

Notice of Funding Opportunity

Original Applications Due: **Friday, March 14, 2025**

Revised Application Due: **Friday, April 11, 2025**



Great Lakes National Program Office

Great Lakes Fish Monitoring and Surveillance Program

Funding Opportunity Number: EPA-R5-GL2025-FMSP



Contents

1.	Basic Information	1
	A. Executive Summary:	1
	B. Key Information:	1
	C. Key Dates:	1
	D. Funding Details:	1
	E. Agency Contact Information:	2
	F. Other Funding Considerations:.....	2
2.	Eligibility.....	2
	A. Eligible Applicants.....	2
	(1) Other Eligibility Requirements.....	3
	B. Cost Sharing	3
3.	Program Description	3
	A. Purpose, Priorities, and Activities.....	3
	B. Program Goals and Objectives.....	9
	C. Statutory Authority	10
	D. Funding Type.....	10
4.	Application Contents and Format	10
	A. Application Forms	10
	The following forms and documents are required under this announcement:	10
	B. Applicants Using Contractors.....	12
	D. Coalition Coverage.....	13
	E. Other Program Specific Application Information	13
5.	Submission Requirements and Deadlines.....	13
	A. Submission Dates and Times	13
	B. Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and System for Award Management (SAM.gov)	14
	C. Submission Instructions	14
	D. Technical Issues with Submission	14
	E. Intergovernmental Review	15
6.	Application Review Information.....	15
	A. Responsiveness Review	15
	B. Review Criteria.....	15
	C. Review and Selection Process.....	22
	Other Evaluation Factors	22
	D. Risk Review	22
7.	Award Notices.....	22
8.	Post-Award Requirements and Administration.....	22
	A. Administrative and National Policy Requirements	22
	B. Reporting	23

C. FFATA and FSRS Reporting..... 23

9. Other Information..... 23

 A. Additional Provisions for Applicants..... 23

1. Basic Information

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Great Lakes National Program Office

Great Lakes Fish Monitoring and Surveillance Program, 2025 Funding Opportunity

A. Executive Summary:

The Great Lakes Fish Monitoring and Surveillance Program (GLFMSP) helps EPA satisfy statutory requirements under section 118 of the Clean Water Act to establish a Great Lakes system-wide surveillance network to monitor the water quality of the Great Lakes, with a special emphasis on the monitoring of toxic pollutants. The goals of the GLFMSP are to collect, analyze, and report contaminant concentrations in Great Lakes top-predator fish, improve understanding of contaminant cycling throughout food webs in the Great Lakes, and screen for emerging chemicals in fish tissue to identify priority chemicals warranting future study. The targeted audience for this funding opportunity is eligible entities listed below capable of analyzing contaminants in fish tissues.

C. Key Dates:

April 11, 2025 11:59 pm ET	Application Submission Deadline
April 11, 2025 10:59 pm CT	Application Submission Deadline (Local Time)
June 2025	Anticipated Notification of Selection
June 2025	Anticipated Award Notification

D. Funding Details:

It is anticipated that up to **1** award(s) will be made under this announcement. Awards are expected to be **\$7.2 Million**, depending on Agency funding levels, the quality of applications received, agency priorities, and other applicable considerations. Awards funded under this opportunity are expected to have an **approximate 6-year** project period.

B. Key Information:

Opportunity Number:

Environmental Protection Agency

Great Lakes National Program Office

EPA-R5-GL2025-FMSP

Assistance Listing:

66.469

Announcement Type:

Initial

Funding Available:

\$ 7,200,000

Number of Awards:

1 Cooperative Agreement

E. Agency Contact Information:

Further information, if needed, may be obtained from the EPA contact(s) indicated below.

Technical Contact: **Brian Lenell GLRI-RFA@epa.gov**
Eligibility Contact: **Victoria Raymond GLRI-RFA@epa.gov**
Administrative Contact: **Victoria Raymond; GLRI-RFA@epa.gov**

F. Other Funding Considerations:

Up to \$7,200,000 may be awarded under this NOFO over approximately six years, consisting of incremental funding of about \$1,200,000 per year, contingent on the quality of applications received, funding availability, future appropriations, satisfactory performance of work, and other applicable considerations. Funding each year is not guaranteed. The application should include an annualized budget and budget detail narrative for the project, and a detailed workplan covering each year of the project.

