

**AGENCY:** ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA)

**TITLE:** Enhanced Air Quality Monitoring for Communities

**ACTION:** Request for Applications (RFA)

**RFA NUMBER:** EPA-OAR-OAQPS-22-01

**Assistance Listing No:** 66.034

### **IMPORTANT DATES**

December 13, 2021	RFA OPENS
January 11, 2022	INFORMATION SESSION
February 25, 2022	OPTIONAL INTENT TO APPLY
March 18, 2022	LAST DAY TO SUBMIT QUESTIONS
March 25, 2022	RFA CLOSURES – APPLICATIONS DUE
August-September 2022	ANTICIPATED NOTIFICATION OF SELECTION
October-November 2022	ANTICIPATED AWARD

Application packages must be submitted electronically to EPA through Grants.gov ([www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov)) no later than **March 25, 2022, at 11:59 p.m. (ET)** in order to be considered for funding.

To allow for efficient management of the competitive process, EPA requests submittal of an informal notice of an Intent to Apply by February 25, 2022 to [AirMonitoring@epa.gov](mailto:AirMonitoring@epa.gov). Please include your approximate funding amount, set-aside preference (if applicable), and one to two sentences about the scope of your project. Submission of an Intent to Apply is optional; it is a process management tool that will allow EPA to better anticipate the total staff time required for efficient review, evaluation, and selection of submitted applications. Potential applicants do not need to re-submit their notice of intent to apply if they submitted one prior to the earlier deadline.

### **COVID-19 UPDATE**

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

**SUMMARY:** Pursuant to the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP), this notice announces the availability of funds and solicits applications from eligible entities to conduct ambient air monitoring of pollutants of greatest concern in communities with environmental and health outcome disparities stemming from pollution and the COVID-19 pandemic. EPA will award funds to support community and local efforts to monitor their own air quality and to promote air quality monitoring partnerships between communities and tribal, state, and local governments.

**FUNDING/AWARDS:** The total estimated funding for this competitive opportunity is approximately **\$20,000,000**. Approximately \$2 million dollars of this amount will be awarded to tribal governments under a tribal government set-aside, and approximately \$2 million will be

awarded to eligible community-based organizations under a community-based organization set-aside.

Overall, EPA anticipates awarding a total of approximately 50-70 assistance agreements (cooperative agreements or grants) from this announcement, subject to availability of funds, the quality of applications received, agency priorities, and other applicable considerations. EPA anticipates awarding approximately 20-30 assistance agreements ranging in value from \$25,000 to \$100,000 (*i.e.*, “Small Grants”) and 30-40 assistance agreements ranging in value from \$100,001-\$500,000 (*i.e.*, “Large Grants”). EPA may increase or decrease the total funding or set-aside amounts based on the number of meritorious applications received, agency priorities, funding availability, and other applicable considerations.

**NOTE:** If you intend to name a contractor (including an individual consultant or equipment vendor) or a subrecipient as a project partner or otherwise in your application, EPA recommends that you carefully review, and comply with, the directions contained in the “Contracts and Subawards” clause that can be accessed under Section I.F. of this RFA. and at [www.epa.gov/grants/epa-solicitation-clauses](http://www.epa.gov/grants/epa-solicitation-clauses). Refer to [EPA’s Best Practice Guide for Procuring Services, Supplies, and Equipment Under EPA Assistance Agreements](#) and [EPA’s Subaward Policy](#) and supplemental Frequent Questions for additional guidance. Applicants must demonstrate that named contractors (including individual consultants and equipment vendors) were selected in compliance with the competitive requirements of the Procurement Standards in 2 CFR Part 200 as interpreted in EPA guidance and/or that named subrecipients meet the eligibility requirements in EPA’s Subaward Policy for EPA to consider their qualifications and role in the proposed project.

**INFORMATION SESSION:** EPA will host a webinar to discuss this RFA. Participants will have the opportunity to have their questions answered by EPA in a public forum. Pre-registration is not required.

**Date:** Tuesday, January 11, 2022

**Time:** 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM EST

**More Information:** <https://www.epa.gov/grants/enhanced-air-quality-monitoring-communities>

Approximately one week after the information session, EPA will post the webinar recording and slides on <https://www.epa.gov/grants/enhanced-air-quality-monitoring-communities>.

**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS:** Applicants are encouraged to review the questions and answers document for further information about this grant program and RFA, available at <https://www.epa.gov/grants/enhanced-air-quality-monitoring-communities>. EPA will respond to questions from applicants regarding:

- Threshold eligibility criteria;
- Administrative issues related to the submission of the application;
- Requests for clarification about any of the language or provisions in the announcement; and,
- Compliance with regulatory requirements and EPA guidance for competition for

procurement of professional services and equipment purchases and entering into proper subawards.

Please note that EPA will **not** respond to questions from applicants seeking help in drafting applications. Questions must be submitted via email to [AirMonitoring@epa.gov](mailto:AirMonitoring@epa.gov) before **March 18, 2022**. EPA will answer relevant questions and post them in the Question/Answer document **the following week**, while the RFA is open, at: <https://www.epa.gov/grants/enhanced-air-quality-monitoring-communities>. All applicants are encouraged to check the document regularly. EPA will post the final questions and answers document no later than March 22, 2022.

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# I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

## A. Background

Under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP), Congress provided EPA with a one-time supplemental appropriation of \$100 million to address health outcome disparities from pollution and the COVID-19 pandemic. EPA will make a portion of these funds available to enhance air quality monitoring in and near underserved communities across the United States. EPA is competing \$20 million of these funds for projects to monitor air pollutants of greatest concern in communities with adverse health outcome disparities through the process outlined in this solicitation. EPA will award funds to eligible entities to support community and local efforts to monitor their own air quality and to promote air quality monitoring partnerships between communities and tribal, state, and local governments.

## B. Scope of Work

The scope of work described in this section applies to all the funding available under this competition.

EPA is soliciting applications from eligible entities, as described in Section III.A., for projects designed to monitor air pollutants of greatest concern in communities with disproportionate and adverse health outcomes. EPA's objective in issuing these awards is to enable communities to monitor their own air quality and to promote monitoring partnerships between communities and tribal, state, and/or local governments that:

- Leverage existing air quality monitoring expertise;
- Expand use of community monitoring advisory groups and other approaches that give the community a voice in the monitoring of their air quality; and
- Build a foundation of trusting relationships and enhanced understanding from which sustainable solutions to community air pollution problems can be found.

Applications should include detailed, well thought-out projects for enhancing air quality monitoring, including but not limited to: building capacity and knowledge of local-scale, real-time air quality; measuring levels of certain air pollutants; collecting data in situations where there is persistent and complex air pollution (*e.g.*, wildfires); or advancing air monitoring system resiliency.

This is a one-time infusion of funds, so projects must be completed within three years without the expectation of additional resources and/or funds to maintain and operate equipment beyond this timeframe.

### **Pollutant Scope**

To be considered for funding under this RFA, each application must address at least one of the following:

- Carbon Monoxide
- Lead
- Nitrogen Dioxide

- Ozone, including ozone precursors
  - Precursors for ozone collected in the Photochemical Assessment Monitoring Stations (PAMS) Program including oxides of nitrogen, (NO, NO<sub>2</sub>, NO<sub>x</sub>, NO<sub>y</sub>) volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and carbonyls. A list of ozone precursors can be found in the Technical Assistance Document for Sampling and Analysis of Ozone Precursors for the Photochemical Assessment Monitoring Stations Program, Revision 2 – April 2019. This is available at: [https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2019-11/documents/pams\\_technical\\_assistance\\_document\\_revision\\_2\\_april\\_2019.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2019-11/documents/pams_technical_assistance_document_revision_2_april_2019.pdf)
  - Additional ozone precursors such as methane.
- Sulfur Dioxide
- Particle Pollution (ultrafine, PM<sub>2.5</sub>, or PM<sub>10</sub>), including aerosol composition and PM precursors
  - Aerosol composition is determined by the Chemical Speciation Network (CSN). A full list of the CSN reported parameters is available at: <https://www.epa.gov/amtic/chemical-speciation-network-parameters-reported-air-quality-system-aqs>.
  - PM precursors including ammonia, sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>), oxides of nitrogen, CO, and VOCs.
- Hazardous Air Pollutants (HAPs), commonly referred to as air toxics. A full list of HAPs is available at: <https://www.epa.gov/haps/initial-list-hazardous-air-pollutants-modifications#mods>.

Proposed projects cannot include activities that address pollutants that are not listed above.

### **Air Monitoring Technology**

To provide timely air quality information in communities, applicants should use commercially available technology and/or proven methods to monitor these air pollutants. For example, projects must utilize commercially available air quality monitoring equipment (*e.g.*, a continuous PM<sub>2.5</sub> monitor), EPA procedures (*e.g.*, [EPA's Compendium of Methods for the Determination of Toxic Organic Compounds in Ambient Air](#)), and/or other air quality methods that have been previously researched and documented in literature. EPA will not fund projects that involve the research, development, demonstration or evaluation of new air monitoring methods or equipment under this RFA.

### **Community Partnerships and Engagement**

EPA encourages eligible entities as identified in Section III.A. of this RFA to partner with local communities to monitor air pollutants of greatest concern in communities with disproportionate and adverse health outcomes. EPA will evaluate how community partners and supporting organizations will participate in or directly assist in the design and performance of the project, or how obtaining support from project partners will allow the applicant to more effectively perform the project under criterion 2 of Section V.A. of this RFA. Community engagement and partnership efforts may engage various organizations representing a broad spectrum of the community; examples include grassroots, neighborhood, school, faith-based, city council, business, local government, and other organizations. Applications that demonstrate recent involvement of project partners and community members working together on past projects may be evaluated more favorably than others. Applicants are encouraged to include letters of

commitment that demonstrate strong, long-term involvement throughout the proposed project from a variety of project partners. While EPA is encouraging partnerships, only eligible entities as described in Section III.A. of this RFA can directly apply for an assistance agreement under this competition. Additionally, as indicated earlier, financial transactions with partners that will be financed with EPA funding must comply with applicable regulatory requirements and EPA policies and guidance. Any partners named in the application are subject to the “Contracts and Subawards” clause that can be accessed under Section IV.d. of the additional EPA Solicitation Clauses: [www.epa.gov/grants/epa-solicitation-clauses](http://www.epa.gov/grants/epa-solicitation-clauses).

