

Federal Agency Name: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Water, Office of Wetlands, Oceans and Watersheds

Funding Opportunity Title: Fiscal Year 2024 Building Partner Capacity and Promoting Resiliency and Equity under Clean Water Act, Wetlands, Nonpoint Source, Monitoring, Assessment and Listing Programs

Announcement Type: Initial Announcement

Funding Opportunity Number: EPA-OW-OWOW-24-03

Assistance Listing Number: 66.436

Dates:

All applications must be received by electronic submission through Grants.gov by **11:59 P.M. ET July 17, 2024**. Late applications will not be considered for funding.

Question Submission

Questions about this funding opportunity must be submitted in writing via e-mail and must be received by the Agency Contact identified in Section VII before **July 1, 2024**. Written responses will be posted on the EPA’s website at [Notice of Funding Opportunity Office of Wetlands, Oceans, and Watersheds](#).

Note to Applicants:

Following the EPA’s evaluation of applications, all applicants will be notified regarding their status. If subawardees/subgrantees and/or contractor(s) are named in the application to assist with the proposed project, pay careful attention to the information in the CONTRACTS AND SUBAWARDS provisions found at [the EPA’s Solicitation Clauses](#).

I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. BACKGROUND

The EPA is soliciting applications from eligible applicants to provide support for training and related activities to build the capacity of agricultural partners, state, territorial and Tribal officials and nongovernmental stakeholders in activities to be carried out to support the goals of the Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 303(d) Program, the CWA 305(b) Program, the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Program, the Nonpoint Source (CWA Section 319) Program, the Fish Monitoring/Advisory Programs, the Recreational Waters/Beach Monitoring Programs and the Water Quality Monitoring Program.

B. STATUTORY AUTHORITY

The statutory authority for the assistance agreements to be funded under this announcement is Section 104(b)(3) of the CWA which authorizes assistance agreements for the following activities: conducting or promoting the coordination and acceleration of research, investigations, experiments,

training, demonstrations, surveys and studies relating to the causes, effects (including health and welfare effects), extent, prevention, reduction and elimination of water pollution.

Implementation projects are not eligible for funding under this announcement. If the application is a demonstration project, then the applicant must describe how it meets the following requirement. Demonstration projects must involve new or experimental technologies, methods, or approaches. The EPA expects that the results of the project will be disseminated so that others can benefit from the knowledge gained in the demonstration project. A project that is accomplished through the performance of routine, traditional, or established practices, or a project that is simply intended to carry out a task rather than transfer information or advance the state of knowledge, however worthwhile the project might be, is not a demonstration project. For applications that include demonstration projects, the applicant must describe how the project meets the above requirements.

C. NATIONAL PRIORITY AREAS

Each application submitted under this announcement must address ***one, and only one***, of the five National Priority Areas described below. Applicants may submit more than one complete application package under this announcement as long as each application is separately submitted and addresses only ***one*** National Priority Area. The cover page of each application package must clearly indicate the National Priority Area addressed in the application. If an applicant submits an application that addresses more than one National Priority Area, it will be deemed ineligible and will not be reviewed.

National Priority Area I: State and Tribal Aquatic Resource Monitoring Technical Training and Capacity Building Workshops

The goal of this National Priority Area is to conduct technical training and capacity building workshops and communication/outreach activities to more effectively assess water quality and communicate technical information at the national, regional and state-scale focusing the technical training workshops on topics related to the [National Aquatic Resource Surveys](#).

The EPA is soliciting applications from eligible applicants to plan, prepare and conduct State and Tribal Aquatic Resource Monitoring Technical Training and Capacity Building Workshops to build the capacity of states and Tribes to more effectively assess water quality. These technical training workshops and communication/outreach areas should include:

- Five to seven technical training workshops (each workshop one to three days in length) focused on specific aquatic resources or selected issues with cross resource topics of interest. During any given year, these smaller training workshops do not have to focus on the same aquatic resource type and may cover different topics. Note that not all training workshops have to be in person; they can be held virtually if appropriate for the topic area.
- Up to three large technical training workshops covering all aquatic resource types. Note that not all large training workshops have to be in person; large workshops can be held virtually if appropriate for the topic area.
- Communication and outreach activities may include development of articles, videos and other communications materials; engagement of experts; and transferring new approaches to states, Tribes and others.

The project components described below provide some detail on roles and responsibilities the successful applicant may be expected to assume in order to establish and manage the State and Tribal Aquatic Resource Monitoring Technical Training and Capacity Building Workshops. The description below is not comprehensive. Applicants are encouraged to identify additional workshop training topic areas, communication/outreach activities and/or project components that may not be included in the announcement but may contribute to overall project success in their application.

The target audience for the State and Tribal Aquatic Resource Monitoring Technical Training and Capacity Building Workshops is expected to include state and Tribal monitoring, assessment and wetland program personnel and other national experts engaged in developing and implementing the [National Aquatic Resource Surveys](#) and state/Tribal scale statistical surveys. Participants are also expected to include individuals from the university, research and non-profit community and the EPA staff from Headquarters (e.g., Office of Water), Office of Research and Development, etc.) and the Regional Offices with expertise in the specific training topic.

Approximately 25-75 people are expected to attend each of the aquatic resource specific training workshops depending on the specific topic(s) covered; approximately 65% state, 5% Tribal, 10% other non-federal (e.g., university, non-profit, etc.) and 20% federal. Up to 200 attendees are expected to attend the large training workshops covering all aquatic resource types; approximately 65% state, 5% Tribal, 10% other non-federal (e.g., university, non-profit, etc.) and 20% federal. Applicants may propose to [use a portion of the assistance funds to defray transportation and subsistence expenses](#) for non-federal attendees to attend the training workshops. The applicant is solely responsible for determining a methodology for selecting and funding reimbursement requests and providing a report on how participating non-federal attendees benefited from the training workshops. The EPA will not participate in the selection or approval of individuals who receive travel assistance.

The overall goals of these training workshops are to: (1) enhance communication, coordination and technology transfer among states, Tribes and federal agencies to ensure state and Tribal interests are effectively represented in the continued development and implementation of the National Aquatic Resource Surveys; (2) facilitate increased understanding and technology transfer of probability-based sampling, field methods, methods comparability and other issues of interest to states and Tribes; (3) increase inter-jurisdictional collaboration among states and Tribes and to build or expand state and Tribal aquatic resource monitoring capacity; and (4) communicate results from the National Aquatic Resource Surveys to support water quality protection/restoration actions at various scales.

The smaller aquatic resource specific training workshops should focus on technical and programmatic issues including but not limited to refining ecological indicators, developing data analysis procedures, establishing reference condition, integrating multiple field methods, learning about field methods and improving state and Tribal use of monitoring data to inform decision-making. A portion of these workshops could also be dedicated to technical training on developing a probability-based survey design, data analysis techniques, or field-based monitoring demonstrations.

The large training workshops covering all aquatic resource types should focus on training participants on successful approaches for enhancing state, Tribal and national assessments of condition of the

nation's waters consistent with CWA Section 305(b). Examples that applicants might consider in designing the large training workshops covering all aquatic resource types include successful approaches for implementing probability surveys and using probability data, improving national and state/Tribal coordination of monitoring approaches, learning about analytical approaches and tools to streamline assessment/reporting, conducting methods comparability studies and applying the biological condition gradient to assessments at multiple scales.

In their applications, applicants should outline the steps they will take to plan, prepare and conduct the training workshops and describe the roles and responsibilities of the applicant in carrying out the training workshops. The application should also describe the approach for consulting with states, Tribes and other interested stakeholders to determine the training workshop priorities. The application should include a description of how the applicant will transfer the results of the training workshops to state, Tribal and local governmental agencies and other interested stakeholders. In their application, applicants should demonstrate experience working with and convening state, Tribal and federal agencies to effectively respond to the range of aquatic resource monitoring needs nationally.

Whenever possible, in-person technical training workshops should be located in or near major U.S. cities accessible to transportation to most effectively accommodate travel needs of participants. Applicants should demonstrate their intent to coordinate, where possible, the training workshops with existing meetings to increase interaction among state, Tribal and other monitoring experts and organizations and to reduce the travel burden on non-federal attendees.

The successful applicant will provide the overall leadership for the training workshops, identify appropriate timeframes for each training workshop, select workshop locations, secure workshop facilities (meeting rooms, accommodations, audio-visual equipment, etc.), develop workshop agendas and materials and select speakers. Applicants should consider the National Aquatic Resource Surveys [schedule](#), including the timeframe for survey implementation and data analyses/national report development. Applicants should include in their description how they propose to deliver in-person training workshops under normal circumstances and how they will deliver the trainings if in-person training is not possible due to impacts related to natural disasters and/or health emergencies, (e.g., under quarantine situations, if social distancing is required in your locale). Alternative training workshops due to the impacts of natural disasters and/or health emergencies may include switching from in-person formats to online only or reducing the number of participants in each training. If the EPA co-sponsors one or more of these events the EPA will do so in accordance with a co-sponsorship agreement developed between the EPA and the recipient. The EPA will support these events as a co-sponsor by providing technical assistance, promotion of the events, review of agendas and printed materials. The successful applicant will use its logos on any workshop materials it provides; the EPA will use its logos on any workshop materials it provides.

