



AQUARIUS

DWSRF AQUARIUS Program 2023 Nomination Form



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Program Description

The Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) is a \$49 billion federal-state partnership dedicated to protecting America’s public health. The program finances the construction and rehabilitation of critical drinking water infrastructure, along with public health-focused programs and activities across our nation. The DWSRF AQUARIUS program nationally recognizes DWSRF-funded projects for exceptional focus on six main areas. These projects are examples of the high level of innovation possible with the DWSRF.

Nomination Process

States may nominate one project by sending the nomination form to their EPA Regional Office Coordinator. After review from the EPA Regional Office, the Region will send nominations to EPA Headquarters (HQ). A panel at EPA HQ will review and rank submitted projects. Of the projects nominated, the panel will select one project for each of the six categories to be designated as “Exceptional Projects.”

EPA plans to announce the Exceptional Projects in Spring 2024.

The materials will also be shared with all EPA Regional Offices to highlight excellent projects in their Region and across the country.

2023 AQUARIUS Program Timeline

Fall

2023 AQUARIUS Program kickoff and call for nominations. The project nomination form will be available on the [EPA DWSRF website](#).

November 30

Project nominations from states are due to their respective EPA Regional Office Coordinator. States fill out the attached form to nominate a project. Each state may nominate only one project (that has not been previously nominated).

December 29

After review, Regions send the nominations to AQUARIUS@epa.gov at EPA HQ.




April 2024

All recognized projects will be showcased in the *2023 AQUARIUS Compendium* to be made available online. Six Exceptional Projects will be honored during a celebration ceremony (details on the ceremony will be provided to the exceptional projects later in 2024).

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AQUARIUS Evaluation Criteria

States participating in this voluntary recognition program may nominate **one** DWSRF project during the 2023 round. All DWSRF projects are eligible for nomination, as long as **the project (or a distinct project phase) is complete**. The project must meet three criteria to be eligible:

-  Address the most serious risk to human health;
-  Necessary to ensure compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act; and
-  Assist systems most in need, on a per household basis, according to state-determined affordability criteria

This year, one Exceptional Project will be selected for each of the six categories below:

- Excellence in Innovative Financing (e.g., a unique or uncommon funding mechanism was employed; co-financing)
- Excellence in System Partnerships (e.g., projects that involved many stakeholder entities; creation of regional water system)
- Excellence in Community Engagement (e.g., local schools or community groups played an integral role in the project design; a project that educates the community)
- Excellence in Environmental and Public Health Protection (e.g., project addresses health-based violations; a system returns to compliance)
- **NEW** Excellence in Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation (e.g., reducing carbon footprint; increasing resiliency to flooding, droughts, wildfires, or storms; considering future climate scenarios in long-term planning or vulnerability assessments)
- Excellence in Creative Solutions (e.g., addressing multiple challenges with one project; innovative use of DWSRF eligibilities)

Project information submitted in this nomination form will be used to rank each project according to each category's criteria. All other AQUARIUS projects will be considered Honorable Mention Projects, highlighted in the 2023 AQUARIUS Compendium, and receive a certificate signed by the OGWDW Office Director.



AQUARIUS 2023 Nomination Form

State Contact Information

DWSRF State Program:

DWSRF Point-of-Contact:

Point-of-Contact Email Address:

Recipient Contact Information

Assistance Recipient:

Assistance Recipient Point-of-Contact:

Point-of-Contact Email Address (or phone number):

Project Information

Project Name:

Location (city, state):

DWSRF Funding Amount (include any additional subsidy):

Any Co-funding (e.g., USDA, CDBG, etc.)? *Please include co-funding source name:*

Date of Construction Completion (NOTE—project must be complete):

Project Description (no more than 100 words):

Why was the project necessary (no more than 200 words)? Describe the existing conditions that prompted the need for the project. If this project was proactive, what prompted that decision? If there were violations, from what regulations and for how long?

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Project Information, continued

Which of the six categories (excellence in innovative financing, system partnerships, community engagement, environmental and public health protection, climate and resiliency, and/or creative solutions) best describes this project? Please provide rationale for the categories selected. You may select up to **three**.

Who was impacted? (e.g., How many people? Children? Disadvantaged community? Hospital or other critical infrastructure? Neighborhood with frequent water main breaks?):

What are the outcomes and/or next steps?

Please include 1-2 high resolution photos* with submission. Please submit photos relevant to the project that showcase as much of the project as possible. These may be used online or in other publications.

**NOTE: by submitting photo(s) with this nomination form, you agree to waive compensation and authorize the photo(s) to be used for informational, education, and/or public relations purposed both within the U.S. EPA and by the general public. You authorize disclosure and release of the photo(s) to the U.S. EPA.*

If you have additional questions about the AQUARIUS Recognition Program, please contact AQUARIUS@epa.gov.