Projects must address engagement with relevant communities to ensure their meaningful participation with respect to the design, planning, and performance of the proposed project. All selected projects must disseminate collected data and/or other observations to interested stakeholders in a practicable amount of time throughout the lifetime of the project. EPA will evaluate community engagement under criterion 2.B. of Section V.A. of this RFA.

### **Environmental Justice and Underserved Communities**

Environmental justice (EJ) is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies. Fair treatment means no group of people should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, governmental and commercial operations or policies. Meaningful involvement means people have an opportunity to participate in decisions about activities that may affect their environment and/or health; the public's contribution can influence the regulatory agency's decision; community concerns will be considered in the decision-making process; and decision makers will seek out and facilitate the involvement of those potentially affected. EPA will evaluate environmental justice issues under criterion 3 of Section V.A. of this RFA.

For purposes of this competition and the evaluation of applications, “underserved communities” means people/communities of color, low income, tribal and indigenous populations, and other vulnerable populations such as the elderly, children, and those whose pre-existing medical conditions make them vulnerable to the adverse effects of air pollution.

Applications will be evaluated based on the extent to which they demonstrate how the project will effectively address disproportionate health outcomes from pollution and the COVID–19 pandemic that have affected and/or currently affect people/communities of color, low income, tribal, and indigenous populations, and if applicable other vulnerable populations such as the elderly, children, and those with pre-existing medical conditions. Adverse impacts may be the result of the COVID-19 pandemic, industrial, governmental, commercial and/or other actions and include the accompanying economic challenges of such impacts.

In addressing these criteria, as applicable, applicants should describe how the project benefits these communities and/or populations including those that have experienced a lack of resources or other impediments to addressing the adverse impacts described above. Additionally, applicants should describe the extent to which the project addresses engagement with these

communities and/or populations to ensure their meaningful participation with respect to the design, planning, and performance of the project.

NOTE: Disproportionate health outcomes from pollution and the COVID–19 pandemic, as well as the accompanying economic challenges of such impacts, may result when greater pollution burdens or consequences, and the impact of them, are more likely to affect people/communities of color, low income, tribal and indigenous populations and vulnerable populations including those identified above. The impacts may result from various factors including but not limited to being a function of historical trends and policy decisions.

Factors that may indicate disproportionate and adverse impacts as referenced above include:

- Differential proximity and exposure to environmental hazards;
- Greater susceptibility to adverse effects from environmental hazards (due to genetic predisposition, age, chronic medical conditions, lack of health care access, the COVID-19 pandemic, or poor nutrition);
- Unique environmental exposures because of practices linked to cultural background or socioeconomic status (e.g., subsistence fishing or farming);
- Cumulative effects from multiple stressors;
- Reduced ability to effectively participate in decision-making processes due to language barriers, inability to access traditional communication channels, or limited capacity to access technical and legal resources; and
- Degraded physical infrastructure, such as poor housing, poorly maintained public buildings (e.g., schools), or lack of access to transportation.

Applicants are encouraged, as appropriate, to include data from EPA’s [EJSCREEN](#) tool (or other EJ-focused geospatial mapping tools) as **part** of their application to help characterize and describe the affected communities/populations and area(s). Data from other sources (e.g., studies, census, and third-party reports) should also be included to give a more complete picture of the impacted communities and populations. Instructions, resources, and tutorials on how to use EJSCREEN are included at the hyperlink above.

### **Quality Assurance & Quality Control**

Quality Assurance (QA) is a series of management activities, including planning, implementation, and assessment, necessary to ensure the quality and defensibility of the final product (e.g., air monitoring data). Quality Control (QC) is the system of technical activities conducted to measure the attributes and performance of a process against defined standards. QC provides a reasonable level of checking (verification) at various stages of the data collection process to ensure quality is maintained. Examples of QC activities include calibrations and precision checks. Each application must describe the approaches needed to successfully complete the research project and obtain documented quality data. Additionally, the applicant must also identify and document the activities that will ensure that the product is of adequate quality to be used as planned. EPA will evaluate the applicant’s quality assurance and quality control practices under criterion 5 of Section V.A. of this RFA.

## **Number of Applications**

Applicants can submit a total of two (2) applications overall under this solicitation. If an applicant is submitting two (2) applications, each application must be for a different project and must be submitted separately. Applicants can target multiple air pollutants and/or air monitoring methods within one application, but they cannot include the same project(s) in multiple applications. If an applicant submits more than two applications to EPA, or more than one application requests funding for the same project, the applicant will be contacted prior to EPA review of any of the applications to determine which application(s) the applicant will withdraw from the competition.

## **C. EPA Strategic Plan Linkage, Anticipated Outputs/Outcomes and Performance Measures**

Pursuant to Section 6.a. of EPA Order 5700.7A1, “Environmental Results under EPA Assistance Agreements,” EPA must link proposed assistance agreements with the Agency’s Strategic Plan. EPA also requires that grant applicants and recipients adequately describe environmental outputs and outcomes to be achieved under assistance agreements (see [EPA Order 5700.7A1, Environmental Results under Assistance Agreements](#)).

- 1. Linkage to EPA Strategic Plan:** The activities to be funded under this announcement support EPA’s Draft Fiscal Year (FY) 2022-2026 Strategic Plan. Awards made under this announcement will support Goal 4, “Ensure Clean and Healthy Air for All Communities;” Objective 4.1, “Improve Air Quality and Reduce Localized Pollution and Health Impacts.” Under this objective, “EPA will work with air agencies and local communities to prioritize engagement with low-income and marginalized communities that for decades have been overburdened with air pollution and other environmental hazards.” Applications must be for projects that support this goal and objective. For more information see: [EPA’s Draft FY 2022-2026 Strategic Plan](#).

EPA also requires that grant applicants adequately describe environmental outputs and outcomes to be achieved under assistance agreements (see [EPA Order 5700.7A1, Environmental Results under Assistance Agreements](#)). Applicants must include specific statements describing the environmental results of the proposed project in terms of well-defined outputs and, to the maximum extent practicable, well-defined outcomes that will demonstrate how the project will contribute to the priorities described above.

- 2. Outputs:** The term “output” means an environmental activity, effort, and/or associated work product related to an environmental goal and 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 an assistance agreement funding period.

Expected outputs from the projects to be funded under this announcement may include, but are not limited to:

- Identification of air pollution;
- Community-specific assessments of air pollution data;

- Deployment of equipment to conduct air quality monitoring in or near underserved communities;
- Near real-time air quality data availability for communities and other stakeholders; and,
- Promotion of partnerships and community involvement through various activities and information exchanges.

Progress reports and a final report will also be required outputs, as specified in Section VI.C. “Reporting Requirement,” of this RFA.

- 3. Outcomes:** The term “outcome” means 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 may be environmental, behavioral, health-related or programmatic in nature, but must also be quantitative. They may not necessarily be achievable within an assistance agreement funding period.

In and near areas with disproportionate environmental and human health impacts to underserved communities, expected outcomes from the projects to be funded under this announcement may include, but are not limited to:

- Short-term Outcomes (*i.e.*, a change in knowledge)
  - Problem identification.
  - Increased community awareness.
  - Increased access to information and tools that increase understanding and reduction of environmental and human health risks.
- Intermediate Outcomes (*i.e.*, a change in behavior)
  - State or local policy action(s).
  - Mitigation action(s) from parties responsible for certain air pollution.
  - Community action to mitigate certain air pollutant(s).
- Long-term Outcomes (*i.e.*, a change in conditions)
  - Reduction of certain air pollutant emissions.
  - Reduction of ambient concentrations of certain air pollutant(s).
  - Reduction of human exposure to certain air pollutant(s).

- 4. Performance Measures.** The applicant should also develop performance measures they expect to achieve through the proposed activities and describe them in their application. These performance measures will help gather insights and will be the mechanism to track progress concerning successful processes and output and outcome strategies and will provide the basis for developing lessons to inform future recipients. Additional details on reporting requirements are included in Section VI.C. It is expected that the description of performance measures will directly relate to the project outcomes and outputs. The description of the performance measures will directly relate to the project’s outcomes and outputs, including but not limited to:

- Overseeing subrecipients, and/or contractors and vendors;
- Tracking and reporting project progress on expenditures and purchases; and
- Tracking, measuring, and reporting accomplishments and proposed timelines/milestones.

The following are questions to consider when developing output and outcome measures of quantitative and qualitative results:

- What are the measurable short term and longer term results the project will achieve?
- How will progress toward achieving the expected results be measured (including outputs and outcomes) and how will the approach use resources effectively and efficiently?

#### **D. Statutory Authority**

The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (P.L. 117-2) provided funding to EPA to address health outcome disparities from pollution and the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, ARP §6002(a)(2) provides funding for grants and activities authorized under subsections (a) through (c) of section 103 of the Clean Air Act.

The statutory authority for this action is Clean Air Act, §103(b)(3), which authorizes the award of grants for research, investigations, experiments, demonstrations, surveys, and studies related to the causes, effects, (including health and welfare effects), extent, prevention, and control of air pollution. Projects designed to monitor air pollutants of greatest concern in communities with disproportionate and adverse health outcomes is consistent with this authority.

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

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

## **II. AWARD INFORMATION**

### **A. What is the amount of funding available?**

The total estimated funding for this competitive opportunity is approximately \$20,000,000. Approximately \$2 million dollars of this amount will be awarded to tribal governments under a tribal government set-aside under which only applications from tribal governments will be considered, and approximately \$2 million will be awarded to community-based organizations under a community-based organization set-aside under which only applications from community-based organizations will be considered. Applications for each set-aside will be reviewed separately and separate ranking lists prepared (see Section V.B. of this competition for more information). The anticipated award amounts and the relative allocations for the set-asides are approximations, and EPA may increase or decrease the amounts and number of projects selected under each set-aside based on the number of meritorious applications received, agency priorities, funding availability, and other applicable considerations.

