

Environmental Finance Center Grant Program Request for Applications



Water Infrastructure and Resiliency Finance Center
May 3, 2022

Overview of the Webinar

May 3, 2022

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Welcome, Overview, and Zoom Introduction

Speakers

- Andrew Sawyers, Director, EPA Office of Wastewater Management
- Bev Vazquez, EPA Water Infrastructure and Resiliency Finance Center
- Michelle Madeley, EPA Water Infrastructure and Resiliency Finance Center

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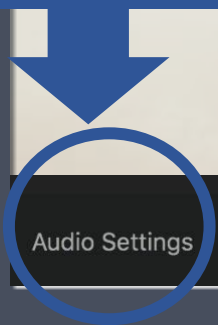
Additional Information

Today's webinar will be recorded and made available on the EPA website within 2 weeks.

Zoom Controls



Adjust audio by clicking on small arrow next to audio settings



Audio Settings ^



Chat



Raise Hand



Q&A

Leave

Agenda

Opening – Andrew Sawyers

Important Dates – Michelle Madeley

Project Description, Amount of Funding, & Who is Eligible – Michelle Madeley

How to Apply, Required Documents, & Scoring Criteria – Bev Vazquez

Additional Information – Michelle Madeley

Have a question about the RFA?

Please submit your questions during the webinar! We will use them to help populate the EFC RFA Frequent Questions webpage at

<https://www.epa.gov/waterfinancecenter/environmental-finance-center-grant-program-frequent-questions>

You can also email your questions to

EFCRFA@epa.gov

during and/or after the webinar.

We will not be answering questions during the webinar.

EPA Announces Request for Applications for the Environmental Finance Center (EFC) Grant Program

Section I of EFC RFA

- Through this grant program, EPA seeks to support projects that **help communities address environmental and financial resource challenges** they face.
- EPA also seeks to **maximize the impact of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL)**, signed in November 2021.
 - BIL includes over *\$50 billion in water infrastructure investments*, most of which will be available through the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds (SRFs) programs.
 - EFCs will play an important role in helping to ensure that *communities that have struggled to secure public funding receive the help they need to access resources to support infrastructure improvements that protect public health, safeguard the environment, and mitigate environmental justice concerns.*

Important Dates

Section I of EFC RFA

Closing date and time for applications is:

Friday, June 17, 2022 at 11:59 PM, Eastern Time (ET)

Questions about this RFA must be submitted in writing via e-mail and must be received by **Wednesday, May 18, 2022 at 11:59 PM ET**

- Agency Contact: Addison Chau at EFCRFA@epa.gov

If your organization has no access to the internet or access is very limited, you may request an exception to applying electronically by **June 2, 2022 at 11:59 PM ET**

Project Description

Section I of EFC RFA

EPA is inviting applications for three types of Environmental Finance Centers:

- **Category 1:** Regional Multi-Environmental Media EFCs
- **Category 2:** Regional Water Infrastructure EFCs with BIL Funding
- **Category 3:** National Water Infrastructure EFCs with BIL Funding

Category 1: Regional Multi-Environmental Media EFCs

Section I of EFC RFA

Approximately 10 will be selected

- Represents the traditional work of prior EFC grant programs
- Serve as hubs focused on providing technical assistance to local, state, and tribal governments, and non-governmental organizations in the equitable implementation of environmental programs and infrastructure investments in the areas of water, air, and land