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

Selection or award of funding under this NOFO is not a guarantee of future funding. EPA reserves the right to make additional awards under this announcement if additional funding becomes available after the original selections are made. Any additional selections for awards will be made no later than 6 months after the original selection decisions.

2. Eligibility

A. Eligible Applicants

Only these types of organizations may apply. Organization types are consistent with definitions at [2 CFR 200.1](#):

- [Indian Tribe](#).
- [State & Local Governments](#).
- [Institutions of Higher Education \(IHEs\)](#).
- [Nonprofit organizations](#).

Qualified non-federal entities eligible to apply include non-federal governmental entities, nonprofit organizations, and institutions. This includes state agencies; any agency or instrumentality of local government; interstate agencies; federally recognized tribes and tribal organizations; colleges and

universities; nonprofit organizations; and other public or nonprofit private agencies, institutions, and organizations. "For profit" organizations, federal agencies, and individuals are not eligible applicants.

(1) Other Eligibility Requirements

Applications must meet the following threshold criteria to be considered eligible:

1. Applications must address all program elements listed in Section 3.
2. Applications must not request more than \$7,200,000.
3. Applicants must only submit 1 application under this opportunity. Applicants that submit more than 1 application will be contacted to determine which application to evaluate. The remaining application(s) will be deemed ineligible.
4. Applications must address all outputs and outcomes.
5. Applications must specify a start date of June 1, 2025, and must specify an end date for the cooperative agreement of no later than November 30, 2031, that allows for the completion of analysis and final data reporting for all samples from 2025 through 2029.

Please see [Section 6](#) for additional threshold criteria.

To be eligible under this request, applicants must demonstrate how they will:

1. Analyze homogenized fish tissue from all 10 GLFMSP stations for fish collected in 2025-2029.
2. Analyze all chemicals listed in Table 2 of this NOFO and demonstrate the ability to perform chemical analyses to retain comparability and continuity with historical GLFMSP data. Historical GLFMSP data can be found in the [Great Lakes Environmental Database](#) (GLENDa).

B. Cost Sharing

Cost sharing is not a requirement to be eligible to apply to this funding opportunity. Please note only Federal funds should be listed on the SF-424, SF-424A, and Budget Detail.

3. Program Description

A. Purpose, Priorities, and Activities

Program Purpose

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Great Lakes National Program Office (GLNPO) Great Lakes Fish Monitoring and Surveillance Program (GLFMSP) is a long-term monitoring program designed to:

- 1) collect, analyze, and report contaminant concentrations in Great Lakes top-predator fish (Lake Trout (*Salvelinus namaycus*) and Walleye (*Sander vitreus*),
- 2) improve understanding of contaminant cycling throughout food webs in the Great Lakes, and
- 3) screen for emerging chemicals in fish tissue to identify priority chemicals warranting future trend analysis and study.

By accomplishing these goals, Great Lakes Fish Monitoring and Surveillance Program will help to achieve the purpose of the assistance listing of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative by protecting the largest system of fresh surface water in the world.

Program Priority

Composites of top-predator fish are collected in the open waters of the five Great Lakes and analyzed to assess temporal trends in legacy organic contaminants and new chemicals of concern. Table 1 describes GLFMSP fish sampling station information and analytes and fish tissue parameters measured by the GLFMSP are listed in Table 2.

Table 1. GLFMSP fish sampling station information.

Lake	Estimated number of composite samples	Sample type (species)	Sampling location and latitude/longitude	Collection year	Fish size (length)
Superior	10 + 1 mega-composite* per sampling location	Lake Trout	Apostle Islands 46°55', 90°25'	2026, 2028	600 – 700 mm
			Keweenaw Pt. 47°25', 87°35'	2025, 2027, 2029	600 – 700 mm
Michigan	10 + 1 mega-composite* per site	Lake Trout	Saugatuck 42°35', 86°25'	2026, 2028	600 – 700 mm
			Sturgeon Bay 44°45', 87°15'	2025, 2027, 2029	600 – 700 mm
Huron	10 + 1 mega-composite* per site	Lake Trout	Rockport 45°15', 83°15'	2026, 2028	600 – 700 mm
			Port Austin 44°05', 82°45'	2025, 2027, 2029	600 – 700 mm
Erie	10 + 1 mega-composite* per site	Walleye	Middle Bass Island 41°35', 82°55'	2026, 2028	400 – 500 mm
		Lake Trout	Dunkirk 42°25', 79°35'	2025, 2027, 2029	600 – 700 mm
Ontario	10 + 1 mega-composite* per site	Lake Trout	Oswego 43°35', 76°15'	2026, 2028,	600 – 700 mm
			North Hamlin 43°25', 77°55'	2025, 2027, 2029	600 – 700 mm