Applications will be evaluated based on the criteria in Section V including how well and thoroughly the National Priority Area is addressed. The EPA anticipates funding one cooperative agreement under this National Priority Area for a total available funding of approximately \$550,000 depending on the amount requested and the overall size and scope of the project. It is anticipated that the project period

for the award will be five years and that the award will be incrementally funded depending on agency priorities, availability of funds and satisfactory performance of the recipient.

National Priority Area II: State, Tribal and Territorial Data Management and Data Sharing Training Workshops in Support of CWA Section 303(d), CWA Section 305(b), TMDLs and Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment

The goal of National Priority Area II is to conduct training workshops to educate state, Tribal and territorial personnel on new approaches for sharing CWA Sections 303(d), 305(b) and TMDL data. The EPA is developing new approaches for sharing these data as part of the EPA's [Water Quality Framework](#) (Framework). A goal of the Framework is to more fully integrate water quality monitoring, assessment and restoration data to provide a more complete picture of the nation's waters. As a first step in this effort, the EPA redesigned the Assessment TMDL Tracking and Implementation System (ATTAINS) using an agile approach. This system tracks state CWA Sections 303(d), 305(b) and TMDL data using a common geospatial framework based on the National Hydrography Dataset Plus (NHDP*Plus*). The new ATTAINS system also integrates statewide statistical surveys and site-specific assessment data. It is anticipated that these training workshops will educate states, Tribes and territories on the following tools: ATTAINS, NHDP*Plus*, as well as the EPA Water Quality eXchange (WQX), Water Quality Portal (WQP), R Tools for Automated Data Analysis (TADA), Recovery Potential Screening (RPS) Tool and Healthy Watersheds Assessments, as well as obtain state, Tribal and territorial input on these systems and how they are used to support the full CWA data lifecycle from monitoring to data management, assessment and reporting.

The EPA is soliciting proposals from eligible applicants to plan, prepare and conduct three State, Tribal and Territorial Data Management and Data Sharing Training Workshops starting in 2025—over the next five years—with the option to hold smaller workshops during the other years in support of CWA Sections 303(d), 305(b), TMDLs and water quality monitoring and assessment. The project components described below provide more detail on roles and responsibilities the successful applicant may be expected to assume to establish and manage these workshops, but it is not comprehensive. Applicants are encouraged to identify additional workshop training topic areas and/or project components that may not be included in this announcement, but that may contribute to overall project success in their proposals.

The target audience for the State, Tribal and Territorial Data Management and Data Sharing Training Workshops includes state, Tribal and territorial monitoring, assessment, CWA Sections 303(d), 305(b) and TMDL program personnel, and may also include local and regional officials, stakeholders and national experts. If fully funded, an estimated 50 to 60 participants are expected to attend each training workshop with representatives from 50 states and some territorial and Tribal representatives and federal representatives. It is anticipated that workshop participation will be approximately 75% state, 10% Tribal and 15% federal (the EPA). Applicants may propose to use a portion of the assistance funds to defray transportation and subsistence expenses for non-federal attendees to attend the training workshops. The applicant is solely responsible for determining a methodology for selecting and funding reimbursement requests and providing a report on how participating non-federal attendees benefited from the training workshops. The EPA will not select the trainees or participate in the selection or approval of individuals who receive travel assistance.

The goals of the State, Tribal and Territorial Data Management and Data Sharing Training Workshops are: (1) to provide training to states, Tribes and territories on the new approaches for capturing monitoring, assessment and TMDL data (including training on the redesigned ATTAINS system and new approaches for reporting on strategic measures); (2) to solicit feedback from state, Tribal and territorial personnel on the new ATTAINS data model for tracking these data; (3) to provide information for scoping the integration of these data using a common geospatial framework; and (4) to provide training on other tools being used by states, which include: [Recovery Potential Screening Tool](#), [Healthy Watersheds Assessments](#), [Water Quality eXchange](#), [Water Quality Portal](#), associated R Tools for Automated Data Analysis (TADA) and [How's My Waterway](#).

In their proposals, applicants should outline the steps they will take to plan, prepare and conduct the training workshops and describe the roles and responsibilities of the applicant in carrying out the training workshops. The successful applicant will provide the overall leadership for the training workshops, select workshop locations, secure meeting facilities (e.g., meeting rooms, accommodations, audio-visual and information technology equipment), develop training workshop agendas, develop, where appropriate, non-technical materials and select the speakers (i.e., plan, prepare and conduct these workshops). The awardee is not expected to develop technical documents or technical training materials for these workshops. If the EPA co-sponsors one or more of these events the EPA will do so in accordance with a co-sponsorship agreement developed between the EPA and the recipient. The EPA will support these events as a co-sponsor by providing technical assistance, promotion of the events, review of agendas and printed materials. The EPA will also support the training workshops by providing the technical content and training (e.g., develop participant training materials and lead the training sessions to present this technical material). The proposal should describe the approach for consulting with states, Tribes, territories and other interested stakeholders to determine the training priorities. The proposal should also include a description of how the applicant will transfer the results of the training workshops to state, Tribal, territorial and local governmental agencies and other interested stakeholders. In their application, applicants should demonstrate their experience working with state and Tribal staff that implement the CWA Section 303(d), CWA Section 305(b) and TMDL programs and convening meetings and/or trainings that support these programs in coordination with the EPA.

The in-person training workshops should be located in or near major U.S. cities accessible to transportation to most effectively accommodate travel needs of participants and to bring as many state, Tribal and territorial information system specialists as possible. Applicants should demonstrate their intent to coordinate, where possible, the training workshops with existing meetings to increase interaction among state, Tribal, monitoring and assessment and TMDL program personnel and to reduce the travel burden on non-federal attendees. Applicants should include in their description how they propose to deliver in-person training workshops under normal circumstances and how they will deliver the trainings if in-person training is not possible due to impacts related to natural disasters and/or health emergencies, (e.g., under quarantine situations, if social distancing is required in your locale). Alternative training workshops due to the impacts of natural disasters and/or health emergencies may include switching from in-person formats to online only or reducing the number of

participants in each training. The successful applicant will use its logos on any materials it provides; the EPA will use its logos on any materials it provides.

In their proposals, applicants should describe the technical approach to addressing this National Priority Area. The proposal should include a description of the roles and responsibilities of the applicant in carrying out the project elements. The proposal should also include a description of the applicant's plan for active transfer of project results, methods and/or effective strategies to state, Tribe, local agencies and/or other interested stakeholders so that the others can better build their programs.

Proposals will be evaluated based on the criteria in Section V including how well and thoroughly the National Priority Activity Area is addressed. The EPA anticipates funding one cooperative agreement under this National Priority Activity Area for a total available funding of approximately \$450,000, depending on the amount requested and the overall size and scope of the project. It is anticipated that the project period for the award will be five years, which will include a total of three training workshops over this period, and that the award will be incrementally funded depending on agency priorities, availability of funds and satisfactory performance of the recipient.

National Priority Area III: Training Workshops on Recreational Waters and Beach Monitoring Programs

The goal of National Priority Area III is to conduct training workshops to build the capacity of states and Tribes to more effectively implement programs to protect human health from illnesses related to exposure in recreational waters, including beaches.

Application for this National Priority Area should describe the applicant's plan to prepare and conduct two hybrid workshops over the six-year project period (one year to plan, one year to hold workshop, two-year gap, one year to plan and second workshop held in the sixth year of project period) The project components described below provide some detail on roles and responsibilities the successful applicant may be expected to assume. The description below is not comprehensive. Applicants are encouraged to identify additional workshop training topic areas and/or project components that may not be included in this announcement, but that may contribute to overall project success in their applications.

The overall goals of the training workshops related to the recreational waters and beach monitoring are: (1) to enhance communication, coordination and technology transfer among states, Tribes and federal agencies to ensure protection of human health including for vulnerable communities; (2) to build on lessons learned and advance the latest developments and innovations, including monitoring; and (3) to foster or increase inter-jurisdictional collaboration among states and Tribes. Examples of potential workshop topics include but are not limited to new methods, indicators and techniques for monitoring and modeling; latest research pertaining to human health risks from exposure to pathogens/pathogen indicators/HABs in recreational waters (such as developments related to microbial source tracking, antibiotic resistant genes and risk to children); regulatory and policy issues associated with recreational water/beach monitoring and water quality; use of citizen science/volunteer monitoring; water quality standards issues; performance criteria for beach

monitoring and notification grants; and recommended protocols and procedures to encourage greater consistency among jurisdictions.