Category 2: Regional Water Infrastructure EFCs with BIL Funding

Section I of EFC RFA

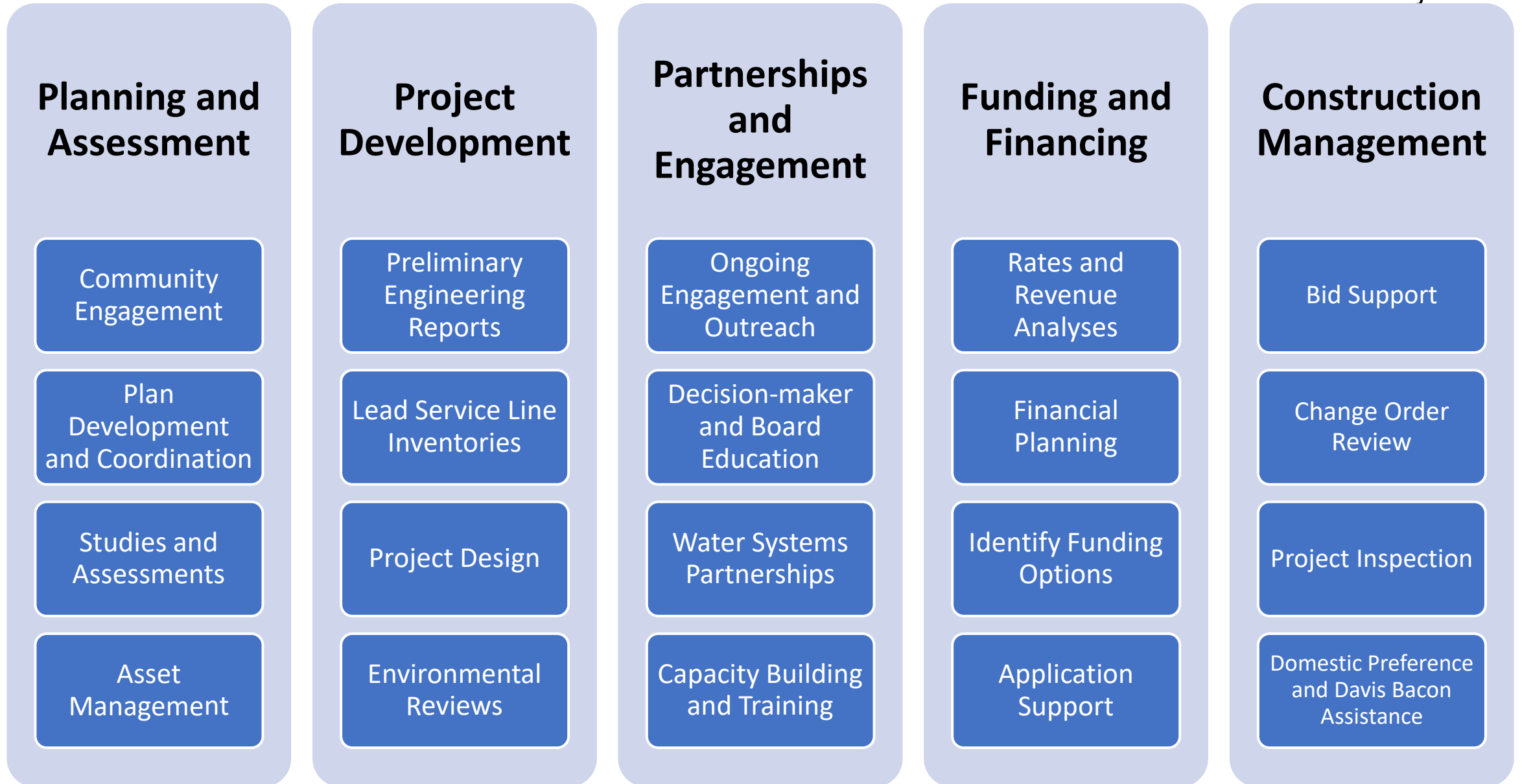
New EFC category

Approximately 10 will be selected

- Provide technical support to communities to obtain water infrastructure funding provided through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), with a priority on underserved and disadvantaged communities
 - Capacity development and technical assistance
 - Tools and resources
- Activities that are eligible for funding under Clean Water Act 104(b)(3) and Safe Drinking Water Act 1442(c)(3)

Description of Potential Technical Assistance Activities for Water Infrastructure Projects

Section I of EFC RFA



Category 3: National Water Infrastructure EFCs with BIL Funding

Section I of EFC RFA

New EFC category

At least one will be selected

- Identify any gaps that may exist in Regional Water Infrastructure EFCs and develop a strategy to address those gaps
- Support Regional Water Infrastructure EFCs by providing subawards
- Activities that are eligible for funding under Clean Water Act 104(b)(3) and Safe Drinking Water Act 1442(c)(3)

Amount of Funding

The total estimated amount of federal funding available under this announcement is approximately \$68 million, depending on Agency funding levels, the quality of applications received, Agency priorities, and other applicable considerations.