*Mega-composite sample refers to a composite sample of all fish homogenates from a single annual sampling station.

Table 1: Historical analytes and parameters analyzed in fish composite samples by the GLFMSP.

Analyte
Polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) congeners (143)
Coplanar PCBs (4)
Total PCBs
Hexabromocyclododecane isomers (3)
Total hexabromocyclododecane
Total toxaphene and toxaphene homologs (3)
Polybrominated diphenyl ether (PBDE) congeners (25)
Total PDBEs
Total mercury
Organochlorine pesticides (21)
Polybrominated biphenyl (PBB)-153
Polychlorinated dibenzodioxin (PCDD) congeners (7)
Polychlorinated dibenzofuran (PCDF) congeners (10)
Total PCDDs
Total PCDFs
Polychlorinated naphthalenes (41)
Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) (16)
Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) including perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS), perfluorononanoic acid (PFNA), perfluorohexanesulfonic acid (PFHxS), perfluoroheptanoic acid (PFHpA), perfluorobutanoic acid (PFBA), perfluorobutane sulfonic acid (PFBS), perfluoroalkyl carboxylic acid (PFCA) (26)
Lipid fraction of fish composites
Omega-3 fatty acids of fish composites (39)
Sample percent moisture of fish composites

Program Activities

Applicants must propose plans to conduct activities in support of Great Lakes Fish Monitoring Surveillance Program goals listed below and must also include other activities associated with conducting new emerging chemical surveillance and special studies. The following provides a brief description of the goals and objectives that applicants must address when proposing project activities.

Applicants must propose program activities that support the following general goals of the program:

3. Annually analyze homogenized fish tissue from Great Lakes Fish Monitoring and Surveillance Program (GLFMSP) stations in the Great Lakes;
4. Assess concentrations and trends (both spatial and temporal) of persistent toxic chemicals in Great Lakes top-predator fish;
5. Identification of new or emerging chemical threats to the Great Lakes;
6. Reporting of results to support Great Lakes ecosystem assessments.

Applicants must address each of the objectives in accordance with requirements described below:

Sample Analysis

The GLFMSP collects top-predator fish from all five Great Lakes at two long-term sampling stations in each lake, as detailed in Table 1. Sampling of each station in a lake alternates between calendar years. A total of 11 total homogenized fish composite samples are prepared from each sampling station in a given year, resulting in 55 total samples to be analyzed annually, not inclusive of any necessary additional quality assurance samples, including spikes, duplicates and other typical quality assurance samples. An additional 10 to 20 samples per year may also be required for comparison studies with ECCC or other partnering labs. For all GLFMSP stations, applicants must demonstrate their plans to analyze all collected fish tissue composite samples for persistent toxic chemicals and parameters currently on the GLFMSP analyte list, including: 143 individual PCB congeners, 21 chlorinated pesticides, 16 PAHs, 25 polybrominated diphenyl ether flame retardants (PBDEs), and 26 PFAS. A list of required analytes and parameters to be analyzed is in Table 2. Applicants may suggest modifications to the list of analytes if accompanied by a supporting rationale and demonstration that data will remain consistent and comparable to historic datasets.

Applicants should demonstrate their plans to detail all analytical methodologies they will employ to measure persistent toxic chemicals in collected samples. Applicants should identify all analytical equipment they intend to use to analyze samples, provide rationale for analysis methods, and be able to demonstrate how methods will ensure comparability and consistency with historic datasets. Applicants should include their laboratory's analyte minimum detection limit (MDL) within their application. The awardee will need to conduct a performance evaluation through the analysis of a standard reference and archived extracts provided by EPA prior to analyzing any environmental samples. Applicants must also demonstrate how they will store sample extracts for the duration of the six-year agreement.