The target audience for these training workshops is expected to include state and Tribal recreational water/beach monitoring program personnel and other national experts engaged in these areas, such as those from federal agencies like the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). The target audience is also expected to include individuals from the university, research and non-profit community and the EPA staff from Headquarters and the Regional Offices with expertise in the specific training workshop topic identified. Approximately 500 people are expected to attend each of the training workshops, with approximately 65% state/Tribal, 10% other non-federal (e.g., university, non-profit, etc.) and 25% federal (mostly the EPA) attendees. Applicants may propose to use a portion of the assistance funds to defray transportation and subsistence expenses for non-federal attendees to attend the training workshops. The applicant is solely responsible for determining a methodology for selecting and funding reimbursement requests and providing a report on how participating non-federal attendees benefited from the training workshops. The EPA will not participate in the selection or approval of individuals who receive travel assistance.

Applicants should outline the steps they will take to plan, prepare and conduct the training workshops and describe the roles and responsibilities of the applicant in carrying out the training workshops. The successful applicant will provide the overall leadership for the training workshops, select workshop locations, secure workshop facilities (meeting rooms, accommodations, audio-visual equipment, etc.), develop workshop agendas and materials, select the speakers and facilitate the workshop. If the EPA co-sponsors one or more of these events the EPA will do so in accordance with a co-sponsorship agreement developed between the EPA and the recipient. The EPA will support these events as a co-sponsor by providing technical assistance, promotion of the events, review of agendas and printed materials. The successful applicant will use its logos on any materials it provides; the EPA will use its logos on any materials it provides.

The training workshops should be in or near major U.S. cities accessible to transportation to most effectively accommodate travel needs of participants. Applicants may demonstrate their intent to coordinate, where possible, the training workshops with existing meetings (e.g., national meeting or training workshops on similar or related topics as listed above) to increase interaction among state, Tribal and territorial and federal pertinent program personnel and to reduce the travel burden on non-federal attendees. Applicants should include in their description how they propose to deliver in-person training workshops under normal circumstances and how they will deliver the trainings if in-person training is not possible due to impacts related to natural disasters and/or health emergencies, (e.g., under quarantine situations, if social distancing is required in your locale). Alternative training workshops due to the impacts of natural disasters and/or health emergencies may include switching from in-person formats to online only or reducing the number of participants in each training.

Applications should also describe the approach for consulting with states, Tribes, territories and other interested stakeholders to determine the training priorities. The applications should also include a description of how the applicant will transfer the results of the training workshops to state, Tribal and territorial governmental agencies and other interested stakeholders. Applicants should demonstrate

their experience working with or organizing workshops for state, Tribal and territorial program personnel as well as federal agencies responsible for implementing programs that protect human health such as recreational water/beach monitoring and advisory programs in their applications.

Applications will be evaluated based on the criteria in Section V including how well and thoroughly the National Priority Area is addressed. The EPA anticipates funding one cooperative agreement under this National Priority Area for a total available funding of approximately \$400,000, depending on the amount requested and the overall size and scope of the project. It is anticipated that the project period for this award will be six years and that the award will be incrementally funded, depending on agency priorities, availability of funds, activities and satisfactory performance of the recipient.

National Priority Area IV: Nonpoint Source Technical Support for Tribes

The goal of this National Priority Area is to provide technical assistance to the 211 Tribes authorized under Clean Water Act Section 319 to have a nonpoint source program. The EPA expects the specific areas of Tribal nonpoint source technical assistance could include coordinating a nonpoint source technical exchange, providing direct nonpoint source technical assistance planning to Tribes, convening Tribal nonpoint source training events, supporting Tribal staff travel to related events and coordinating with other federal agencies in delivering technical and financial assistance to Tribes. The successful applicant should clearly describe the activities they will take while integrating Indigenous knowledge into the technical assistance.

The project components described below provide detail on roles and responsibilities the successful applicant may be expected to assume. The description is not comprehensive. Applicants are encouraged to identify additional project components that may not be included in this announcement, but that may contribute to overall project success in their application. To support the project components described below, [the applicant could support staff experts](#) that may travel and provide hands-on support for nonpoint source-related Tribal activities.

The applicant could also share staffing and funding opportunities across federal programs (e.g., United States Department of Agriculture-Natural Resources Conservation Service, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of the Interior) to better coordinate nonpoint source program work and leverage other federal funding opportunities.

1. Tribal Nonpoint Source Technical Exchange.

The applicant should demonstrate their approach for supporting Tribal nonpoint source technical exchange opportunities, for example through the development of virtual and/or in-person events, web-based engagement (e.g., listserv, website), Tribal program peer-to-peer (e.g., mentor/mentee) and partnerships. The EPA expects applicants will primarily provide a supporting/facilitating role in providing Tribes opportunities to network, share nonpoint source program experiences and build partnerships. Applicants should describe their plans to support Tribal nonpoint source technical exchange through existing organizations (intertribal consortia) or programs (e.g., Clean Water Act Section 319 National Nonpoint Source Program, Gulf Hypoxia Program, etc.).

2. Direct Nonpoint Source Technical Assistance.

The applicant should demonstrate how they will provide direct nonpoint source technical assistance to Tribes. For example, the applicant could provide training and assistance for Tribal staff to support the development of nonpoint source assessment reports and nonpoint source management plans; watershed-based planning; development of nonpoint source water quality monitoring and assessment strategies; gathering water quality and other related data to support nonpoint source program work; and/or assistance in planning, designing and implementing projects. The applicant could also assist Tribes with programmatic work planning and preparing and updating Quality Assurance Project Plans (QAPP) as a part of grants.

3. Tribal Nonpoint Source Training.

The applicant should demonstrate how they may convene technical nonpoint source training events. Example training topics could include adopting a watershed approach in managing nonpoint source pollution, incorporating climate resiliency in nonpoint source management work, leveraging water quality data and integrating Indigenous knowledge to target nonpoint source work, building partnerships and accessing funding opportunities and supporting nonpoint source project planning, design and implementation. The applicant could coordinate with partners, to assist in the development and delivery of training workshops. The applicant should consider the involvement of Tribal colleges and universities, who could assist in the collaboration and coordination required to convene technical nonpoint source trainings. The applicant should include opportunities to support Tribal staff travel to in-person trainings.

Applicants should include in their description how they propose to deliver in-person training workshops under normal circumstances and how they will deliver the trainings if in-person training is not possible due to impacts related to natural disasters and/or health emergencies, (e.g., under quarantine situations, if social distancing is required in your locale). Alternative training workshops due to the impacts of natural disasters and/or health emergencies may include switching from in-person formats to online only or reducing the number of participants in each training.

4. Coordination with Other Federal Agencies for Technical and Financial Support.

The applicant should demonstrate how the EPA's funding will complement any work the applicant may be doing with other federal agencies to coordinate the delivery of nonpoint source and nonpoint source-related technical assistance across federal programs (e.g., Natural Resources Conservation Service, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of the Interior).

5. Nonpoint Source Tribal Travel Support.

The applicant may provide support for Tribal representatives to travel to nonpoint source-related training events, conferences, meetings, etc. These events may include regional-based events, e.g., Hypoxia Task Force Meetings. [Applicants may propose to use a portion of the assistance funds to defray transportation and subsistence expenses for non-federal attendees](#) to attend nonpoint source-related events. The applicant is solely responsible for determining a methodology for selecting and funding reimbursement requests and providing a report on how participating non-federal attendees benefited from the nonpoint source-related events. The EPA will not participate in the selection or approval of individuals who receive travel assistance.

The applicant should demonstrate how they will provide technical assistance to Tribes to increase and sustain Tribal nonpoint source capacity. Applicants should describe how the applicant will transfer the results and/or methods to interested stakeholders. Applicants should state how collaborative partnerships (e.g., partnering federal agencies, Tribal college and university partnerships, partnerships with interested stakeholders, etc.) will be developed and how those partnerships will support the outcomes of this funding opportunity. In their applications, applicants should demonstrate their experience working on nonpoint source programs and convening Tribal CWA personnel as well as federal agencies responsible for implementing the CWA programs.

Applications will be evaluated based on the criteria in Section V including how well and thoroughly the National Priority Area is addressed. The EPA anticipates funding one cooperative agreement under this National Priority Area for a total available funding of approximately \$500,000, depending on the amount requested and the overall size and scope of the project. It is anticipated that the project period for the award will be up to 5 years and that the award will be incrementally funded, depending on agency priorities, availability of funds and satisfactory performance of the recipient.

National Priority Area V: Training Workshop on Fish Monitoring and Advisory Programs

The goal of National Priority Area V is to conduct a training workshop to build the capacity of states and Tribes to more effectively implement programs to protect human health from the effects of consuming contaminated fish caught in local waters.