## **B. Partial Funding**

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

## **C. How many agreements will EPA award in this competition?**

EPA anticipates awarding a total of approximately 50 to 70 grants or cooperative agreements under this announcement, subject to the availability of funds, the quantity and quality of applications received, and other applicable considerations. EPA anticipates awarding approximately 20-30 assistance agreements ranging in value from \$25,000 to \$100,000 (*i.e.*, “Small Grants”) and 30-40 assistance agreements ranging in value from \$100,001-\$500,000 (*i.e.*, “Large Grants”). EPA may increase or decrease the number of small or large grants based on the number of meritorious applications received, agency priorities, funding availability, and other applicable considerations.

If EPA selects multiple applications from an applicant, EPA may combine the selected applications into one grant award for the successful applicant (See Section VI.A. Combining of Successful Applications into One Award).

EPA reserves the right to make additional awards under this announcement, consistent with Agency policy and other applicable considerations, if additional funding becomes available after the original selections. Any additional selections for awards will be made no later than six months from the date of the original selections.

In addition, EPA reserves the right to reject all applications and make no awards under this announcement or to make fewer awards than anticipated.

## **D. What is the project period for awards resulting from this solicitation?**

The estimated project period for awards resulting from this solicitation is expected to begin by November 2022. Proposed project periods may be up to three years from the project start date. Because this is one-time funding, projects must be completed within three years and/or address how equipment will be maintained and operated beyond this timeframe without the expectation of additional resources. EPA will only consider extending project periods due to extraordinary circumstances that an applicant could not foresee when the application was submitted.

## **E. Funding Type**

The funding for selected projects will be in the form of a grant or cooperative agreement.

Cooperative agreements provide for substantial involvement between the EPA project officer and the selected applicants in the performance of the work supported. Although 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;
- EPA prior review or approval of project phases or the substantive provisions of proposed contracts or subawards found within the scope of the cooperative agreement;
- EPA approval of a quality assurance project plan prior to issuing an award that involves environmental data collection, production, or use.
- Approving qualifications of key personnel (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).

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

### **III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

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

#### **A. Eligible Entities**

In accordance with Assistance Listing 66.034, applications will be accepted from states (including the District of Columbia); local governments; U.S. territories and possessions; Indian tribes; public and private hospitals and laboratories; and other public or private nonprofit organizations.

Nonprofit organization, as defined by 2 CFR 200.1, means any corporation, trust, association, cooperative or other organization that: (1) is operated primarily for scientific, educational, service, charitable or similar purposes in the public interest; (2) is not organized primarily for profit; and (3) uses its net proceeds to maintain, improve and/or expand its operations. The term includes tax-exempt nonprofit neighborhood and labor organizations. Note that the definition of nonprofit in 2 CFR Part 200.1 specifically excludes the following types of organizations from the definition of "nonprofit organization" because they are separately defined in the regulation: (i) institutions of higher education; and (ii) state, local and federally-recognized Indian tribal governments. Institutions of Higher Education are not eligible to submit applications under this RFA. Hospitals operated by state, tribal, or local governments or that meet the definition of nonprofit at 2 CFR 200.1 are eligible to apply. Nonprofit organizations do not need be tax exempt under the Internal Revenue Code but may use documentation of tax-exempt status to demonstrate that it is a nonprofit. EPA will verify applicants' non-profit status on SAM.gov. For-profit colleges, universities, trade schools, and hospitals are ineligible.

For-profit organizations are not an eligible entity for this funding opportunity. Additionally, nonprofit organizations described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engage in lobbying activities as defined in Section 3 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 are not

eligible to apply.

To be eligible for the tribal set-aside, the applicant must meet the definition of Indian tribe under Section 302(r) of the Clean Air Act: “The term ‘Indian tribe’ means any Indian tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community, including Alaska Native village, which is Federally recognized as eligible for the special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians.”

To be eligible for the community-based organization set-aside, the applicant must be an eligible nonprofit or not for profit corporation in good standing under state or tribal law with authority to enter into binding legal agreements. The community-based organization need not be tax exempt under the Internal Revenue Code but may use documentation of tax-exempt status to demonstrate that it is a nonprofit. Entities applying for the community-based set-aside must specify the community they represent and provide documentation, such as their charter, mission statement, or other official documentation of the organization; and include a statement demonstrating the effectiveness as a representative of the applicable community (See Section III.C.6).

## **B. Voluntary Cost Sharing/Matching Funds and Leveraged Resources**

No cost sharing/matching funds or leveraged resources are required as a condition of eligibility under this competition.

## **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 from eligible applicants (see Section III.A. of this RFA) that meet all of these criteria will be evaluated against the ranking criteria in Section V. of this RFA. If necessary, EPA may contact applicants to clarify threshold eligibility questions prior to making an eligibility determination. Applicants deemed ineligible for funding consideration due to the threshold eligibility review will be notified within 15 calendar days of the ineligibility determination.

### **1. Application Content and Submission**

- a. Applications must substantially comply with the application submission instructions and application content requirements set forth in Section IV. and Appendices A and B or else they will be rejected.
- b. Applications must be submitted through Grants.gov as stated in Section IV.A. of this announcement (except in the limited circumstances where another mode of submission is specifically allowed for as explained in Section IV.) on or before the application submission deadline published in Section IV.D. of this announcement. Applicants are responsible for following the submission instructions in Section IV. of this announcement to ensure that their application is timely and properly submitted.

Applications submitted after the submission deadline will be considered late and deemed ineligible without further consideration unless the applicant can clearly demonstrate that it was late due to EPA mishandling or because of technical problems associated with [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) or relevant [SAM.gov](https://www.sam.gov) system issues. An applicant's failure to timely submit their application through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) because they did not timely or properly register in [SAM.gov](https://www.sam.gov) or [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) will not be considered an acceptable reason to consider a late submission. **EPA suggests registering in Grants.gov and SAM.gov as early as possible.** Additional information about SAM.gov registration is available in the [EPA Solicitation Clauses](#) under Section IV.f., System for Award Management (SAM) Unique Identifier Requirements.

2. Applications must support Goal 4 “Ensure Clean and Healthy Air for All Communities;” Objective 4.1: “Improve Air Quality and Reduce Localized Pollution and Health Impacts” of EPA’s Draft FY 2022-2026 Strategic Plan described in Section I.C.1.
3. Applications which request EPA funds in excess of \$500,000 or less than \$25,000, as specified in Section II.A of this RFA, are not eligible for funding under this RFA and will not be reviewed.
4. Applications must include a statement on quality assurance, as specified in Section IV.C.3 of this RFA.
5. Applications must specify whether or not they are applying for a set-aside and specify which set-aside. Applications that fail to identify a desired set-aside will be evaluated as though they selected the “no set-aside” option (i.e., they will be evaluated in the general pool of applications).
6. If applying for the community-based organization set-aside, applicants must explain how their organization meets the definition of “community-based organization.” A “community-based organization” generally means a non-governmental organization that has demonstrated effectiveness as a representative of a community\* or a significant segment of a community as defined in its charter, mission statement, or other official document and that helps members of that community or segment obtain environmental, health, educational, or other social services. Such organizations may include, for example, those representing communities with environmental justice concerns including health outcome disparities stemming from air pollution and the COVID-19 pandemic. Local chapters of a national organization that can meet this definition can apply for the community-based organization set-aside. To be considered for the community-based organization set-aside, the applicant must:
  - a. Provide documentation that it is a nonprofit or not for profit corporation under federal, state, or tribal law with authority to enter into binding legal agreements.
  - b. Specify the community they represent and provide documentation, such as their charter, mission statement, or other official documentation of the organization.

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\* As defined in the [Office of Management and Budget’s M-21-08](#), “community” means: either a group of individuals living in geographic proximity to one another, or a geographically dispersed set of individuals (such as migrant workers or Native Americans), where either type of group experiences common conditions

- c. Include a statement demonstrating the effectiveness as a representative of the applicable community.

Please note that this information will be evaluated under evaluation criterion 2.C. under Section V.A. of this RFA.

7. If applying for the tribal set-aside, applicants must meet the definition of Indian tribe under Section 302(r) of the Clean Air Act: “The term ‘Indian tribe’ means any Indian tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community, including Alaska Native village, which is Federally recognized as eligible for the special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians
8. Applications must address disproportionate and adverse environmental or human health impacts to underserved communities.
9. Applications must address one or more of the following air pollutants from Section I.B.:
  - Carbon Monoxide
  - Lead
  - Nitrogen Dioxide
  - Ozone, including ozone precursors
    - Precursors for ozone collected in the Photochemical Assessment Monitoring Stations (PAMS) Program including oxides of nitrogen, (NO, NO<sub>2</sub>, NO<sub>x</sub>, NO<sub>y</sub>) volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and carbonyls. A list of ozone precursors can be found in the Technical Assistance Document for Sampling and Analysis of Ozone Precursors for the Photochemical Assessment Monitoring Stations Program, Revision 2 – April 2019. This is available at: [https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2019-11/documents/pams\\_technical\\_assistance\\_document\\_revision\\_2\\_april\\_2019.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2019-11/documents/pams_technical_assistance_document_revision_2_april_2019.pdf)
    - Additional ozone precursors such as methane.
  - Sulfur Dioxide
  - Particle Pollution (ultrafine, PM<sub>2.5</sub>, or PM<sub>10</sub>), including aerosol composition and PM precursors
    - Aerosol composition is determined by the Chemical Speciation Network (CSN). A full list of the CSN reported parameters is available at: <https://www.epa.gov/amtic/chemical-speciation-network-parameters-reported-air-quality-system-aqs>.
    - PM precursors including ammonia, sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>), oxides of nitrogen, CO, and VOCs.
  - Hazardous Air Pollutants (HAPs), commonly referred to as air toxics. A full list of HAPs is available at: <https://www.epa.gov/haps/initial-list-hazardous-air-pollutants-modifications#mods>.

#### **D. Ineligible Costs or Activities and Other Considerations**

Any of the following may lead to a portion or all of the application not being reviewed:

- 1. Ineligible Costs or Activities.** If an application is submitted that has ineligible items, tasks, or activities, that portion of the application will not be reviewed and will be ineligible for funding and may, depending on the extent to which it affects the application, render the entire application ineligible for funding. The following activities are not eligible for funding under this RFA:
  - a. Air monitoring activities, equipment, and/or methods that are not previously existing, commercially available technologies as specified in Section I.B. of this RFA.
  - b. Activities that address pollutants not identified in Section I.B.
  - c. Costs that are included as a cost or used to meet cost sharing or matching requirements of any other federally financed grant, as required under 2 CFR 200.306(b)(5) and 200.403(f).
  