A summary of the current GLFMSP analytical methods can be found on the [NOFO webpage](#).

Data Management and Quality Assurance

Applicants should demonstrate their plans to manage all data generated from sample analysis and submit data to EPA in electronic format. With large quantities of data being generated, a comprehensive and efficient data management system is necessary. Applicants should demonstrate how they will submit quality-assured analytical results of analytes within 12 months of sample receipt to EPA (i.e., submit all data from samples received by April 30, 2025, by April 30, 2026). Once data are reviewed and approved by EPA the data will be made publicly available on the Great Lakes Environmental Database (GLENDa) via EPA's Central Data Exchange (CDX) reporting site.

Applicants should demonstrate how they will develop, implement, and maintain a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP). The QAPP details project organization and responsibility, sample custody, analytical standard operating procedures, data reduction, validation, internal quality control checks, and preventative maintenance. Applicants should discuss their plans for ensuring the continuity and consistency of GLFMSP measurements through reproducible quality assurance and quality control samples (e.g., field and laboratory duplicates, field and laboratory blanks, and matrix spikes). Please see [Quality Assurance Resources for GLRI Grantees](#) for more information.

Data Interpretation, Statistical Analysis, and Report Writing

Applicants should describe their plans to ensure that the monitoring and assessment information generated is made available to the Great Lakes community in a wide variety of formats, including peer-reviewed journals, scientific conference presentations, etc. Applicants should demonstrate how they will work with the EPA Technical Lead to integrate recent and historical data to provide interpretation of status and trends of persistent toxic chemicals in Great Lakes top-predator fish tissue and contribute to EPA technical reports and the triannual State of the Great Lakes (SOGL) Report.

New and Emerging Chemical Surveillance and Special Studies

a) The funding opportunity seeks to fund a pilot study to determine the ability to measure short-chain chlorinated paraffins (SCCPs) in GLFMSP samples. In support of this pilot, applicants should propose plans to analyze SCCPs in top predator fish in GLFMSP samples from all five Great Lakes collected in 2025, 2027, 2029. The approach proposed should include the development of new analysis methods or use of existing analysis methods and plans to compare environmental results to other published fish tissue SCCPs datasets in the Great Lakes.

b) Applicants should propose plans for identifying and assessing new and emerging chemicals of concern in Great Lakes top predator fish. Applicants should also discuss how additional special studies and/or enhancements to the long-term monitoring program will be implemented. Surveillance and special study activities could include but are not limited to:

- targeted and non-targeted screening for new chemicals;
- emerging chemicals research;
- analysis of persistent toxic chemicals from additional sites.

Studies designed solely to assess contaminant concentrations in environmental media (e.g. atmospheric deposition, water) or lower food web organisms will not be considered. Applicants must discuss how these activities contribute to the goals and objectives of GLFMSP, the GLRI and the GLWQA.

Results

Applicants are required to describe how funding will help EPA achieve outputs and outcomes in their responses to the criteria in Section 6. Outputs and outcomes specific to each project will be identified as deliverables in the negotiated workplan if the application is selected for award. Recipients will be expected to report progress toward the attainment of expected project outputs and outcomes during the project performance period. Outputs and outcomes are defined as follows:

- **Outputs** are an environmental activity, effort, and/or associated work product related to an environmental goal or objective that will be produced or provided over time or by a specified date. Outputs may be quantitative or qualitative but must be measurable during the project period. The expected outputs for the cooperative agreement awarded under these guidelines must include all the following, and must link to applicable GLRI Action Plan IV Measure(s) of Progress:
 - A quantification of persistent toxic chemicals in Great Lakes top-predator fish tissue samples, with attention to continuity and consistency of those measurements.
 - Evaluation of the spatial and temporal trends of persistent toxic chemicals in Great Lakes top-predator fish tissue.
 - Surveillance of new emerging chemical threats to the Great Lakes.
 - Development of Great Lakes scientists through the education of graduate and undergraduate students in Great Lakes ecosystem science and environmental chemistry.
 - Delivery of quality assured data to EPA in appropriate timeframes.
 - Support for the development of the Toxic Chemicals in Whole Fish sub-indicator report for the 2028 and 2031 State of the Great Lakes reports.
 - Dissemination of results via peer-reviewed journal articles and other media including contributions to EPA GLFMSP Technical Reports.