The EPA is soliciting applications from eligible applicants to plan, prepare and conduct a hybrid workshop. The project components described below provide some detail on roles and responsibilities the successful applicant may be expected to assume. The description below does not attempt to be comprehensive. Applicants are encouraged to identify additional workshop training topic areas and/or project components that may not be included in this announcement, but that may contribute to overall project success in their applications.

The overall goals of the training workshop related to the fish monitoring and advisories are: (1) to enhance communication, coordination and technology transfer among states, Tribes and federal agencies to ensure protection of human health including for vulnerable communities; (2) to build on lessons learned and advance the latest developments and innovations, including monitoring; and (3) to foster or increase inter-jurisdictional collaboration among states and Tribes. Examples of potential workshop topics include but are not limited to fish sampling and analysis; federal, state and Tribal advisory coordination; emerging issues such as harmful algal blooms (HABs) and fish consumption; risk assessment, epidemiology and toxicology; health benefits and risk management of fish consumption; and risk communication to all communities.

The target audience for the training workshop is expected to include state and Tribal fish monitoring and advisory program personnel and other national experts engaged in these areas, such as those from federal agencies like the Food and Drug Administration and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The target audience is also expected to include individuals from the university, research and non-profit community and the EPA staff from Headquarters and the Regional Offices with

expertise in the specific training workshop topic identified. Approximately 1000 people are expected to attend, with approximately 65% state/Tribal, 10% other non-federal (e.g., university, non-profit, etc.) and 25% federal (mostly the EPA) attendees. Approximately 15% are anticipated to attend in person; the rest would attend remotely. [Applicants may propose to use a portion of the assistance funds to defray transportation and subsistence expenses](#) for non-federal attendees to attend the training workshop. The applicant is solely responsible for determining a methodology for selecting and funding reimbursement requests and providing a report on how participating non-federal attendees benefited from the training workshop. The EPA will not participate in the selection or approval of individuals who receive travel assistance.

Applicants should outline the steps they will take to plan, prepare and conduct the training workshop and describe the roles and responsibilities of the applicant in carrying out the training workshop. The successful applicant will provide the overall leadership for the training workshop, select workshop location, secure workshop facilities (meeting rooms, accommodations, audio-visual equipment, etc.), develop workshop agendas and materials, select the speakers and facilitate the workshop. If the EPA co-sponsors one or more of these events the EPA will do so in accordance with a co-sponsorship agreement developed between the EPA and the recipient. The EPA will support these events as a co-sponsor by providing technical assistance, promotion of the events, review of agendas and printed materials. The successful applicant will use its logos on any materials it provides; the EPA will use its logos on any materials it provides.

The training workshop should be in or near major U.S. cities accessible to transportation to most effectively accommodate travel needs of in-person participants. Applicants may demonstrate their intent to coordinate, where possible, the training workshop with existing meetings (e.g., national meeting or training workshops on similar or related topics as listed above) to increase interaction among state, Tribal, territorial and federal pertinent program personnel and to reduce the travel burden on non-federal attendees. Applicants should include in their description how they propose to deliver the in-person training workshop under normal circumstances and how they will deliver the training if in-person training is not possible due to impacts related to natural disasters and/or health emergencies. An alternative training workshop due to the impacts of natural disasters and/or health emergencies may include switching from in-person formats to online only or reducing the number of participants in the training.

The applications should also describe the approach for consulting with states, Tribes, territories and other interested stakeholders to determine the training priorities. The applications should also include a description of how the applicant will transfer the results of the training workshops to state, Tribal and territorial governmental agencies and other interested stakeholders. In their applications, applicants should demonstrate their experience working with or organizing workshops for state, Tribal and territorial program personnel as well as federal agencies responsible for implementing the programs that protect human health such as fish monitoring and advisory program.

Applications will be evaluated based on the criteria in Section V including how well and thoroughly the National Priority Area is addressed. The EPA anticipates funding one cooperative agreement under this National Priority Area for a total available funding of approximately \$200,000, depending on the

amount requested and the overall size and scope of the project. It is anticipated that the project period for this award will be four years, with planning activities starting in 2026 and a workshop held in 2027 and that the award will be incrementally funded, depending on agency priorities, availability of funds, anticipated activities and satisfactory performance of the recipient.

Partnerships

Effective partnerships are important for the success of projects under this competition. In their proposals, applicants should identify appropriate and necessary partnerships to successfully conduct the project. Applicants should also include a clear description of the roles of specific partners in the project's components/tasks. If the applicant chooses to identify any partner entities who will receive subawards or procurement contracts (including consultants), please pay careful attention to the CONTRACTS AND SUBAWARDS provision found at [the EPA Solicitation Clauses](#). The EPA will not consider their qualifications unless the applicant selects them in compliance with applicable regulations and provisions. Partnerships between organizations can greatly benefit from one another's experience and expertise.

Groups of two or more eligible applicants may choose to form a coalition and submit a single application under this competition; however, one entity must be responsible for the grant. Coalitions must identify which eligible organization will be the recipient of the grant and which eligible organization(s) will be subrecipients of the recipient (the "pass-through entity"). Subawards must be consistent with the definition of that term in 2 CFR 200.1 and comply with EPA's Subaward Policy. The pass-through entity that administers the grant and subawards will be accountable to EPA for proper expenditure of the funds and reporting and will be the point of contact for the coalition. As provided in 2 CFR 200.332, subrecipients are accountable to the pass-through entity for proper use of EPA funding. For-profit organizations are not eligible for subawards under this grant program but may receive procurement contracts. Any contracts for services or products funded with EPA financial assistance must be awarded under the competitive procurement procedures of 2 CFR Part 200 and/or 2 CFR Part 1500, as applicable. The regulations at 2 CFR 1500.10 contain limitations on the extent to which EPA funds may be used to compensate individual consultants. 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. Do not name a procurement contractor (including a consultant) as a "partner" or otherwise in your application unless the contractor has been selected in compliance with competitive procurement requirements.

D. ENVIRONMENTAL RESULTS AND LINKAGE TO STRATEGIC PLAN

The activities to be funded under this announcement support the [EPA's FY 2022-2026 Strategic Plan](#). Awards made under this announcement will support Goal 5 - Ensure Clean and Safe Water for All Communities: Provide clean and safe water for all communities and protect our nation's waterbodies from degradation, Objective 5.2: Protect and Restore Waterbodies and Watersheds: Address sources of water pollution and ensure water quality standards are protective of the health and needs of all people and ecosystems.

All applications must demonstrate the linkage to the Strategic Plan 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 demonstrate how the project will contribute to the overall goal of restoring and protecting ecosystems. Additional information regarding the EPA's Strategic Plan and discussion of environmental results can be found at [EPA Order 5700.7A1: EPA's Policy for Environmental Results under EPA Assistance Agreements](#).

Outputs (deliverables/products) 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 of time or by a specified date. Outputs may be quantitative or qualitative but must be measurable during the assistance agreement funding period.

Examples of anticipated environmental outputs from the assistance agreements to be awarded under this announcement include, but are not limited to:

National Priority Area I: State and Tribal Aquatic Resource Monitoring Technical Training and Capacity Building Workshops:

- Technology and information transfer seminars and workshops to promote and build skill around:
 - aquatic resource monitoring methods and design, analyzing National Aquatic Resource Surveys data for use in national and regional reports.
 - innovative techniques for using probability-derived monitoring data to address state or Tribal water management program priorities.
 - approaches for combining aquatic resource monitoring data collected with different field protocols or in different resource types to support alternative means of implementing the National Aquatic Resource Surveys or on field methods from National Aquatic Resource Surveys more generally.
 - improving administrative, technical and logistical aspects of monitoring program design and implementation at multiple scales.
- Cross-resource dialogue on design and implementation innovations to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of state, regional and national monitoring and assessment of the Nation's water resources.
 - Communication approaches and training materials that support the technical training workshops and communicate National Aquatic Resource Surveys results.

National Priority Area II: State, Tribal and Territorial Data Management and Data Sharing Training Workshops in Support of CWA Section 303(d), CWA Section 305(b), TMDLs and Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment

- Organization and administration of training workshops to educate state, Tribal, territorial and other stakeholder personnel on system/tools to support implementation of the 303(d) Vision.
- Written report that identifies training gaps and needs for state, Tribal, territorial and federal agency personnel.

National Priority Area III: Training Workshops on Recreational Waters or Beach Monitoring Programs:

- Training workshops related to the recreational waters or beach monitoring programs.

- Summary document that includes abstracts and copies of any presentations given.

National Priority Area IV: Nonpoint Source Technical Support for Tribes

- Number of Tribes engaged in nonpoint source technical exchange opportunities during project period.
- Number of Tribes receiving direct TA during project period.
- Number of Tribes attending training events during project period.
- Number of other agencies/programs collaborating in the delivery of nonpoint source trainings.