- 2. Other Considerations:**
  - a. Where a page limit is expressed in Section IV.C. with respect to the project narrative, pages in excess of the page limitation will not be reviewed. The page limit of the project narrative is 12 pages.
  - b. Applicants can submit no more than two applications, as specified in Section I.B of this RFA. If an applicant submits more than two applications, EPA will contact the applicant to determine which application(s) to withdraw.
  - c. If an applicant is submitting two applications, each application must include a different project(s) and must be submitted separately. Applicants can include multiple types of projects within one application, but they cannot include the same project(s) in multiple applications. If an applicant submits more than one application that requests funding for the same project, the applicant will be contacted prior to EPA review of any of the applications to determine which application(s) the applicant will withdraw from the competition.

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

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

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

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

respect to this opportunity only are addressed in section Appendix A. under *Technical Issues with Submission*.

## **B. Grants.gov Application Submission Instructions (see Appendix A)**

Your organization's authorized official representative (AOR) must submit your complete application electronically to EPA through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) no later than **March 25, 2022, 11:59 PM Eastern Time**.

See Appendix A for full [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) submission instructions.

## **C. Content of Application Submission**

Applicants should review Appendix B for specific instructions for the project narrative. Applicants should note which materials are required for the application package.

### **1. Grant Application Forms.** Please complete the forms as appropriate.

- a. Standard Form 424, *Application for Federal Assistance* (**Required**). Please note that the organizational Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number must be included on the SF-424. Organizations may obtain a DUNS number at no cost by calling the toll-free DUNS number request line at 1-866-705-5711.
- b. Standard Form 424A, *Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs* (**Required**)
- c. EPA Form 4700-4, *Pre-Award Compliance Review Report for All Applicants Requesting Federal Financial Assistance* (**Required**)
- d. EPA Form 5700-54, *Key Contacts Form* (**Required**)
- e. Project Narrative Attachment Form (**Required**, see Section IV.C.2. below for additional information)
- f. Attachments using the Other Attachments Form (See Section IV.C.3.–6. below for additional information)

### **2. Project Narrative Attachment Form – see Appendix B (Required;** part of the 12-page limit). Applicants may use the Project Narrative Attachment form in [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). The project narrative must explicitly describe how the proposed project meets the threshold eligibility criteria in Section III.C., and address the evaluation criteria set forth in Section V.A. The project narrative cannot exceed a maximum of (12) single-spaced typewritten pages, including the summary page, workplan, and budget table and detail. Pages in excess of the 12-page limit will not be reviewed. Additionally, the project narrative should be in a legible font (e.g., size 12 Times New Roman font, size 11 Calibri font, etc); smaller font sizes may be used for tables and figures. Supporting materials identified below can be submitted as attachments and are not included in the 12-page limit. The project narrative must substantially comply with the specific instructions, format and content as defined in Appendix B.

3. **Attachments.** Applicants should note which attachments are required. These attachments are not included in the 12-page limit. Use the “Other Attachments Form” for each.

- **Quality Assurance Statement (Required).** Applicants may use the Other Attachment Form in Grants.gov. A brief description of the quality assurance and quality control practices that will be applied during a project to assure that the results obtained satisfy the project objectives. The quality assurance statement should not exceed 2 pages in length.
- **Proof of Nonprofit Status (Required for nonprofits only).** Applicant organizations claiming nonprofit status must include documentation that shows the organization is either a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization as designated by the Internal Revenue Service; OR a nonprofit organization recognized by the state, territory, commonwealth or tribe in which it is located. Documentation must be on official government letterhead. These are not subject to the page limit.
- **Community-based Organization Documentation (Required for applicants applying for community-based organization set-aside only).** This is only required for applicants applying for the community-based organization set-aside to demonstrate the community the organization represents. This documentation can include the organization’s charter, mission statement or other official document that describes the community that the organization represents.
- **Partnership Letter(s)-** If applicable, letters that demonstrate strong involvement throughout the project from a variety of project partners are encouraged. Letters should be addressed to the applicant organization. Please do not ask partners to submit letters directly to EPA. Note also the requirements described earlier on naming partners that will be parties to EPA funded financial transactions.
- **Resumes of the Project Manager and Other Key Personnel-** Applicants can attach a resume or curricula vitae (CV) for the project manager and other key personnel. These are not subject to the workplan page limit although individual resumes should not exceed 2 pages in length. EPA funded transactions with Key Personnel who are not employees of the applicant are subject to the requirements described earlier on naming partners.

#### **D. Submission Date and Times**

The closing date and time for submission of applications is **March 25, 2022, 11:59 p.m., Eastern Time (ET)**. Applications submitted after the closing date and time will not be considered for funding.

#### **V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION**

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

Only eligible entities whose applications meet the threshold criteria in Section III.C. of this RFA will be evaluated according to the criteria set forth below. **Applicants should explicitly address these criteria as part of their application package submittal in the project narrative,**

following the content requirements set forth in Appendix B. Each application will be rated using a point system. Applications not submitted under the community-based organization set-aside will be evaluated based on a total of 125 points possible; applications submitted under the community-based organization set-aside will be evaluated based on a total of 135 points possible.

## A. Evaluation Criteria

Criteria	Points
<b>Total Possible Points</b>	<b>125<sup>†</sup></b>
<p><b>1. <u>Project Summary and Approach:</u></b> Under this criterion, EPA will evaluate applications based on the extent and quality of the applicant’s project summary and overall approach. Specifically, EPA will evaluate the extent and quality of:</p> <p><b>A. (20 points) Overall Project:</b> The overall proposed project consistent with the Scope of Work (Section I.B.), and the steps the applicant will take to meet the program objectives and execute the project.</p> <p><b>B. (10 points) Project Significance:</b> How the proposed project will support or benefit the public and the environment, and the relationship of the proposed project to the seriousness, extent, and urgency of the environmental or public health problems toward which the project is directed.</p>	<b>30</b>
<p><b>2. <u>Community Involvement:</u></b> Under this criterion, EPA will evaluate:</p> <p><b>A. (15 Points) Community Partnerships:</b> How community partners and supporting organizations will participate in, directly assist in the design and performance of the project, and/or allow the applicant to more effectively perform the project. Any partners named in the application are subject to the “Contracts and Subawards” clause that can be accessed under Section IV.d. of the additional EPA Solicitation Clauses: <a href="http://www.epa.gov/grants/epa-solicitation-clauses">www.epa.gov/grants/epa-solicitation-clauses</a>.</p> <p><b>B. (10 points) Community Engagement:</b> The extent to which the project addresses engagement with these communities and/or populations (see A above) to ensure their meaningful participation with respect to the design, planning, and performance of the project.</p> <p>Note for sub-criteria A. and B.: Applications that demonstrate recent involvement of project partners and community members working together on past projects may be evaluated more favorably than others. Applications with letters of commitment that demonstrate strong involvement throughout the proposed project from a variety of project partners may also be evaluated more favorably than others. All applicants who do not propose to use community partners will be evaluated based on how well they can</p>	<b>25<sup>‡</sup></b>

<sup>†</sup> The total points for the community-based organization set-aside is 135 points.

<sup>‡</sup> The total points for the Community Involvement criterion is 35 points for the community-based organization set-aside for a total of 135 points rather than 125 points.

<p>demonstrate that they can effectively perform the proposed project without partners. If the applicant does not have any community partnerships, please indicate this in the application and explain why.</p> <p><u>The following sub-criterion applies only to applications submitted under the community-based organization set-aside:</u></p> <p><b>C. (10 Points) Community-Based Organization Set-Aside:</b> The extent to which an application establishes that the applicant is an effective “community-based organization” as defined in Section III.C. of this announcement, including their effectiveness as a representative of a community or a significant segment of a community and how the organization helps members of that community or segment obtain environmental, health, educational, or other social services.</p>	
<p><b>3. <u>Environmental Justice and Underserved Communities:</u></b> Under this criterion, EPA will evaluate applications based on the quality and extent to which the project benefits people/communities of color, low income, tribal, and indigenous populations (and if applicable other vulnerable populations such as the elderly, children, and those with pre-existing medical conditions) that have been and/or are currently affected by disproportionate health outcomes from pollution and the COVID–19 pandemic, including these communities and/or populations that have experienced a lack of resources or other impediments to addressing these adverse impacts. Adverse impacts may be the result of the COVID-19 pandemic, industrial, governmental, commercial and/or other actions and include the accompanying economic challenges of such impacts.</p>	<b>10</b>
<p><b>4. <u>Environmental Results – Outputs, Outcomes and Performance Measures:</u></b> Under this criterion, EPA will evaluate:</p> <p><b>A. (10 points) Expected Project Outputs and Outcomes-</b> The extent and quality to which the applicant identifies and proposes outputs and outcomes, as described in Section I.C.2. and 3.</p> <p><b>B. (5 points) Performance Measures and Plan-</b> The effectiveness of the applicant’s plan for tracking and measuring its progress toward achieving the expected project outputs and outcomes, including those identified in Section I.C. of this announcement.</p> <p><b>C. (5 points) Timeline and Milestones-</b> The reasonableness of the proposed timeline including key milestones for specific tasks and the likelihood of completion of the project’s goals and objectives by project end.</p>	<b>20</b>
<p><b>5. <u>Quality Assurance Statement:</u></b> Under this criterion, EPA will evaluate the quality assurance and quality control practices that will be applied during the project to ensure that the results obtained satisfy the project objectives.</p>	<b>5</b>
<p><b>6. <u>Programmatic Capability and Past Performance:</u></b> Under this criterion, EPA will evaluate applicants based on their ability to successfully complete and manage the proposed project considering their:</p>	<b>15</b>