- **Outcomes** are the result, effect, or consequence that will occur from carrying out the activities under the cooperative agreement. Outcomes may be environmental, behavioral, health-related, or programmatic; must be qualitative or quantitative; and may not necessarily be achievable during the project period. EPA anticipates the outcomes from the project awarded under this announcement should be quantifiable to the maximum extent practicable will include, at minimum:
 - Increased understanding of the spatial and temporal trends of persistent toxic chemicals in Great Lakes top-predator fish.
 - Increased understanding of the impacts of persistent toxic chemical reduction strategies in top-predator fish.
 - Increased understanding of emerging toxic chemicals in the Great Lakes.

B. Program Goals and Objectives

The activities to be funded under this funding announcement support [FY 2022-2026 EPA Strategic Plan](#). Awards made under this funding opportunity will support Goal 5: Ensure Clean and Safe Water for All Communities, Objective 5.2: Protect and Restore Waterbodies and Watersheds of the [Strategic Plan](#). All applications must be for projects that support the goals and objectives identified above.

This Notice of Funding Opportunity is being offered under Assistance Listing 66.469.

The GLFMSP began in 1977 as a cooperative effort to assess contaminant levels in top predator fish. The GLFMSP also serves as a model for US interagency cooperation and coordination with the Environment and Climate Change Canada's National Fish Contaminants Monitoring and Surveillance Program. The goals of the GLFMSP are to collect, analyze, and report contaminant concentrations in Great Lakes top-predator fish, improve understanding of contaminant cycling throughout food webs in the Great Lakes, and screen for emerging chemicals in fish tissue to identify priority chemicals warranting future study.

Applicants must ensure that analytical results yield data with comparable detection limits currently used by the GLFMSP to ensure comparability and continuity in data sets, however, refinement and optimization of methods are encouraged, as needed. New method development by the Principal Investigator may be necessary as the analyte list is modified. The annual number of GLFMSP composites to be analyzed is between 50 and 60 (Table 1), not inclusive of any necessary additional quality assurance samples, including spikes, duplicates, and other typical quality assurance samples. An additional 10-20 samples per year may also be necessary for comparison studies with ECCC or other partnering labs. Prior to the receipt or analysis of any environmental samples, the award recipient will need to demonstrate comparability with existing data sets collected under this program through the analysis of a minimum of 10 check samples. These data will be received and evaluated by the EPA GLNPO Technical Lead prior to analysis of GLFMSP environmental samples. At the discretion of the EPA Project Officer, the Principal Investigator may need to conduct a pre-award performance evaluation through the analysis of standard reference and archived fish samples to be provided by the EPA Technical Lead. Applicants are encouraged to provide suggestions for changes and/or improvements to the GLFMSP collections. Continuity between the historical GLFMSP and future data is required.

Applicants must propose program activities that support the following general goals of the program:

7. Annually analyze homogenized fish tissue from Great Lakes Fish Monitoring and Surveillance Program (GLFMSP) stations in the Great Lakes;
8. Assess concentrations and trends (both spatial and temporal) of persistent toxic chemicals in Great Lakes top-predator fish;
9. Identification of new or emerging chemical threats to the Great Lakes;
10. Reporting of results to support Great Lakes ecosystem assessments.

By accomplishing these goals, Great Lakes Fish Monitoring and Surveillance Program will help to achieve the purpose of the assistance listing of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative by protecting the largest system of fresh surface water in the world.

C. Statutory Authority

EPA has authority to award grants and cooperative agreements for planning, research, monitoring, outreach, and implementation projects in furtherance of the GLRI and the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement. GLRI's statutory authority to award cooperative agreements is contained in the Clean Water Act, Section 118(c)(7), as amended by Public Law 114-322.

D. Funding Type

It is anticipated that cooperative agreements will be funded under this funding opportunity.