- The grant program is for five years.
- EPA anticipates making 10 to 21 awards.
- The total amount of federal funding available under this competitive announcement is up to approximately \$13,600,000 per year.
- Applicants should submit applications requesting up to \$650,000 of funding each year for five years.
 - Applicants may submit applications requesting funding above the \$650,000 annual funding level.
 - Applicants may submit applications requesting funding below the \$650,000 annual funding level.
 - EPA will only be able to fund up to the amount that is requested by the applicant.

Amount of Funding, cont.

Section II of EFC RFA

- While EPA intends to make awards for an EFC at EPA Headquarters and in all ten EPA Regions within each of the two Regional EFC categories, the Agency reserves the right to make more awards than anticipated and reserves the right to make no awards in a particular EFC category or in a region.
- In addition, EPA reserves the right to prioritize the broadest possible coverage by selecting more than one applicant for a single region.

Who is Eligible to Apply?

Section III of EFC RFA

Eligible applicants under this competition are:

- public and non-profit universities and colleges, and
- non-profit organizations
 - A definition of non-profit organization can be found in 2 CFR 200.1

For-profit colleges, universities, trade schools, and hospitals are ineligible.

Who is Eligible to Apply?, cont.

Section III of EFC RFA

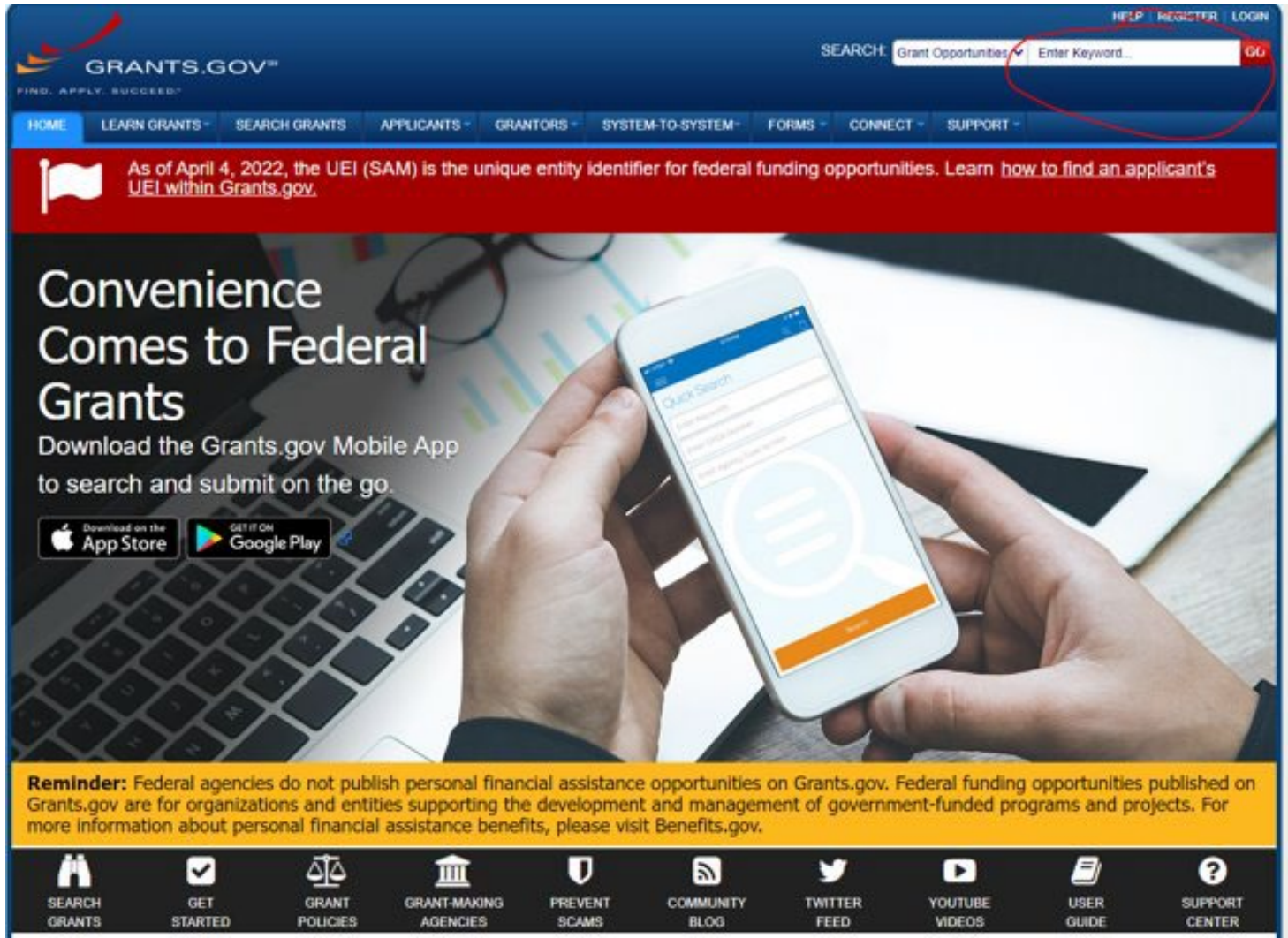
Groups of two or more eligible applicants may choose to form a coalition (i.e., partnership) and submit a single application under this RFA.