<p><b>A. (5 points) Past Performance-</b> Past performance in successfully completing and managing the assistance agreements identified in response to Appendix B, Section 5 of the solicitation.</p> <p><b>B. (5 points) Reporting Requirements-</b> History of meeting the reporting requirements under the assistance agreements identified in response to Appendix B, Section 5 of the solicitation, including whether the applicant submitted acceptable final technical reports under those agreements and the extent to which the applicant adequately and timely reported on their progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes under those agreements and if such progress was not being made whether the applicant adequately reported why not;</p> <p><b>C. (5 points) Staff Expertise-</b> Staff expertise and qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project. Note: Partnership letters related to community involvement will be evaluated under Criterion 2 of the Evaluation Criteria. Applicants should discuss their partnerships related to community involvement in more detail under Section 2 of their workplan.</p> <p>Note: In evaluating applicants under items A. and B. of this criterion, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant 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 supplied by the applicant). If the applicant does not have any relevant or available past performance or reporting information, please indicate this in the application and you will receive a neutral score for sub-criteria A. and B. (a neutral score is half of the total points available in a subset of possible points). If the applicant does not provide any response for these items, they may receive a score of 0 for these sub-criteria.</p>	
<p><b>7. Budget:</b> Under this criterion, EPA will evaluate applicants based on the extent and quality to which:</p> <p><b>A. (5 points) Budget Detail-</b> The proposed budget provides a detailed breakout by funding type in the proper budget category for each activity the applicant is requesting funding.</p> <p><b>B. (10 points) Reasonableness of Costs-</b> Costs are reasonable to accomplish the proposed goals, objectives, and measurable environmental outcomes; and</p> <p><b>C. (5 points) Expenditure of Awarded Funds-</b> Their approach, procedures, and controls ensure that awarded grant funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner.</p>	<p><b>20</b></p>

\* Applications submitted under the community-based organization set-aside will be evaluated based on a total of 135 points possible.

\*\* Applications submitted under the community-based organization set-aside will be evaluated on the Community Involvement criteria 2.a., 2.b., and 2.c., for a total of 35 points possible

for the criterion and 135 points total. Applications that are not submitted under the community-based organization set-aside will be evaluated on the Community Involvement criteria 2.a. and 2.b., for a total of 25 points possible for the criterion and 125 points total.

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

Applications will first be evaluated against the threshold factors listed in Section III.C. of this RFA. Only those applications which meet all of the threshold factors will be evaluated using the evaluation criteria listed above by an EPA evaluation team.

Each application will be given a numerical score and will be rank-ordered by the review panel within their applicable set-aside or the general pool of applications. Applications applying for the community-based organization set-aside will be evaluated and scored out of 135 possible points while all others will be evaluated and scored out of 125 possible points, as described in the evaluation criteria under Section V.A. Preliminary funding recommendations will be provided to the EPA selection official based on these reviews and rankings. Final funding decisions will be made by the EPA headquarters selection official based on the rankings and preliminary recommendations of the EPA evaluation team and the other factors listed in Section V.C. below.

## **C. Other Factors**

Final funding decisions will be made by the selection official based on the rankings and preliminary recommendations of the EPA evaluation team. In making the final funding decisions, the selection official may also consider other programmatic priorities, the geographic diversity of funds, the mix of small and large grants as described in Section II.C., and the availability of funds. Once final decisions have been made, a funding recommendation will be developed and forwarded to the EPA Award Official.

## **VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**

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

### **A. Award Notices**

Following evaluation of applications, all applicants will be notified regarding their status.

- 1. Successful Applicants:** EPA anticipates notification to successful applicants will be made via electronic or postal mail by September 2022. 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 EPA's Grants and Interagency Agreements Management Division.

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 EPA to make an award to the applicant. The award notice, signed by the 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.

### **Combining Successful Applications into One Award**

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

- 2. Unsuccessful Applicants:** EPA anticipates notification to unsuccessful applicant(s) will be made via electronic or postal mail by September 2022. The notification will be sent to the original signer of the SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance.

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

A listing and description of general EPA Regulations applicable to the award of assistance agreements may be viewed at: [www.epa.gov/grants/policy-regulations-and-guidance-epa-grants](http://www.epa.gov/grants/policy-regulations-and-guidance-epa-grants).

## **C. Reporting Requirement**

Quarterly progress reports and a detailed final report will be required. Quarterly reports summarizing technical progress, planned activities for the next quarter and a summary of expenditures are required. The final report shall be submitted to EPA within 120 calendar days of the completion of the period of performance. The final report must include: summary of the project or activity, advances achieved and costs of the project or activity. In addition, the final report shall discuss the problems, successes, and lessons learned from the project or activity that could help overcome structural, organizational or technical obstacles to implementing a similar project elsewhere. The schedule for submission of quarterly reports will be established by EPA, after the grants are awarded. Award recipients may be provided with additional information and guidance on reporting performance measures and project progress after award.

## **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 that the Federal Register 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.

## VII. AGENCY CONTACTS

For further information, contact Tim Roberts in EPA's Office of Air and Radiation at [AirMonitoring@epa.gov](mailto:AirMonitoring@epa.gov). All questions or comments must be communicated in writing.

All applicants are encouraged to review the questions and answer document posted at <http://www.epa.gov/grants/air-grants-and-funding> for further clarification of this RFA. EPA will respond to questions from individual applicants regarding threshold eligibility criteria, administrative issues related to the submission of the application, and requests for clarification about any of the language or provisions in the announcement through the questions and answers document.

Applicants may email questions to [AirMonitoring@epa.gov](mailto:AirMonitoring@epa.gov). All questions submitted via email by 4:00 p.m. ET each Friday during the RFA open period will be answered and posted in the questions and answers document the following week. All applicants are encouraged to check the document regularly. The deadline for submitting final questions regarding this RFA via email is March 18, 2022 at 4:00 PM EST. EPA will post the final questions and answers document no later than March 22, 2022.

## APPENDIX A – Grants.gov Application Submission Instructions

The electronic submission of your application must be made by an official representative of your institution who is registered with Grants.gov and is authorized to sign applications for Federal assistance. For more information on the registration requirements that must be completed in order to submit an application through grants.gov, go to [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and click on “Applicants” on the top of the page and then go to the “Get Registered” link on the page. If your organization is not currently registered with Grants.gov, please encourage your office to designate an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) and ask that individual to begin the registration process as soon as possible. Please note that the registration process also requires that your organization have a Unique Entity Identifier (e.g. DUNS number) and a current registration with the System for Award Management (SAM) and the process of obtaining both could take a month or more. Applicants must ensure that all registration requirements are met in order to apply for this opportunity through grants.gov and should ensure that all such requirements have been met well in advance of the submission deadline. Registration on grants.gov, SAM.gov, and DUNS number assignment is FREE. Please see [RAIN-2021-G01](#) for information about EPA’s implementation of the upcoming Government-wide transition from DUNS to Unique Entity Identifier (UEI).

Applicants need to ensure that the AOR who submits the application through Grants.gov and whose Unique Entity Identifier (e.g., DUNS number) is listed on the application is an AOR for the applicant listed on the application. Additionally, the DUNS number listed on the application must be registered to the applicant organization’s SAM account. If not, the application may be deemed ineligible.

To begin the application process under this grant announcement, go to [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and click on “Applicants” on the top of the page and then “Apply for Grants” from the dropdown menu and then follow the instructions accordingly. Please note: To apply through Grants.gov, you must use Adobe Reader software and download the compatible Adobe Reader version. For more information about Adobe Reader, to verify compatibility, or to download the free software, please visit [Adobe Reader Compatibility Information on Grants.gov](#)

You may also be able to access the application package for this announcement by searching for the opportunity on Grants.gov. Go to [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and then click on “Search Grants” at the top of the page and enter the Funding Opportunity Number, EPA-OAR-OAQPS-22-01, or the Assistance Listing number (66.034), in the appropriate field and click the Search button.

Please Note: All applications must now be submitted through Grants.gov using the “Workspace” feature. Information on the Workspace feature can be found at the [Grants.gov Workspace Overview Page](#).

**Application Submission Deadline:** Your organization’s AOR must submit your complete application package electronically to EPA through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) no later than **March 25, 2022 by 11:59 p.m. ET**. Please allow for enough time to successfully submit your application process and allow for unexpected errors that may require you to resubmit.

Please submit *all* of the application materials described below using the Grants.gov application package accessed using the instructions above.

## **Application Materials**

The following forms and documents are required under this announcement, as described in Section IV.C. of the RFA:

### **Mandatory Documents:**

- a. Standard Form 424, *Application for Federal Assistance* (**Required**). Please note that the organizational Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number must be included on the SF-424. Organizations may obtain a DUNS number at no cost by calling the toll-free DUNS number request line at 1-866-705-5711.
- b. Standard Form 424A, *Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs* (**Required**)
- c. EPA Form 4700-4, *Pre-Award Compliance Review Report for All Applicants Requesting Federal Financial Assistance* (**Required**)
- d. EPA Form 5700-54, *Key Contacts Form* (**Required**)
- e. Project Narrative Attachment Form (**Required**, see Section IV.C.2. below for additional information)
- f. Attachments using the Other Attachments Form
  - Quality Assurance Statement
  - Proof of Nonprofit Status, if applicable
  - Community-based Organization Documentation, if applicable –

### **Optional Documents:**

- Use the Other Attachments Form in Grants.gov for the following optional documents:
  - Partnership Letter(s)
  - Resumes of the Project Manager and Other Key Personnel

Applications submitted through Grants.gov will be time and date stamped electronically.

If you have not received a confirmation of receipt from EPA (not from Grants.gov) within 30 days of the application deadline, please contact Tim Roberts at [AirMonitoring@epa.gov](mailto:AirMonitoring@epa.gov). Failure to do so may result in your application not being reviewed.

### **Technical Issues with Submission**

1. Once the application package has been completed, the “Submit” button should be enabled. If the “Submit” button is not active, please call [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) for assistance at 1-800-518-4726. Applicants who are outside the U.S. at the time of submittal and are not able to access the toll-free number may reach a Grants.gov representative by calling 606-545-5035. Applicants should save the completed application package with two different file names before providing it to the AOR to avoid having to re-create the package should submission problems be experienced or a revised application needs to be submitted.