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

- EPA review of all data generated through this agreement. All data will be made available to the public;
- At the discretion of the EPA Project Officer and EPA GLNPO Technical Lead, the Principal Investigator may need to conduct a pre-award performance evaluation through the analysis of standard reference and archived fish samples to be provided by EPA;
- Close monitoring of the successful applicant's performance to verify the results proposed by the applicant;
- Collaboration during performance of the scope of work, which may include technical assistance, network guidance, use of the EPA facilities as appropriate, provision of historic data, and quantification and reporting of results;
- In accordance with [2 CFR 200.317](#) and/or [2 CFR 200.318](#), review of proposed procurement;
- Approving qualifications of key personnel (the EPA will not select employees or contractors employed by the award recipient); and
- Review and comment on reports prepared under the cooperative agreement.

The EPA does not have the authority to select employees or contractors employed by the recipient. The final decision on the content of reports rests with the recipient.

4. Application Contents and Format

A. Application Forms

The following forms and documents are required under this announcement:

Mandatory Documents:

- Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
- Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)
- EPA Key Contacts Form 5700-54
- EPA Form 4700-4 Preaward Compliance Review Report
- Project Narrative Attachment Form: use this to submit your Project Narrative

Optional Documents:

- Other Attachments Form
- Budget Narrative Attachment Form.
- Curriculum Vitae for Principal Investigators and other staff

Project Narrative

The project narrative (including the Summary Information Page, Workplan, Detailed Budget Narrative, Maps, Charts and Figures, and Meeting/Conference/Workshop Information) must be **no more than thirty single-spaced pages in length** and include the items below, in the requested order. Excess pages will not be reviewed. Maps, charts, pictures, and other figures must be included in the Project Narrative file. They may be included within the body of the workplan or as an appendix. In either case those items will be counted toward the page limit. Maps, charts, pictures, and other figures that are submitted as a separate attachment will not be reviewed.

Project Narratives must be formatted for 8½” x 11” paper and should use no smaller than an 11-point Times New Roman font with 1” margins. Do not use a “double column” (aka newspaper) format. Readability is of paramount importance. Do not include more than one application in any file. Please do not zip the file or use a zip extension for your file because it will not be accepted.

1. Summary Information Page Contents

- Funding Opportunity Number. The NOFO number is EPA-R5-GL2025-FMSP.
- Project Title: Please limit to 60 characters. EPA reserves the right to change the project title for its administrative convenience.
- Applicant Information: Include applicant (organization) name, address, contact person, phone number, and e-mail address. *Do not include private information.*
- Proposed Funding Request: The total dollar amount requested from EPA - make sure it is within the limits specified or your application will be rejected.
- Project Duration: Provide beginning and ending dates. For this award, the anticipated start date is [enter date] and the anticipated end date is [enter date].
- Brief Project Description: Summarize the proposed project in 100 words or less in a clear and succinct manner using PLAIN LANGUAGE, including expected outputs, outcomes and environmental benefits resulting from implementation of the project. Include environmental KEY TERMS that could be used as search terms (*e.g.*, water quality, toxins, mercury, *etc.*). Do not use acronyms. Should the proposal be selected, and a grant awarded, this description may be posted to the EPA Website. EPA reserves the right to make unilateral changes to conform to posting requirements. Examples can be found [here](#).
- Project Location: Specify representative project locations, including latitude and longitude specifying decimal degrees available [here](#). If the work will be done at multiple locations, specify a primary project location. Please include the reason for the location you identify if that is not self-evident.

2. Workplan Contents

The workplan for each proposed project **must** explicitly describe how the proposed project meets the guidelines established in Sections 1-3 of this NOFO (including the threshold eligibility criteria in Section 2) and **must** address each of the evaluation criteria set forth in Section 6. The workplan should be organized in the order and with the headings and information requested below. Details and associated point values for each section of the workplan are described in NOFO Section 6B (Review Criteria) below.

11. Technical Approach
 12. Project Summary and Design
 13. Sample Analysis
 14. Data Management and Quality Assurance
 15. Data Interpretation, Statistical Analysis, and Report Writing
 16. New and Emerging Chemical Surveillance and Special Studies
 17. Collaboration
18. Results
 19. Outputs
 20. Outcomes
21. Programmatic Capability and Past Performance
 22. PI's past history of managing agreements
 23. Institution's past history of managing agreements
 24. PI's history of meeting reporting requirements
 25. Institution's history of meeting reporting requirements
 26. Organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project
 27. Timely Expenditure of Grant Funds
 28. Staff expertise
29. Budget
 30. Detailed budget narrative
Expeditious spending and sufficient progress in the use of GLRI funds

Applicants are advised that readability is of paramount importance and should take precedence in application format, including selecting a legible font type and size for use in the application.