- Coalitions must identify which eligible organization will be the recipient of the grant and which eligible organization(s) will be the subrecipients of the recipient.
- Subawards must be consistent with the definition of that term in 2 CFR 200.1 and comply with EPA's [Subaward Policy](#).
- For-profit organizations are not eligible for subawards under this grant program but may receive procurement contracts.
- For any contracts for services or products funded with EPA financial assistance refer to the [Best Practice Guide for Procuring Services, Supplies, and Equipment Under EPA Assistance Agreements](#) for guidance on competitive procurement requirements and consultant compensation.

New Applicants

*Section II and V of
EFC RFA*

- EPA encourages all eligible applicants to apply and recognizes that new applicants are essential to expanding the pool of service providers able to address the environmental and financial challenges the nation faces.
- New applicants are applicants that have not received an EFC award from EPA in the past 10 years.
- EPA reserves the right to select at least 5 high-ranking new applicants, depending on funding availability and geographic distribution.



HOW TO APPLY

Section III of EFC RFA

Applications must be submitted electronically through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov)

Enter "EPA-I-OW-OWM-22-01" into the search bar in the upper right corner of the screen.



*Quick Start Guide for
Getting a Unique Entity ID*

HOW TO APPLY, cont.

Section III of EFC RFA

Quick Start Guide for Getting a Unique Entity ID

- Applicants must register on [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov).
- All registrants will receive a free SAM-issued Unique Entity Identifier (UEI).
- Applicants must use their UEI, not their DUNS number, when filling out forms.
- The Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) submitting the application must be registered to the applicant organization's SAM account.
- Guide to Getting a Unique Entity ID available at [fsd.gov's FAQ section](https://fsd.gov).
- All registration requirements must be met well in advance of the submission deadline.

Threshold Eligibilities

Section III of EFC RFA

Each application must:

- Address **one, and only one** of the three categories: 1) Regional Multi-Environmental Media EFCs, 2) Regional Water Infrastructure EFCs with BIL Funding, or 3) National Water Infrastructure EFC(s) with BIL Funding
- Address **one, and only one** EPA Region or EPA Headquarters

Regional EFC applications should indicate if geography served is an entire EPA Region or a smaller area

Applicants may submit more than one application.

Refer to Section III.C of the EFC RFA for a full list of threshold eligibility criteria.

Required Documents

Section IV of EFC RFA

Mandatory Documents include:

- Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
- Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)
- EPA Key Contacts Form 5700-54
- EPA Form 4700-4 Preaward Compliance Review Report
- Project Narrative – Workplan (Attachment Form)

Project Narrative

Section IV of EFC RFA

The Project Narrative – no more than 20 pages. Must include:

- Cover Page
- Executive Summary
- Workplan
- Additional Materials (do not count toward 20 page limit)
 - Resumes
 - Support Letters



Project Narrative – Workplan

Section IV of EFC RFA

These contents in the Workplan count toward the 20 page limit:

- Project Description
- Project Partnerships
- Technical Assistance, Research, Training, and Financial and Environmental Results and Measuring Progress
- Detailed Budget Narrative
- Milestone Schedule
- Programmatic Capability/Experience
- Past Performance

Scoring Criteria

Section V of EFC RFA

All eligible applications will be evaluated based on the evaluation criteria in Section V of the EFC RFA.