National Priority Area V: Training Workshop on Fish Monitoring and Advisory Programs:

- Training workshop related to the fish monitoring and advisory programs.
- Summary document that includes abstracts and copies of any presentations given.

Outcomes (objectives/goals) are the result, effect, or consequence that will occur from carrying out an environmental program or activity that is related to an environmental or programmatic goal or objective. Outcomes are used as a way to gauge a project’s performance. Outcomes may be environmental, behavioral, health-related, or programmatic in nature.

Outcomes must be quantitative and may not necessarily be achieved within an assistance agreement funding period. Outcomes may be short- term (changes in learning, knowledge, attitude, or skills), intermediate (changes in behavior, practice, or decisions), or long-term (changes in condition of the natural resource).

Examples of anticipated outcomes from the assistance agreements to be awarded under this announcement include, but are not limited to:

National Priority Area I: State and Tribal Aquatic Resource Monitoring Technical Training and Capacity Building Workshops:

- Increased awareness of how to develop and use information from probability monitoring designs.
- Improved quality of National Aquatic Resource Surveys data and analyses.
- Increased consistency and comparability among national, state, interstate and Tribal monitoring and assessment techniques supporting a national integration of multi-scale water resource surveys.

National Priority Area II: State, Tribal and Territorial Data Management and Data Sharing Training Workshops in Support of CWA Section 303(d), CWA Section 305(b), TMDLs and Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment

- Improved CWA 303(d), CWA 305(b) and TMDL reporting, including the transition from paper to an electronic process.
- More effective and transparent demonstration of environmental progress in water quality protection and restoration.
- Reduced reporting burden on states and Tribes.

- More timely submittal and review of CWA 303(d) data.

National Priority Area III: Training Workshops on Recreational Waters or Beach Monitoring Programs:

- Increased capacity of states and Tribes to reduce illnesses caused by exposure to pathogens and/or other contaminants in recreational waters or beaches.
- Improved understanding of latest developments in monitoring methods, techniques and results for beaches and other recreational waters.
- Enhanced coordination among states, Tribes and federal agencies on notification methods to ensure protection of human health, including vulnerable and/or disadvantaged communities.

National Priority Area IV: Nonpoint Source Technical Support for Tribes

- Strengthened intertribal relationships.
- Increased awareness among Tribal nonpoint source programs about other Tribal nonpoint source management approaches.
- More Tribes successfully securing financial assistance to implement priority projects.
- Increased Tribal staff capacity to achieve nonpoint source management goals.
- Tribal program has well-integrated support from the EPA and Federal Emergency Management Agency to achieve nonpoint source WQ outcomes at watershed scale.

National Priority Area V: Training Workshop on Fish Monitoring and Advisory Programs:

- Increased capacity of states and Tribes to more effectively implement programs to protect human health from effects of consuming contaminated fish caught in local waters.
- Improved understanding of latest developments in monitoring methods and contaminants for fish and shellfish advisory programs.
- Enhanced coordination among states, Tribes and federal agencies on notification methods to ensure protection of human health, including vulnerable and/or disadvantaged communities.

As part of the application, applicants should describe how the project will result in the protection of water and/or wetland resources and link the anticipated outputs and outcomes to the agency's Strategic Plan. Further information is in Section IV.C, CONTENT OF APPLICATION SUBMISSION, of this funding opportunity. Additional information regarding the EPA's definition of environmental results in terms of outputs and outcomes can be found at [EPA Order 5700.7A1: EPA's Policy for Environmental Results under EPA Assistance Agreements](#).

E. 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 [the 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 in Section VII to obtain the provisions.

II. AWARD INFORMATION

A. AMOUNT OF FUNDING

The total amount of expected federal funding available under this announcement is approximately \$2,100,000, depending on agency funding levels and other applicable considerations. It is anticipated that up to five awards will be made under this announcement and the awards will be funded incrementally. The following are the expected total award amounts for each of the five National Priority Activities:

- One award for the State and Tribal Aquatic Resource Monitoring Technical Training and Capacity Building Workshops (National Priority Area I) will be incrementally funded for a total of \$550,000 with a five-year project period.
- One award for the State, Tribal and Territorial Data Management and Data Sharing Training Workshops (National Priority Area II) in support of CWA Section 303(d), CWA Section 305(b), TMDLs and water quality monitoring and assessment (National Priority Area II). The award is anticipated to be incrementally funded for a total of \$450,000 over the five-year project period.
- One award for Training Workshops on Recreational Waters and Beach Monitoring Programs (National Priority Area III) will be incrementally funded for a total of \$400,000 with a six-year project period.
- One award for Nonpoint Source Technical Support for Tribes (National Priority Area IV). The award is anticipated to be incrementally funded for a total of \$500,000 with a five-year project period.
- One award for Training Workshops on Fish Monitoring and Advisory Programs (National Priority Area V). The award is anticipated to be incrementally funded for a total of \$200,000 with a four-year project period.

The actual award amounts and number of projects awarded under each of the National Priority Areas described in Section I may differ from the estimated amounts depending upon the number of meritorious applications received, agency priorities and funding availability. In addition, the EPA reserves the right to increase or decrease (including decreasing to zero) the total number and amount of awards under each National Priority Area, or change the ratio of awards among the National Priority Areas.

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

The EPA reserves the right to make no awards under this announcement. In addition, the EPA reserves the right to make additional awards under this announcement, consistent with agency policy and guidance, if additional funding becomes available after the original selections are made. Any additional selections for awards will be made no later than six months after the original selection decisions.

Awards may be fully or incrementally funded, as appropriate, based on funding availability, satisfactory performance and other applicable considerations.

B. TYPE OF FUNDING

The EPA intends to award cooperative agreements under this solicitation. Cooperative agreements provide for substantial involvement between the EPA Project Officer and the selected applicant(s) in the performance of the work supported. Although the EPA will negotiate precise terms and conditions relating to substantial involvement as part of the award process, the anticipated substantial federal involvement for these projects may include:

- close monitoring of the successful applicant's performance to verify the results proposed by the applicant;
- collaboration during performance of the scope of work;
- in accordance with 2 CFR 200.317 and 2 CFR 200.318, review of proposed procurement;
- approving qualifications of key personnel (the EPA will not select employees or contractors employed by the award recipient); and
- review and comment on reports prepared under the cooperative agreement (the final decision on the content of reports rests with the recipient).

The 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.

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

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

A. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

States, local governments, federally recognized Indian Tribes, intertribal consortia, interstate agencies, territories, possessions of the U.S. (including the District of Columbia), public and private universities and colleges, hospitals, laboratories and public or private non-profit institutions¹ are eligible to apply. Individuals and for-profit entities are not eligible. 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(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that lobby are not eligible for the EPA funding as provided in the Lobbying Disclosure Act, 2 U.S.C. 1611.

¹ 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 nonprofit organization(s) as defined by 2 CFR 200.1, public or nonprofit Institutions of Higher Education are, nevertheless, eligible to submit applications under this funding opportunity. 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.

The term “interstate agency” is defined in CWA Section 502(2) as “an agency of two or more states established by or pursuant to an agreement or compact approved by the Congress, or any other agency of two or more states, having substantial powers or duties pertaining to the control of pollution as determined and approved by the Administrator.” An intertribal consortium is a partnership between two or more Tribes that is authorized by the governing bodies of those Tribes to apply for and receive assistance. (See 40 CFR 35.502.) The intertribal consortium is eligible only if the consortium demonstrates that all of its members meet the eligibility requirements and authorize the consortium to apply for and receive assistance in accordance with 40 CFR 35.504 at the time of application submission. An intertribal consortium must submit with its application to the EPA adequate documentation of the existence of the partnership and the authorization of the consortium by its members to apply for and receive the grant (see 40 CFR 35.504.) Non-profit applicants may be asked to provide documentation that they meet the definition of a non-profit organization.

B. COST SHARING/MATCH REQUIREMENTS

No cost-share/match is required under this announcement.

If an applicant includes voluntary cost-share/match the non-federal cost share/match must be for eligible and allowable project costs. Cost share/matching funds are considered grant funds and are included in the total award amount and must be used for the reasonable and necessary expenses of carrying out the workplan. Non-federal cost share/match may be provided in cash or can come from in-kind contributions, such as the use of volunteers and/or donated time, equipment, and expertise, subject to the regulations governing matching fund requirements at 2 CFR 200.306 as applicable. In-kind contributions often include salaries or other verifiable costs, and this value must be carefully documented. In the case of salaries, applicants may use either minimum wage or fair market value. All grant funds are subject to federal audit and are subject to the regulations governing cost share/matching fund requirements at [2 CFR 200.306](#). Any restrictions on the use of grant funds (examples of funding restrictions are outlined in Section III.C of this announcement) also apply to the use of cost share/matching funds. Other federal grants may not be used as cost share/match without specific statutory authority.