2. Submitting the application. The application package must be transferred to [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) by an AOR. The AOR should close all other software before attempting to submit the application package. Click the “submit” button of the application package. Your Internet browser will launch and a sign-in page will appear. **Note: Minor problems are not uncommon with transfers to Grants.gov. It is essential to allow sufficient time to ensure that your application is submitted to Grants.gov BEFORE the due date identified in Section IV of the solicitation.** The support desk operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, except Federal Holidays.

A successful transfer will end with an on-screen acknowledgement. **For documentation purposes, print or screen capture this acknowledgement.** If a submission problem occurs, reboot the computer – turning the power off may be necessary – and re-attempt the submission.

Note: Grants.gov issues a “case number” upon a request for assistance.

3. Transmission Difficulties. If transmission difficulties that result in a late transmission, no transmission, or rejection of the transmitted application are experienced, and following the above instructions do not resolve the problem so that the application is submitted to [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) by the deadline date and time, follow the guidance below. The Agency will make a decision concerning acceptance of each late submission on a case-by-case basis. All emails, as described below, are to be sent to Tim Roberts with the FON in the subject line. If you are unable to email, contact Tim Roberts at (202) 564-6004. Be aware that EPA will only consider accepting applications that were unable to transmit due to Grants.gov or relevant [www.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 timely because they did not properly or timely register in [SAM.gov](https://www.sam.gov) or [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) is not an acceptable reason to justify acceptance of a late submittal.

If you are experiencing problems resulting in an inability to upload the application to [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov), it is essential to call Grants.gov for assistance at 1-800-518-4726 before the application deadline. Applicants who are outside the U.S. at the time of submittal and are not able to access the toll-free number may reach a Grants.gov representative by calling 606-545-5035. **Be sure to obtain a case number from Grants.gov.** If the problems stem from unforeseen exigent circumstances unrelated to [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov), such as extreme weather interfering with internet access, contact Tim Roberts at [AirMonitoring@epa.gov](mailto:AirMonitoring@epa.gov).

Unsuccessful transfer of the application package: If a successful transfer of the application cannot be accomplished even with assistance from [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) due to electronic submission system issues or unforeseen exigent circumstances, and you have already attempted to resolve the issue by contacting Grants.gov, send an email message to [AirMonitoring@epa.gov](mailto:AirMonitoring@epa.gov) prior to the application deadline. **The email message must document the problem and include the Grants.gov case number as well as the entire application package in PDF format as an attachment.**

Grants.gov rejection of the application package: If a notification is received from [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) stating that the application has been rejected for reasons other than late submittal promptly send an email to [AirMonitoring@epa.gov](mailto:AirMonitoring@epa.gov) with the FON in the subject line within one business day of the closing date of this solicitation. The email should include any materials provided by Grants.gov and attach the entire application in PDF format.

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

## APPENDIX B – Project Narrative Instructions, Format, and Content

**Instructions:** The project narrative must substantially comply with the instructions, format, and content described below. It must also address the evaluation criteria in Section V.A. of the Request for Applications (RFA). You may receive a score of 0 for any evaluation factor that your application does not address.

The project narrative, including the cover page, workplan, and budget table and detail, must not exceed a maximum of 12 single-spaced typewritten pages. Pages in excess of the 12-page limit will not be reviewed. Additionally, the project narrative should be in a legible font (e.g., size 12 Times New Roman font, size 11 Calibri font, etc); smaller font sizes may be used for tables and figures.

Supporting materials, such as project team biographies, partnership letters, and negotiated indirect cost rate agreements can be submitted as attachments and are not included in the 12-page limit. Supporting materials should also be submitted using the Optional Attachments form.

Applicants should ensure that their project narratives are written clearly using understandable terms. Doing so will help ensure that the evaluation team members understand the purpose, outputs, and outcomes of the proposed project.

Applicants are not required, but highly encouraged, to use the project narrative, including cover page, format below.

### I. Cover Page:

The cover page should not exceed one page. The cover page should include the following information:

- **Project Title:** One descriptive sentence only.
- **Applicant Information:**
  - Applicant Organization
  - Address
  - Primary contact name, phone number, and e-mail address
  - DUNS number
- **Set-Aside:** Choose either “tribal set-aside,” “community-based organization set-aside,” or “no set-aside.” If applying for the community-based organization set-aside, include a brief description of the community the organization represents.
- **Brief Description of Applicant Organization:** In one to three sentences only, provide a brief description of the applicant organization, including its mission and key ongoing projects/activities in which it is involved.
- **Project Partner(s) (if applicable):**
  - Partner Organization
  - Partner Primary Contact Name
- **Project Location:** List the primary location(s) where the benefits of the project will be realized (including community/neighborhood(s), city, state, and zip code).
- **Air Pollutant Scope:** List the target air pollutants that are the focus of the application. See Section I.B. for pollutants covered under this RFA.

- **Budget Summary:** Include the following table:

EPA Funding Requested	Total Project Cost
TBD	TBD

As noted in Section II.A. of the RFA, while each application can request up to the full funding amount of \$500,000 (but no less than \$25,000), the total amount of requested funding needs to be commensurate with the applicant’s proposed activities. In determining your funding request amount, keep in mind that EPA anticipates awarding approximately 20-30 assistance agreements ranging in value from \$25,000 to \$100,000 (*i.e.*, “Small Grants”) and 30-40 assistance agreements ranging in value from \$100,001-\$500,000 (*i.e.*, “Large Grants”). EPA may increase or decrease the number of small or large grants based on the number of meritorious applications received, agency priorities, funding availability, and other applicable considerations.

- **Project Period:** Provide beginning and ending dates.
- **Short Project Description:** Briefly describe your project in one to three sentences only, especially noting the main objective, activities, expected outputs and outcomes.

**II. Workplan:**

Applicants must ensure that the workplan addresses the evaluation criteria in Section V. of the RFA. Applicants should use the section and subsection numbers and headings below which correspond with the evaluation criteria in Section V.A. of the RFA. The workplan should be written clearly using understandable terms.

**Section 1 – Project Summary and Approach (30 total possible points from Section V.A. of the RFA)**

**Applications should only include information in Section 1 of their workplan that will not be covered by another section of their workplan.** This section should contain a detailed project description of the following information:

**A. Overall Project (20 possible points)**

Provide a detailed project summary and description of the proposed activities to be undertaken, consistent with Section I.B. (Scope of Work) of the RFA. Include details of every activity for which the applicant is seeking funding. Provide a clear description of the steps the applicant will take to meet the program objectives and execute the project.

**B. Project Significance (10 possible points)**

Describe the extent of the environmental or public health problem the proposed project will address. Provide both details of how the proposed project will address these problems and an explanation of project benefits to the public, and specifically the potential audience(s) served. The project narrative should include a discussion of how the proposed project will address the needs and concerns of affected communities. A description of the current environmental impacts or burdens located around the proposed project should be included, explaining how the affected communities are potentially vulnerable to these environmental burdens. The application should also include relevant information such as demographics, geographic location, and community history. (Note: Environmental justice should be addressed under

Section 3 of the Project Narrative).

**Section 2 – Community Involvement (25 total possible points from Section V.A of the RFA. 35 possible points for applicants applying for community-based organization set-aside)**

As defined in the [Office of Management and Budget’s M-21-08](#), “community” means: either a group of individuals living in geographic proximity to one another, or a geographically dispersed set of individuals (such as migrant workers or Native Americans), where either type of group experiences common conditions.<sup>§</sup>

**A. Community Partnerships (15 possible points)**

The applicant should discuss how the project promotes community benefits through engagement and possible partnership(s). Describe the partnerships identified in the project including:

- Planned roles of each partner listed in your Project Summary, including which project activities each will be responsible for and what resources each partner brings to the partnership;
- Whether the partners have expertise on the issues addressed by the project;
- How each partner will benefit by working with a member of this partnership (other than just getting income from a subaward or contract); and,
- If applicable, how the applicant organization plans to maintain and sustain these relationships into the future.

Commitment letters from all project partners will be reviewed as part of the evaluation process. Applications with partnership letters that demonstrate strong involvement throughout the project from a variety of project partners may also be evaluated more favorably than others. Letters should specifically indicate how project partners and supporting organizations will participate in or directly assist in the design and performance of the project, including their specific role, or how obtaining support from project partners will allow the applicant to more effectively perform the project. Letters should be addressed to the applicant organization and included as attachments to the application; see Section IV.C. of the RFA. **Please do not ask partners to submit letters directly to EPA.** Any partners named in the application are subject to the “Contracts and Subawards” clause that can be accessed under Section IV.d. of the additional EPA Solicitation Clauses: [www.epa.gov/grants/epa-solicitation-clauses](http://www.epa.gov/grants/epa-solicitation-clauses).

If there are no partnerships associated with the application, please indicate this in the workplan and describe how you will perform the project effectively without partnerships.

**B. Community Engagement (10 possible points)**

In addition to the information included under Section 2.A., applications will be evaluated based on the effectiveness of the applicant’s plan for engaging local community members with respect to the design and performance of the proposed project and obtaining support from project partners to more effectively perform the project. Applicants will be evaluated on their approach for incorporating community input throughout the design and performance of

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<sup>§</sup> CEQ, Environmental Justice: Guidance under the National Environmental Policy Act (Dec. 10, 1997), available at <https://ceq.doe.gov/docs/ceq-regulations-and-guidance/regs/ej/justice.pdf>

the project. Community engagement and partnership efforts could include various organizations representing a broad spectrum of the community; examples include grassroots, neighborhood, school, faith-based, city council, business, local government, and other organizations. Applications that demonstrate recent involvement of project partners and community members working together on other projects may be evaluated more favorably than others.

Applicants should include a strategy to ensure that the collected data is useable, accessible to the public, and will be shared with appropriate stakeholders (*e.g.*, local government) and local communities in a practicable amount of time. Data and/or related observations must be shared throughout the lifetime of the project and not only after the project is at or near completion.

**B. Community-Based Organization Set-Aside (10 possible points)**

This evaluation sub-criterion is only required if applying under the community-based organization set-aside. Applicants applying under the community-based organization set-aside should provide a detailed description of how their organization meets the “community-based organization” criteria as defined in Section III.C.6. of this announcement. Applicants applying for the community-based organization set-aside should submit documentation to demonstrate the community the organization represents. This documentation can include the organization’s charter, mission statement or other official document that states the community that the organization represents. This documentation can be submitted using the Other Attachments Form in grants.gov and does not count towards the 12-page limit of the project narrative. In addition to describing the community that the applicant’s organization represents, applicants should also address how their organization:

- Has demonstrated effectiveness as a representative of the community or a significant segment of the community and
- Helps members of that community or segment obtain environmental, health, educational, or other social services.