The scoring is based on a 100-point scale with the following criteria:

1. Project Description
2. Project Partnerships
3. Technical Assistance (TA), Research, Training, Financial and Environmental Results and Measuring Progress
4. Detailed Budget Narrative
5. Programmatic Capability/Experience
6. Milestone Schedule
7. Past Performance

Scoring Criteria

Section V of EFC RFA

Criteria 1 – Project Description (15 points)

- Demonstrates the extent and quality of the strategy for addressing the objective (including listed necessary components) in Section I.B (Project Description) of this announcement (5 points); and
- Demonstrates the extent to which the application demonstrates how the proposed project will address the selected EFC category and how it identifies the specific examples of environmental finance-related programs or infrastructure and cost-effective priorities such as those listed in Section I.B (Project Description) (10 points).

Scoring Criteria

Section V of EFC RFA

Criteria 2 – Project Partnerships (15 points)

Demonstrate appropriate and necessary partnerships to successfully conduct the project as described in Section IV.C.ii, including whether they have provided a clear description of roles, or planned roles, of each partner in the project's component/task, and how these partnerships will contribute to the success of the project and meeting the objectives described in Section I.B.

Scoring Criteria

Section V of EFC RFA

Criteria 3 – TA, Research, Training, Financial and Environmental Results and Measuring Progress (30 points)

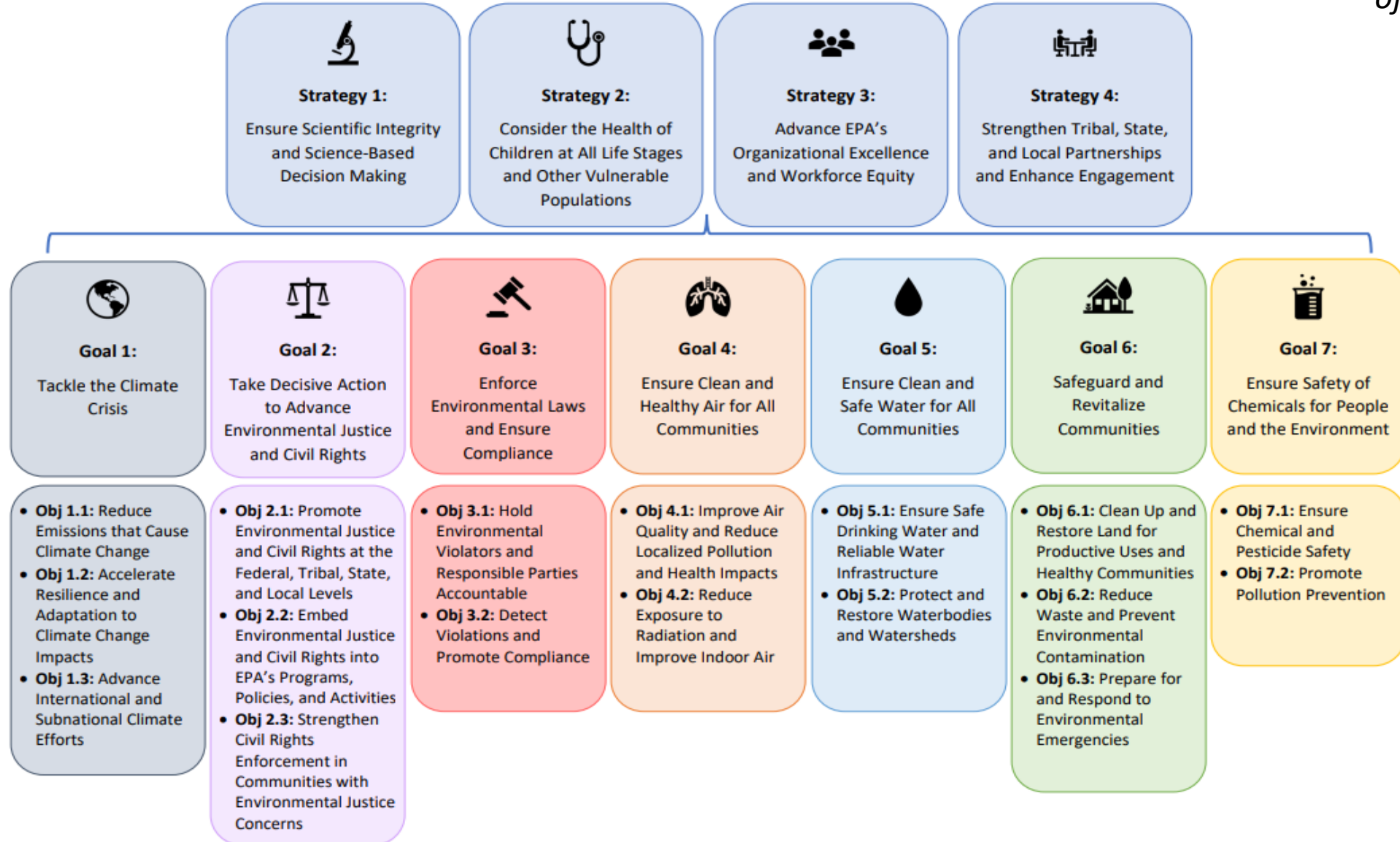
- Demonstrates a sound plan for tracking and measuring progress toward achieving the anticipated financial, environmental outputs and environmental outcomes (5 points);
- Demonstrates the potential to achieve environmental results, anticipated environmental and financial outputs and outcomes including increased access to financing and how the outputs and outcomes are linked to the Strategic Plan described in Section I.D of this announcement (5 points)