C. THRESHOLD ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

These are requirements that if not met by the time of application submission will result in elimination of the application from consideration for funding. Only applications that meet **all** of these criteria will be evaluated against the ranking factors in Section V of the announcement. Applicants deemed ineligible for funding consideration 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.
2. Each application submitted under this announcement must address **only one** of the National Priority Areas (Area I, II, III, IV and V) listed in Section I.B. Applicants may submit more than one application package under this announcement if each application is separately submitted and is for a different project. Applications must address **only one** National Priority Area. The cover page of each application package must clearly indicate the National Priority Area addressed.

Applications that address more than one National Priority Area will be deemed ineligible and will not be reviewed.

3. Applications must substantially comply with the application submission instructions and requirements set forth in Section IV of this solicitation or else they will be rejected. However, where a page limit is expressed in Section IV with respect to the application, or parts thereof, pages in excess of the page limitation will not be reviewed. Applicants are advised that readability is of paramount importance and should take precedence in application format, including selecting a legible font type and size for use in the application.
4. Applications must be for projects that improve water quality by conducting or promoting the coordination and acceleration of research, investigations, experiments, training, demonstrations, surveys and studies relating to the causes, effects, extent, prevention, reduction and elimination of water pollution. Implementation projects are not eligible for funding under this announcement.
5. Demonstration projects must involve new or experimental technologies, methods, or approaches, where the results of the project will be disseminated so that others can benefit from the knowledge gained in the demonstration project. A project that is accomplished through the performance of routine, traditional, or established practices, or a project that is simply intended to carry out a task rather than transfer information or advance the state of knowledge, however worthwhile the project might be, is not a demonstration and all or parts of the application will be eliminated from consideration. Such projects are implementation projects and are not eligible for funding under this announcement. Individual project tasks that are for program implementation are not eligible for funding.
6. An applicant may submit an application requesting up to a maximum federal amount for each National Priority Area (Area I, II, III, IV and V). If an applicant submits an application that requests more than maximum federal amount for the National Priority Area, it will be rejected from further consideration. Applications for awards under National Priority Area I cannot exceed \$550,000 in federal funds. Applications for awards under National Priority Area II cannot exceed \$450,000 in federal funds. Applications for awards under National Priority Area III cannot exceed \$400,000 in federal funds. Applications under National Priority Area IV cannot exceed \$500,000 in federal funds. Applications under Priority Area V cannot exceed \$200,000 in federal funds.
7. In addition, initial applications must be submitted through [Grants.gov](https://www.Grants.gov) as stated in Section IV of this solicitation (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 solicitation. Applicants are responsible for following the submission instructions in Section IV of this solicitation to ensure that their application is timely submitted. Please note that applicants experiencing technical issues with submitting through [Grants.gov](https://www.Grants.gov) should follow the instructions provided in Section IV, which include both the requirement to contact Grants.gov and email a full application to the EPA prior to the deadline.
8. Applications submitted outside of Grants.gov will be deemed ineligible without further consideration unless the applicant can clearly demonstrate that it was due to the EPA mishandling or technical problems associated with [Grants.gov](https://www.Grants.gov) or [SAM.gov](https://www.SAM.gov). An applicant's failure to timely submit their application through Grants.gov because they did not timely or

properly register in [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov) or [Grants.gov](https://grants.gov) will not be considered an acceptable reason to consider a submission outside of Grants.gov.

9. 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.

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

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

A. FORM OF APPLICATION SUBMISSION

a. Requirement to Submit Through Grants.gov and Limited Exception Procedures

Applicants must apply electronically through [Grants.gov](https://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. Submission Instructions

1. SAM.gov (System for Award Management) Registration Instructions

Organizations applying to this funding opportunity must have an active SAM.gov registration. If you have never done business with the Federal Government, you will need to register your organization in [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov). If you do not have a SAM.gov account, then you will create an account using login.gov to complete your SAM.gov registration. SAM.gov registration is FREE. The process for entity registrations includes obtaining Unique Entity ID (UEI), a 12-character alphanumeric ID assigned an entity by SAM.gov, and requires assertions, representations and certifications and other information about your organization. Please review the [Entity Registration Checklist](#) for details on this process.

If you have done business with the Federal Government previously, you can check your entity status using your government issued UEI to determine if your registration is active. SAM.gov requires you renew your registration every 365 days to keep it active.

Please note that SAM.gov registration is different than obtaining a UEI only. Obtaining a UEI only validates your organization's legal business name and address. Please review the [Frequently Asked Question](#) on the difference for additional details.

Organizations should ensure that their SAM.gov registration includes a current e-Business (EBiz) point of contact name and email address. The EBiz point of contact is critical for Grants.gov Registration and system functionality.

Contact the [Federal Service Desk](#) for help with your SAM.gov account, to resolve technical issues or chat with a help desk agent: (866) 606-8220. The Federal Service desk hours of operation are Monday - Friday 8am - 8pm ET.

2. [Grants.gov Registration Instructions](#)

Once your SAM.gov account is active, you must register in Grants.gov. Grants.gov will electronically receive your organization information, such as e-Business (EBiz) point of contact email address and UEI. Organizations applying to this funding opportunity must have an active Grants.gov registration. Grants.gov registration is FREE. If you have never applied for a federal grant before, please review the [Grants.gov Applicant Registration](#) instructions. As part of the Grants.gov registration process, the EBiz point of contact is the only person that can affiliate and assign applicant roles to members of an organization. In addition, at least one person must be assigned as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR). Only person(s) with the AOR role can submit applications in Grants.gov. Please review the Intro to [Grants.gov-Understanding User Roles](#) and [Learning Workspace - User Roles and Workspace Actions](#) for details on this important process.

Please note that 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 application submission deadline.

Contact [Grants.gov](#) for assistance at 1-800-518-4726 or support@grants.gov to resolve technical issues with Grants.gov. 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. The Grants.gov Support Center is available 24 hours a day 7 days a week, excluding federal holidays.

3. [Application Submission Process](#)

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 associated with this opportunity.

The electronic submission of your application to this funding opportunity must be made by an official representative of your organization who is registered with Grants.gov and is authorized to sign applications for Federal financial assistance. If the submit button is grayed out, it may be because you do not have the appropriate role to submit in your organization. Contact your organization's EBiz point of contact or contact Grants.gov for assistance at 1-800-518-4726 or support@grants.gov.

Applicants need to ensure that the Authorized Organization Representative (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.gov account. If not, the application may be deemed ineligible.

4. Application Submission Deadline

Your organization's AOR must submit your complete application package electronically to the EPA through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) no later than July 17, 2024 11:59 PM ET. Please allow for enough time to successfully submit your application and allow for unexpected errors that may require you to resubmit.

Applications submitted through Grants.gov will be time and date stamped electronically. Please note that successful submission of your application through Grants.gov does not necessarily mean your application is eligible for award. Any application submitted after the application deadline time and date deadline will be deemed ineligible and not be considered.

c. Technical Issues with Submission

If applicants experience technical issues during the submission of an application that they are unable to resolve, follow these procedures before the application deadline date:

1. Contact Grants.gov Support Center **before** the application deadline date.
2. Document the Grants.gov ticket/case number.
3. Send an email with the EPA-OW-OWOW-24-03 in the subject line to Connie Cahanap at OWOW-RFP@epa.gov **before** the application deadline time and date and must include the following:
 - a. Grants.gov ticket/case number(s)
 - b. Description of the issue
 - c. The entire application package in PDF format.

Without this information, the EPA may not be able to consider applications submitted outside of Grants.gov. Any application submitted after the application deadline time and date deadline will be deemed ineligible and not be considered.

Please note that successful submission through Grants.gov or email does not necessarily mean your application is eligible for award.

The EPA will make decisions concerning acceptance of each application submitted outside of Grants.gov on a case-by-case basis. The EPA will only consider accepting applications that were unable to submit through Grants.gov due to [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) or relevant [SAM.gov](https://www.sam.gov) system issues or for unforeseen exigent circumstances, such as extreme weather interfering with internet access. Failure of an applicant to submit prior to the application submission deadline date because they did not properly or timely register in SAM.gov or Grants.gov is not an acceptable reason to justify acceptance of an application outside of Grants.gov.

d. 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. Project Narrative (Project Narrative Attachment Form) prepared as described in Section IV of the announcement.

Optional Documents:

6. Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable)
The Indirect Cost Rate Agreement is not included in the twenty (20) page single-spaced Project Narrative page limit. See [Indirect Cost Guidance for Recipients of EPA Assistance Agreements](#) for additional information about indirect cost rates. (Use Other Attachment Form)
7. Letters of Commitment, if applicable. (Use Other Attachment Form)
8. Biographical sketches of major project managers, support staff members, or other major project participants for the proposed projects. (Use Other Attachment Form)

Applications submitted through [Grants.gov](#) will be time and date stamped electronically. If you have not received a confirmation of receipt from the EPA (not from [Grants.gov](#)) within 30 days of the application deadline, please contact Connie Cahanap at 202-566-1382. Failure to do so may result in your application not being reviewed.