**Section 3 – Environmental Justice and Underserved Communities (10 total possible points from Section V.A. of the RFA)**

This section of the workplan should include a detailed discussion of how the proposed project will promote environmental justice, as described in Section I.C.3. of the RFA. Environmental justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.

Applicants should describe how the project will effectively address disproportionate health outcomes from pollution and the COVID–19 pandemic, that have affected and/or currently affect people/communities of color, low income, tribal, and indigenous populations, and if applicable other vulnerable populations such as the elderly, children, and those with pre-existing medical conditions. Adverse impacts may be the result of industrial, governmental, commercial and/or other actions and include the accompanying economic challenges of such impacts. Adverse impacts may be the result of the COVID-19 pandemic, industrial, governmental, commercial and/or other actions and include the accompanying economic challenges of such impacts.

As applicable, applicants should demonstrate how the project benefits these communities and/or populations including those in the communities/populations that have experienced a lack of resources or other impediments to addressing the adverse impacts described above. Additionally, applicants should describe the extent to which the project addresses engagement with these communities and/or populations to ensure their meaningful participation with respect to the design, planning, and performance of the project.

NOTE: Disproportionate health outcomes from pollution and the COVID–19 pandemic, as well the accompanying economic challenges of such impacts, may result when greater pollution burdens or consequences, and the impact of them, are more likely to affect people/communities of color, low income, tribal and indigenous populations and vulnerable populations including those identified above. The impacts may result from various factors including but not limited to being a function of historical trends and policy decisions.

Factors that may indicate disproportionate and adverse impacts as referenced above include:

- Differential proximity and exposure to environmental hazards;
- Greater susceptibility to adverse effects from environmental hazards (due to genetic predisposition, age, chronic medical conditions, lack of health care access, the COVID-19 pandemic, or poor nutrition);
- Unique environmental exposures because of practices linked to cultural background or socioeconomic status (e.g., subsistence fishing or farming);
- Cumulative effects from multiple stressors;
- Reduced ability to effectively participate in decision-making processes due to language barriers, inability to access traditional communication channels, or limited capacity to access technical and legal resources; and
- Degraded physical infrastructure, such as poor housing, poorly maintained public buildings (e.g., schools), or lack of access to transportation.

Applicants are encouraged, as appropriate, to include data from EPA’s [EJSCREEN](#) tool (or other EJ-focused geospatial mapping tools) as part of their application to help characterize and describe the affected communities/populations and area(s). Data from other sources (e.g., studies, census, and third-party reports) should also be included to give a more complete picture of the impacted communities and populations. Instructions, resources, and tutorials on how to use EJSCREEN are included at the hyperlink above.

#### **Section 4 – Environmental Results—Outcomes, Outputs and Performance Measures (20 total possible points from Section V.A. of the RFA)**

##### **A. Expected Project Outputs and Outcomes (10 possible points)**

Identify the expected quantitative and qualitative outcomes and outputs of the project as defined in Section I.C. of the RFA. Specific outputs and outcomes should be provided and may include short- and longer-term activities. Applicants will be evaluated on the quality of the expected project outputs and outcomes identified in the application for their project. The expected outputs and outcomes should be effective in achieving the Program Objectives listed in Section I of the RFA, including developing strategies for addressing local

environmental or public health issues. In addition to a narrative discussion of the outputs and outcomes, the applicant is encouraged to include a table of the expected outputs and outcomes.

**B. Performance Measures and Plan (5 possible points)**

Applicants should describe the proposed performance measures, which will be the mechanism to track, measure, and report progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes. Applicants should describe their plan for tracking and measuring progress toward achieving the expected project outputs and outcomes and how the results of the project will be evaluated, as described in Section I.C. of the RFA and Section 4.a. of this appendix.

**C. Timeline and Milestones (5 possible points)**

The applicant should include a detailed and organized timeline for the project including milestones for specific tasks, such as bidding, procurement, installation, and reports, along with estimated dates. Applicant should include scheduled time for quarterly and final report preparation into the project timeline. It is recommended that you insert a table in your work plan narrative to help organize your milestone schedule. Your milestone schedule should support and/or supplement the clear descriptions you provide in the Project Summary section.

**Section 5 – Quality Assurance Statement (5 total possible points from Section V.A. of the RFA)**

A quality assurance statement is a brief description of the quality assurance and quality control practices that will be applied during the project. In no more than 2 pages, the applicant shall state their understanding and intent to carry out work under this potential agreement within a quality assurance system commensurate with the degree of confidence needed for the environmentally related data operations (Note that this statement does not count towards the 12-page limit of the project narrative and should be submitted using the Optional Attachment form).

- Identify the individual who will be responsible for the quality assurance (QA) and quality control (QC) aspects of the project along with a brief description of this person's functions, experience, and authority within the research organization. Describe the organization's general approach for conducting quality assurance.
- Discuss the potential criteria and/or process for determining acceptable data quality (e.g., precision, accuracy, representativeness, completeness, comparability, or data quality objectives).

Note: As detailed in 2 CFR §1500.12, a full quality assurance project plan will be required prior to award of an assistance agreement that involves environmental data collection, production, or use.

**Section 6 – Programmatic Capability and Past Performance (15 total possible points from Section V.A. of the RFA)**

In evaluating applicants under these factors in Section V, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources, including information from 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). If you do not provide any response for these items, you may receive a score of 0 for these factors.

**A. Past Performance (5 possible points)**

Submit a list of federally and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include grants and cooperative agreements but not contracts) that your organization performed within the last three years (no more than 5 agreements) and describe whether, and how, you were able to successfully complete and manage those agreements.

**B. Reporting Requirements (5 possible points)**

For each of the agreements listed, describe your history of meeting the reporting requirements under those agreements including whether you adequately and timely reported on your progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes of those agreements (and if not, explain why not) and whether you submitted acceptable final technical reports under the agreements.

**C. Staff Expertise (5 possible points)**

Include information on the applicant's organization, including a description of the staff's expertise, qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project. Biographical sketches, including resumes or curriculum vitae for key staff, managers and any other key personnel can be included as an optional project team biography attachment, as listed in Section IV.C.6. of the RFA; the optional attachment does not count towards the 12-page limit of the project narrative.

Note: In evaluating applicants under these factors in Section V, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources, including information from 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). If you do not provide any response for these items, you may receive a score of 0 for these factors.

**Section 7 – Budget (20 total possible points from Section V.A. of the RFA)**

This section of the project narrative is a detailed description of the budget found in the SF-424A and must include a discussion of the applicant's approach to ensuring proper management of grant/cooperative agreement funds, a detailed budget narrative, as well as the itemized budget table below. An applicant's budget table and budget narrative must account for both federal funds and any non-federal voluntary cost share, if applicable. Selected applicant(s) will need to submit a copy of their current indirect cost rate that has been negotiated with a federal cognizant agency prior to award. Additional guidance for developing the applicant's budget is available in [RAIN-2019-G02, "Interim General Budget Development Guidance for Applicants and](#)

## Recipients of EPA Financial Assistance.”

### **A. Budget Detail** (5 possible points)

Whether the proposed budget provides a detailed breakout by funding type included in the proper budget category for each activity requesting funds.

Applicants should provide a detailed breakout by funding type included in the proper budget category for each activity requesting funds. Applicants should use the instructions, budget object class descriptions, and example table below to complete the detailed budget section of the project narrative. The budget detail and the budget table should be included in the project narrative and count towards the maximum 12-page limit. Additional budget documents, excluding the SF-424 and SF-424A forms, or project narratives pages in excess of the page limitation will not be reviewed, as listed in Section III.D. of the RFA. Applicants should include applicable rows of costs for each budget category in their budget table to accurately reflect the proposed project budget. Applicants must itemize costs related to personnel, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, installation or labor supplies, contractual costs, other direct costs (i.e., subawards, participant support costs), indirect costs, and total costs. If providing a voluntary cost share, the budget detail must clearly specify the amount of federal funding and the cost share amount for each category. See Appendix C for more information on participant support costs and [RAIN-2018-G05, “EPA Guidance on Participant Support Costs.”](#)

- **Personnel - List all staff positions by title. Give annual salary, percentage of time assigned to the project, and total cost for the budget period.** This category includes only direct costs for the salaries of those individuals who will perform work directly for the project (paid employees of the applicant organization as reflected in payroll tax records). If the applicant organization is including staff time (in-kind services) as a cost-share, this should be included as Personnel costs. Personnel costs do not include: (1) costs for services of contractors (including individual consultants), which are included in the “Contractual” category; (2) costs for employees of subrecipients under subawards or non-employee program participants (e.g., interns or volunteers), which are included in the “Other” category; or (3) effort that is not directly in support of the proposed project, which may be covered by the organization’s negotiated indirect cost rate. The budget detail must identify the personnel category type by Full Time Equivalent (FTE), including percentage of FTE for part-time employees, number of personnel proposed for each category, and the estimated funding amounts.
- **Fringe Benefits - Identify the percentage used, the basis for its computation, and the types of benefits included.** Fringe benefits are allowances and services provided by employers to their employees as compensation in addition to regular salaries and wages. Fringe benefits may include, but are not limited to the cost of leave, employee insurance, pensions and unemployment benefit plans. If the applicant’s fringe rate does not include the cost of leave, and the applicant intends to charge leave to the agreement, it must provide supplemental information describing its proposed method(s) for determining and equitably distributing these costs.