FY 2022-2026 EPA Strategic Plan Framework

Mission: To Protect Human Health and the Environment

Principles: Follow the Science, Follow the Law, Be Transparent, Advance Justice and Equity

*Sections I and V
of EFC RFA*



Criteria 3, cont.

- Demonstrates (10 points)
 - A sound training, pre-development coordination, technical assistance program in a defined area.
 - Their ability and approach for making assistance available in the proposed project geography
 - The approach they will use to identify municipalities, tribes, and/or systems that are in the greatest need of training, technical assistance, and information; and
- Demonstrates an effective process for identifying and reaching out to communities' municipalities in most need of assistance, and the extent to which the applicant's strategy utilizes flexibility and transferability of results to tailor the training and technical assistance techniques and resources to address the specific needs of the target audience to address all or a subset of financing needs and/or eligible projects and activities (10 points).

Scoring Criteria

Section V of EFC RFA

Criteria 4 – Detailed Budget Narrative (10 points)

The extent to which the proposed project budget is appropriate to accomplish the proposed goals, objectives, and measurable environmental outcomes and whether the budget provides an approximation of the percentage of the budget designated for each major activity (5 points);

Approach, procedures, and controls for ensuring that awarded grant funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner (5 points).

Scoring Criteria

Section V of EFC RFA

Criteria 5 – Programmatic Capability/ Experience (20 points)

Applicant's ability to successfully complete and manage the proposed project considering their:

- Staff expertise/qualifications, cultural competency including appropriate language fluency to serve communities in the geographic area to be served, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project, including the ability to lead project partners (if any) and successfully build relationships with state and local government as well as community organizations (10 points); and
- Organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project (10 points).

Scoring Criteria

Section V of EFC RFA

Criteria 6 – Milestone Schedule (5 points)

Applications will be evaluated based on the extent and quality to which the application addresses the adequacy and completeness of the milestone schedule, including timeframes and major milestones to complete significant project tasks.

Scoring Criteria

Section V of EFC RFA

Criteria 7 – Past Performance (5 points)

Applicant's technical ability to successfully complete and manage the proposed project taking into account the applicant's:

- Past performance in successfully completing and managing assistance agreements identified in response to Section IV.C.vii (2.5 points);
- History of meeting reporting requirements and submitting acceptable final technical reports under the assistance agreements identified in response to Section IV.C.vii, including the extent and quality to which the applicant adequately documented and/or reported on progress towards achieving the expected outcomes and outputs (e.g., results) under assistance agreements identified in response to Section IV.C.vii and, if such progress was not made whether the documentation and/or reports satisfactorily explained why not (2.5 points).

Additional Information

A recording of this webinar will be posted on the web within 2 weeks at:
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Please submit your questions to Addison Chau at: EFCRFA@epa.gov

EPA will post answers to questions on the EFC Frequently Asked Questions webpage soon after they are received at: www.epa.gov/waterfinancecenter/environmental-finance-center-grant-program-frequent-questions Check this webpage often!