B. CONTENT OF APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Applicants should read the following section very carefully and address all requirements.

All application packages must include the following documents:

1. Signed Standard Form 424 (SF-424), Application for Federal Assistance.

Complete the form. There are no attachments.

2. Standard Form 424A (SF-424A), Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs.

Complete the form. The total amount of federal funding requested for the project period should be shown on line 5(e) and on line 6(k) of the SF 424A. If indirect costs are included, the amount of indirect costs should be entered on line 6(j). The indirect cost rate (i.e., a percentage), the base (e.g., personnel costs and fringe benefits) and the total indirect amount should also be indicated on line 22. In Section B: Budget Categories row 1, column (e) should be filled out for federal funds, row 1 column (f) should be filled out for any non-federal cost-share/match, and row 5 should be filled out for total project costs (federal funds, any non-federal cost share/match and project total).

3. EPA Key Contacts Form 5700-54.

Complete the form. Attach additional forms as needed.

4. EPA Form 4700-4, Pre-Award Compliance Review Report.

Complete the form. There are no attachments.

5. Project Narrative (Project Narrative Attachment Form).

The Project Narrative, items a-e below, must be limited to no more than twenty (20) typewritten single-spaced 8.5 x 11-inch pages (a page is one side of paper) (**except** for documents specifically excluded from the page limit as noted below). 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 take precedence in selection of an appropriate font for use in the Project Narrative. **Additional pages beyond the twenty (20) page limit will not be considered.** The Project Narrative will be reviewed up to the equivalent of the twenty (20) single-spaced page limit; excess pages will not be reviewed. Supporting materials (e.g., biographical sketches, letters of commitment and negotiated Indirect Cost Rate agreement, if applicable, etc.) are not included within the page limit for the Project Narrative. Any documentation pertaining to Quality Assurance/Quality Control is also not included in the page limit for the Project Narrative. The Project Narrative must be typewritten and must include the information listed below in items a-e. If a particular item is not applicable, clearly state this in the Project Narrative.

a. Cover Page (included in the page limit) including:

- i. Project title (the project title should reflect the main project outcome/objective and should be 15 words or less);
- ii. Name of applicant
- iii. National Priority Area from Section I.B addressed in the application (**applications must address only one National Priority Area per application package**);
- iv. Key personnel and contact information (i.e., e-mail address and phone number);
- v. Total project cost (specify the amount of federal funds requested and the total project cost); and
- vi. Abstract/project summary (recommended 75 words or less): Provide a brief description of the proposed project.

b. Project Description containing:

- i. Technical Approach – Describe how the application addresses one of the National Priority Areas (Area I, II, III, IV and V) described in Section I.B of this announcement. Applicants must address only one National Priority Area per complete application package. Outline the steps you will take to plan, prepare and conduct the training workshops and technical assistance and describe the roles and responsibilities of the applicant in carrying out the training workshops and technical assistance. Include a description of the approach for consulting with interested stakeholders to determine the training priorities. Applicants should include in their description how they propose to deliver in-person trainings under normal circumstances and how they will deliver the trainings if in-person training is not possible due to impacts related natural disasters or public health emergencies (e.g., under quarantine situations, if social distancing is required in your locale). Alternative trainings may include switching from in-person formats to online only or reducing the number of participants in each training. If travel assistance is to be provided for non-federal attendees, describe the process for selecting non-federal attendees who may receive travel assistance.

- ii. Environmental Results and Measuring Progress –
 - a) Stated Objective/Link to the EPA Strategic Plan – Describe the objective of the project (outcomes) and products (outputs) and the linkage to the EPA’s FY 2022 – FY 2026 Strategic Plan– Goal 5 - Ensure Clean and Safe Water for All Communities: Provide clean and safe water for all communities and protect our nation’s waterbodies from degradation specifically Objective 5.2: Protect and Restore Waterbodies and Watersheds (see Section I.D, ENVIRONMENTAL RESULTS AND LINKAGE TO STRATEGIC PLAN, of this announcement);
 - b) Results of Activities (Outputs) - List the anticipated products/results which are expected to be achieved from accomplishment of the project activities and an approach for tracking your progress toward achieving the expected project output(s) (examples of outputs can be found in Section I.D of this announcement); and
 - c) Anticipated Environmental Improvement (Outcomes) - List the anticipated environmental improvements to be accomplished as a result of the project activities. These improvements are changes or benefits to the environment which are a result from the accomplishment of project outputs. Describe an approach for tracking your progress toward achieving the expected project outcome(s) (examples of outcomes can be found in Section I.D of this announcement).
 - iii. Milestone Schedule – Provide a projected milestone schedule that covers each year of the proposed project period. The milestone schedule should provide a breakout of the project activities into phases with associated tasks and a timeframe for completion of tasks. The project start date will follow award acceptance by the successful applicant. Include an approach to ensure that awarded funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner.
 - iv. Transfer of Results – Provide a brief description of how the applicant will transfer the results and/or methods to interested stakeholders.
 - v. Quality Assurance/Quality Control (QA/QC) (not counted in 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: Development of a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) is required of all the EPA assistance agreements that fund data collection and assessment and information analysis. The cost of the QAPP development should be included in the proposed budget.
- c. **Detailed Budget Narrative:** Provide a detailed budget and estimated funding amounts for each project task. Please see [the EPA’s Budget Development Guidance](#) which includes a sample budget. 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”. All subaward funding should be located under the “other” cost category.

Applicants must itemize costs related to personnel, fringe benefits, contractual costs, travel, equipment, supplies, other direct costs, indirect costs and total cost. All subaward funding should be located in the “other” cost category. Participant support costs are captured in the

“other” cost category and may include, for example, training fees or travel assistance for non-federal conference, training or workshop participants. Total costs must include both federal and any voluntary cost-share/matching (non-federal) components. If applicable, the budget narrative for the travel cost category must include travel of applicant employees. Describe itemized costs in sufficient detail for the EPA to determine the reasonableness and the allowability of costs for each project component/task. Helpful tips on writing a budget may be found in the [Interim General Budget Development Guidance for Applicants and Recipients](#).

d. Programmatic Capability/Specialized Experience

- i. Staff Expertise/Qualifications - Provide a list of key staff and briefly describe their expertise/qualifications and knowledge and resources or 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). Annotated resumes of the applicant’s key staff are also encouraged but not required, should be provided as attachments, and are not counted in the page limit.
 - ii. Organizational Experience - Provide a brief description of the applicant’s organization and experience related to the proposed project, and the organization’s infrastructure as it relates to its ability to successfully implement the proposed project.
 - iii. Specialized Experience – For National Priority Area I, include a description of your experience working with and convening state, Tribal and federal agencies to effectively address a range of aquatic resource monitoring needs nationally. For National Priority Area II, include a description of your experience working with and convening state, Tribal and federal agencies responsible for implementing the CWA Section 303(d), CWA Section 305(b) and TMDL programs. For National Priority Area III, include a description of experience working with or organizing meetings for state, Tribal and territorial program personnel as well as federal agencies responsible for implementing the surface water programs that protect human health recreational water and beach monitoring. For National Priority Area IV, include a description of your experience working on nonpoint source programs and convening Tribal CWA personnel as well as federal agencies responsible for implementing the CWA programs. For National Priority Area V, include a description of your experience working with or organizing meetings for state, Tribal and territorial program personnel as well as federal agencies responsible for implementing the surface water programs that protect human health such as fish monitoring and advisory program.
- e. **Past Performance:** Briefly describe federally funded and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include federal grants and cooperative agreements but not federal contracts) that your organization performed within the last three years (no more than five agreements, and preferably the EPA agreements) and:
- i. Describe whether, and how, you were able to successfully complete and manage those agreements.
 - ii. Describe your history of meeting the reporting requirements under those agreements including submitting acceptable final technical reports.

- iii. Describe how you documented and/or reported on whether you were making progress toward 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 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 the EPA files and from current/prior 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 or past reporting information, please indicate this in the application and you will receive a neutral score for these factors (a neutral score is half of the total points available in a subset of possible points). Failure to provide any past performance information, or to include a statement in the applications that you do not have any relevant or available past performance or reporting information, may result in a zero score for these factors (see Section V.A.).

NOTE: The applicant should also provide in its Project Narrative any additional information, to the extent not already identified above, that addresses the selection criteria found in Section V.

C. SUBMISSION DATES AND TIMES

All applications must be received by electronic submission through Grants.gov by **11:59 P.M. ET July 17, 2024**. Late applications will not be considered for funding.