- **Travel - Specify the mileage, per diem, estimated number of trips in-state and out-of-state, number of travelers, and other costs for each type of travel.** Travel may be integral to the purpose of the proposed project (e.g., inspections); related to proposed project activities (e.g., attendance at meetings); or to a technical training or workshop that supports effective implementation of the project activities. Only include travel costs for employees in the travel category. Travel costs do not include: (1) costs for travel of contractors (including consultants), which are included in the “Contractual” category; (2) travel costs for employees of subrecipients under subawards and non-employee program participants (e.g., trainees), which are included in the “Other” category. Further, travel does not include bus rentals for group trips, which would be covered under the contractual category. Finally, if the applicant intends to use any funds for travel outside the United States, it must be specifically identified. All proposed foreign travel must be approved by EPA’s Office of International and Tribal Affairs prior to being taken.
- **Equipment - Identify each item to be purchased which has an estimated acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit and a useful life of more than one year.** Equipment also includes accessories necessary to make the equipment operational. Equipment does not include: (1) equipment planned to be leased/rented, including lease/purchase agreement; or (2) equipment service or maintenance contracts that are not included in the purchase price for the equipment. These types of proposed costs should be included in the “Other” category. Items with a unit cost of less than \$5,000 should be categorized as supplies, pursuant to 2 CFR 200.1, “Equipment.” The budget detail must include an itemized listing of all equipment proposed under the project. If installation costs are included in the equipment costs, labor expenses shall be itemized with the detailed number of hours charged and the hourly wage. If the applicant has written procurement procedures that define a threshold for equipment costs that is lower than \$5,000, then that threshold takes precedence.
- **Supplies - “Supplies” means all tangible personal property other than “equipment.”** The budget detail should identify categories of supplies to be procured (e.g., laboratory supplies or office supplies). Non-tangible goods and services associated with supplies, such as printing service, photocopy services, and rental costs should be included in the “Other” category.
- **Contractual - Identify each proposed contract and specify its purpose and estimated cost.** Contractual services (including consultant services) are those services to be carried out by an individual or organization, other than the applicant, in the form of a procurement relationship. [EPA’s Subaward Policy and supplemental Frequent Questions](#) has detailed guidance available for differentiating between contractors and subrecipients. Leased or rented goods (equipment or supplies) should be included in the “Other” category. EPA does not require applicants to identify specific contractors. The applicant should list the proposed contract activities along with a brief description of the anticipated scope of work or services to be provided, proposed duration, and proposed procurement method (competitive

or non-competitive), if known. Any proposed non-competed/sole-source contracts in excess of \$3,500 must include a justification. Note that it is unlikely that EPA will accept proposed sole source contracts for goods and services (e.g., consulting) that are widely available in the commercial market. Refer to [EPA's Best Practice Guide for Procuring Services, Supplies, and Equipment Under EPA Assistance Agreements](#) for EPA's policies on competitive procurements and encouraging the use of small and disadvantaged business enterprises.

- **Other - List each item in sufficient detail for EPA to determine the reasonableness and allowability of its cost.** This category should include only those types of direct costs that do not fit in any of the other budget categories. Examples of costs that may be in this category are: insurance; rental/lease of equipment or supplies; equipment service or maintenance contracts; printing or photocopying; participant support costs such as non-employee training stipends and travel; and subaward costs. Applicants should describe the items included in the "Other" category and include the estimated amount of participant support costs in a separate line item. Additional information about participant support costs is contained in [RAIN-2018-G05, "EPA Guidance on Participant Support Costs."](#)

Subawards (e.g., subgrants) and participant support costs are a distinct type of cost under this category. The term "subaward" means an award of financial assistance (money or property) by any legal agreement made by the recipient to an eligible subrecipient even if the agreement is referred to as a contract. Rebates, subsidies, and similar one-time, lump-sum payments to program beneficiaries for purchase of eligible emission control technologies are considered participant support costs. Refer to [EPA's Subaward Policy and supplemental Frequent Questions](#) for detailed guidance on funding projects and partnerships and how to correctly categorize these costs in the workplan budget. "Other" does not include procurement purchases, technical assistance in the form of services instead of money, or other assistance in the form of revenue sharing, loans, loan guarantees, interest subsidies, insurance, or direct appropriations. Subcontracts are not subawards and belong in the contractual category. Applicants must provide the aggregate amount they propose to issue as subaward work as a separate line item in the "Other" category, and a description of the types of activities to be supported.

- **Indirect Charges - If indirect charges are budgeted, indicate the approved rate and base.** Indirect costs are those incurred by the grantee for a common or joint purpose that benefit more than one cost objective or project and are not readily assignable to specific cost objectives or projects as a direct cost. Examples of Indirect Cost Rate calculations are shown below:
  - Personnel (Indirect Rate x Personnel = Indirect Costs)
  - Personnel and Fringe (Indirect Rate x Personnel & Fringe = Indirect Costs)
  - Total Direct Costs (Indirect Rate x Total direct costs = Indirect Costs)
  - Direct Costs, less distorting or other factors such as contracts and equipment (Indirect Rate x (total direct cost – distorting factors) = Indirect Costs)

Additional indirect cost guidance is available in [RAIN-2018-G02, “Indirect Cost Guidance for Recipients of EPA Assistance Agreements.”](#)

**Example Budget Table (Required, part of the 12-page limit)**

Line Item & Itemized Cost	EPA Funding**
<b>Personnel</b>	
(1) Project Manager @ \$40/hr x 10 hrs/wk x 156 wks	\$62,400
(2) Project Staff @ \$25/hr x 40 hrs/wk x 156 wks	\$156,000
<b>TOTAL PERSONNEL</b>	<b>\$218,400</b>
<b>Fringe Benefits</b>	
20% of Salary and Wages @ 20% x Total Personnel - Retirement, Health Benefits, FICA, SUI	\$43,680
<b>TOTAL FRINGE BENEFITS</b>	<b>\$43,680</b>
<b>Travel</b>	
Mileage for PM: 25 miles/wk @ \$.17/mi x 208 wks	\$884
Mileage for Staff: 50 mi/wk @ \$.17/mi x 208 wks	\$1,768
<b>TOTAL TRAVEL</b>	<b>\$2,652</b>
<b>Equipment</b>	
5 continuous PM <sub>2.5</sub> monitors @ \$12,000/unit	\$60,000
<b>TOTAL EQUIPMENT</b>	<b>\$60,000</b>
<b>Supplies</b>	
Outreach Materials and Supplies	\$2,500
5 Tablet Computers @ \$750/unit	\$3,750
<b>TOTAL SUPPLIES</b>	<b>\$6,250</b>
<b>Contractual</b>	
Support Services Contract	\$25,000
<b>TOTAL CONTRACTUAL</b>	<b>\$25,000</b>
<b>Other</b>	
Subaward Costs	\$25,000
Community Meeting Logistics	\$4,000
<b>TOTAL OTHER</b>	<b>\$29,000</b>
<b>Indirect Charges</b>	
Federal Indirect Cost Rate x Personnel = Indirect Costs (Federal Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate = 20%)	\$21,840
<b>TOTAL INDIRECT</b>	<b>\$21,840</b>
<b>TOTAL FUNDING</b>	<b>\$406,822</b>
<b>TOTAL PROJECT COST††</b>	<b>\$406,822</b>

\*\* EPA Funding amount must be included on the SF-424 in Section 18.a and SF-424A in: cell 5(e) under Section A – Budget Summary; and Column (1) under Section B – Budget Categories.

†† Total Project Cost must be included on the SF-424 in Section 18.g and SF-424A in: cell 5(g) under Section A – Budget Summary; and column (5), Row k under Section B – Budget Categories.

**Note on Management Fees:** When formulating budgets for applications, applicants must not include management fees or similar charges in excess of the direct costs and indirect costs at the rate approved by the applicant's cognizant federal audit agency, or at the rate provided for by the terms of the agreement negotiated with EPA. The term "management fees or similar charges" refers to expenses added to the direct costs in order to accumulate and reserve funds for ongoing business expenses, unforeseen liabilities, or for other similar costs that are not allowable under EPA assistance agreements. Management fees or similar charges cannot be used to improve or expand the project funded under this agreement, except to the extent authorized as a direct cost of carrying out the work plan.

**B. Reasonableness of Costs (10 possible points)**

EPA will evaluate the reasonableness of the applicant's budget based on the applicant's narrative description of the budget and detailed breakout of requested funding for each work component or task. Provide a detailed description of every itemized cost, including how every cost relates to the project narrative and specific emission reduction activities. Instructions for what to include in the Budget Detail are described in Section 7.a. of this Appendix above.

Applicants must itemize the cost categories as listed below and the SF-424A form: personnel, fringe benefits, contractual costs, travel, equipment, supplies, contractual costs, other direct costs (subawards, participant support costs), indirect costs, and total costs. Round up to the nearest dollar and do not use any cents.

For applicants that provide a voluntary cost share/match or leveraged resources as described in Section III.B. of the RFA and Section 7 of this appendix, the budget narrative must include a detailed description of how the applicant will obtain the cost share and leveraged resources and how the cost share funding and leveraged resources will be used. Proposed voluntary cost share included in the budget detail must also be included on the SF-424 and SF-424A. Leveraged resources should not be included in the SF-424 or SF-424A.

Recipients may issue subawards, contracts, or participant support costs to implement projects. Refer to [EPA's Best Practice Guide for Procuring Services, Supplies, and Equipment Under EPA Assistance Agreements](#), [EPA's Subaward Policy](#), [RAIN-2018-G05](#), ["EPA Guidance on Participant Support Costs"](#) and supplemental Frequent Questions for additional guidance.

**C. Expenditure of Awarded Funds (5 possible points)**

Applicants should provide a detailed written description of the applicant's approach, procedures, and controls for ensuring that awarded grant funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner.

**Section 6 – Optional Attachments (As listed in Section IV.C. of the RFA; this information does not count towards the project narrative 12-page limit):**

- 1. Partnership Letter(s)-** If applicable, letters that demonstrate strong involvement throughout the project from a variety of project partners are encouraged. Letters should be addressed to the applicant organization. Please do not ask partners to submit letters directly to EPA. Note also the requirements described earlier on naming partners that will be parties to EPA funded financial transactions.
  
- 2. Resumes of the Project Manager and Other Key Personnel-** Applicants can attach a resume or curricula vitae (CV) for the project manager and other key personnel. These are not subject to the workplan page limit although individual resumes should not exceed 2 pages in length. Refer to direction in the RFA on naming contractors (including individual consultants) as project partners whose qualifications will be reviewed by EPA as part of the evaluation process.