V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

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

A. SELECTION CRITERIA

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

<p>1) Technical Approach (30 points)</p>	<p>Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on the extent and quality to which the application addresses one of the National Priority Areas (Area I, II, III, IV, or V) identified in Section I.B of the announcement. (30 points)</p>
<p>2) Milestone Schedule/ Detailed Budget/Transfer of Results (15 points)</p>	<p>Applications will be evaluated based on the extent and quality to which the application demonstrates each of the following sub-criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The adequacy and completeness of the milestone schedule for project tasks, including timeframes and major milestones to complete significant project tasks. In

	<p>addition, whether there is a clearly articulated approach to ensure that awarded funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner will also be evaluated. (5 points)</p> <p>b) The reasonableness of the budget and estimated funding amounts for each project component/task. Applicants will be evaluated based on the adequacy of the information provided in the detailed budget and whether the proposed costs are reasonable and allowable. (5 points)</p> <p>c) The adequacy of the description on how the applicant will transfer the results and/or methods to interested stakeholders. (5 points)</p>
<p>3) Environmental Results (15 points)</p>	<p>Applications will be evaluated based on each of these subcriteria:</p> <p>a) The extent and quality to which the application demonstrates the potential to achieve environmental results, anticipated outputs and outcomes and how the outputs and outcomes are linked to the EPA’s Strategic Plan (examples of outputs and outcomes can be found in Section I.D of this announcement). (10 points)</p> <p>b) The extent and quality to which the application demonstrates a sound plan for measuring and tracking progress toward achieving the expected outputs and outcomes (examples of outputs and outcomes can be found in Section I.D of this announcement). (5 points)</p>
<p>4) Programmatic Capability/ Specialized Experience (20 points)</p>	<p>Under this criterion, applications will be evaluated based on the applicant’s ability to successfully complete and manage the proposed project taking into account the following subcriteria:</p> <p>a) Organizational experience related to the proposed project and infrastructure as it relates to its ability to successfully implement the proposed project. (10 points)</p> <p>b) Staff experience/qualifications, staff knowledge and resources, or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the project. (5 points)</p> <p>c) Specialized experience applicable to the National Priority Area (Area I, II, III, IV, or V) as described in Section I.B and Section IV.B. (5 points)</p>
<p>5) Past Performance (20 points)</p>	<p>Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on their ability to successfully complete and manage the proposed project taking into account the following factors:</p> <p>a) Past performance in successfully completing and managing federally and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements (an</p>

	<p>assistance agreement is a grant or cooperative agreement and not a contract) performed within the last three years (no more than five, and preferably EPA agreements). (10 points)</p> <p>b) History of meeting reporting requirements under federally and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements (an assistance agreement is a grant or cooperative agreement and not a contract) within the last three years (no more than five, and preferably EPA agreements) and submitting acceptable final technical reports under these agreements. (5 points)</p> <p>c) Extent and quality to which the applicant documented and/or reported on their progress towards achieving the expected results (e.g., outcomes and outputs) under federally and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements (an assistance agreement is a grant or cooperative agreement and not a contract) performed within the last three years (no more than five, and preferably EPA agreements), and if such progress was not being made, whether the applicant adequately documented and/or reported why not. (5 points)</p> <p>Note: In evaluating applicants under items a), b), and c) above, the agency will consider the information supplied by the applicant in its application and may also consider relevant information from other sources including agency files and prior/current grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information provided the by applicant). Applicants who have no relevant or available past performance information will receive a neutral score for these factors (i.e., 5 points for subcriterion a), 2.5 points for subcriterion b) and 2.5 points for subcriterion c)). Failure to provide any past performance information, or to include a statement in your application that you do not have any relevant or available past performance information, may result in a zero score for the factors (i.e., zero points for subcriterion a), zero points for subcriterion b) and zero points for subcriterion c)).</p>
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B. REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

All applications received by the submission deadline will first be screened by the 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.

Panel(s) comprised of the EPA staff and possibly staff from other federal agencies will review the eligible applications by National Priority Area based on the evaluation criteria listed in Section V.A. Five 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 Selection Official(s) who makes the final funding decisions. In making the final funding decisions for each National Priority Area, the Selection Official will consider the application score/ranking. As noted above, while the 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 per area.

VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

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

A. AWARD NOTICES

The EPA anticipates notification to successful applicants will be made via electronic mail by the Competition Chair. 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 Management and Business Operations Division of EPA's Office of Grants and Debarment. Applicants are cautioned that only a grants officer 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 the EPA to make an award to an applicant. The award notice, signed by an EPA grants officer, 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., work plan), which must be approved by EPA, before the grant can officially be awarded. The time between notification of selection and award of a grant can take up to 90 days or longer.

The EPA reserves the right to negotiate and/or adjust the final grant amount and workplan prior to award, as appropriate and consistent with agency policy including [EPA's Policy for Competition of Assistance Agreements, EPA Order 5700.5A1.\(11\)\(c\)](#) An approvable final workplan narrative is required to include:

1. Workplan components to be funded under the assistance agreement.
2. Estimated work years and the estimated funding amounts for each workplan component.
3. Workplan commitments for each workplan component and a timeframe for their accomplishment.
4. Performance evaluation process and reporting.
5. Roles and responsibilities of the recipient and the EPA in carrying out the workplan commitments.

The selected project will be posted on the EPA's website at [Notice of Funding Opportunity Office of Wetlands, Oceans, and Watersheds](#). This website may also contain additional information about this funding opportunity. Deadline extensions or other modifications, if any, will be posted on this website and [Grants.gov](#).

B. COMBINING APPLICATIONS INTO ONE AWARD

If an applicant submits applications for multiple tasks/activities under this competition and is selected for multiple tasks/activities, the EPA may award a single assistance agreement that combines separate proposals for different tasks/activities.

C. ADMINISTRATIVE AND NATIONAL POLICY REQUIREMENTS

The general award and administration process for assistance agreements are governed by the regulations at 2 CFR 200 and 1500, as applicable. A description of the agency's substantial involvement in any cooperative agreement will be included in the terms and conditions of the assistance agreement.

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 remains unchanged from the procedures described at 70 FR 3629, 3630, as indicated in [2 CFR Part 1500, Subpart E](#).

E. 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 project/budget period end date. Recipients will be required to report direct and indirect environmental results from the work accomplished through the award. In negotiating assistance agreements, the EPA will work closely with the recipient to incorporate appropriate performance measures and reporting requirements in the workplan consistent with [2 CFR §200.328](#) Financial Report, [2 CFR 200.329](#) Monitoring and Reporting Program Performance, and 40 CFR Part 45. This includes any problems, issues or difficulties encountered that may affect the quality requirements of the project. The recipient must indicate what if any corrective actions were taken. Award recipients will be required to submit the final report electronically and in hard copy and should include, in addition, a 1-2 page project summary. If travel assistance is provided to selected attendees to attend workshops or trainings, the recipient will be required to provide a report on how participating non-federal attendees benefited from the workshops.

VII. AGENCY CONTACTS

Note to Applicants: In accordance with the EPA's Assistance Agreement Competition Policy (EPA Order 5700.5A1), the EPA staff will not meet with individual applicants to discuss draft proposals, provide informal comments on draft proposals, or provide advice to applicants on how to respond to

ranking criteria. Applicants are responsible for the content of their applications/proposals. However, consistent with the provisions in the announcement, the EPA will respond to written questions from individual applicants regarding threshold eligibility criteria, administrative issues related to the submission of the proposal 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 as soon as possible so that any questions about the solicitation language may be resolved prior to submitting a proposal. In addition, if necessary, the EPA may clarify threshold eligibility issues with applicants prior to making an eligibility determination. Questions about this funding opportunity must be submitted in writing via email and must be received by the Agency Contact provided below by **July 1, 2024**. Written responses will be posted on the EPA's website at [Notice of Funding Opportunity Office of Wetlands, Oceans, and Watersheds](#).

Agency Contact

Concepcion Cahanap

E-mail: OWOW-RFP@epa.gov

VIII. OTHER INFORMATION

A. QUALITY ASSURANCE/QUALITY CONTROL (QA/QC)

Quality Assurance/Quality Control (QA/QC) requirements apply to these grants (see 2 CFR Part 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. Successful applicants should allow sufficient time and resources for this process. The 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. See Section VII, AGENCY CONTACTS for Agency Contact information for referral to an EPA QA/QC staff.

Successful applicants must ensure that all water quality data generated in accordance with an EPA approved Quality Assurance Project Plan, either directly or by subaward, are transmitted into the agency's Water Quality Exchange (WQX) data system (formerly known as STORET) annually or by project completion. When uploading data through WQX or WQXweb, data should be identified as OWOW grant-related by providing project ID **OWOW FY24** in the data submission. More information about WQX and WQXweb, including tutorials, can be found at [the EPA's Water Quality Data webpage](#).

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.