B. Applicants Using Contractors

Applicants must compete contracts for services and products, including consultant contracts, and conduct cost and price analyses, to the extent required by the [procurement provisions](#) of the regulations at 2 CFR Part 200.

Do not name a procurement contractor (including a consultant) as a "partner" or otherwise in your application unless the contractor has been selected in compliance with competitive procurement requirements. If an applicant selected for award has named a specific subrecipient, contractor, or consultant in the application, it does not relieve the applicant of its obligations to comply with subaward and/or competitive procurement requirements.

The EPA will not consider the qualifications, experience, and expertise of named subrecipients and/or named contractor(s) during the application evaluation process unless the applicant provides documentation that it has complied with these requirements.

For additional guidance, applicants should review [EPA's Best Practice Guide for Procuring Services, Supplies, and Equipment Under EPA Assistance Agreements](#), [EPA's Subaward Policy](#), and [EPA's Subaward Policy Frequent Questions](#). The EPA expects recipients of funding to comply with competitive procurement contracting requirements in 2 CFR Parts 200 and 1500 as well as the EPA's rule on Participation by Disadvantaged Business Enterprises in EPA Programs in 40 CFR Part 33.

Applicants should:

- clearly indicate which portion(s) of the application are confidential, privileged, or sensitive information, or
- state 'n/a' or 'not applicable' if the application does not have confidential, privileged, or sensitive information;
- not include trade secrets or commercial or financial information that is confidential or privileged, or sensitive information that would invade another individual's personal privacy (e.g., an individual's salary, personal email addresses, etc.);
- be aware that if such information is included, it will be treated in accordance with 40 CFR § 2.203.

D. Coalition Coverage

A coalition is formed when two or more eligible applicants coordinate to submit a single application. Coalitions must identify which single eligible organization will be the recipient of the grant and which eligible organization(s) will receive subawards from the recipient (the "pass-through entity"). The pass-through entity that administers the grant and subawards will be accountable to the EPA for proper expenditure of the funds and reporting and will be the point of contact for the coalition. Subawards must be consistent with the definition of that term in [2 CFR 200.1](#) and comply with the [EPA's Subaward Policy](#).

E. Quality Assurance Project Plans & Quality Management Plans

Quality system documentation (i.e., quality assurance project plans or quality management plans) is required for grants involving the use or collection of environmental data. EPA must have this documentation within 90-120 days of award, and it must be approved before grantees commence activities associated with the use or collection of environmental data. Applicants should budget time and resources for developing quality system documentation. Applicants that do not do so may have to fund the quality system documentation and any necessary project changes out of their own funds.

5. Submission Requirements and Deadlines

A. Submission Dates and Times

April 11, 2025 11:59 pm ET Application Submission Deadline

April 11, 2025 10:59 pm CT Application Submission Deadline (Local Time)

Grants.gov creates a date and time record when it receives the application. If you submit the same application more than once, we will accept the last on-time submission.

B. Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and System for Award Management (SAM.gov)

SAM.gov

You must have an active account with SAM.gov. SAM.gov will provide a UEI for your organization, which is required to apply for grants using Grants.gov. To register, go to [SAM.gov Entity Registration](#) and click Get Started. From the same page, you can also click on the [Entity Registration Checklist](#) for the information you will need to register. Make sure you are current with SAM.gov and UEI requirements before applying for the award.

SAM.gov registration can take several weeks. [Begin that process today.](#)

Grants.gov

You must also have an active account with [Grants.gov](#). You can see step-by-step instructions at the Grants.gov [Quick Start Guide for Applicants](#).

Please visit [How to Register to Apply for Grants](#) for additional information.

C. Submission Instructions

You must submit your application through Grants.gov. See Section 5.B. above for information on getting registered.

Important tips:

- To begin the application process under this grant announcement, go to Grants.gov and click the red “Apply” button at the top of the view grant opportunity page associated with this opportunity.
- See the Quick Start Guide for Applicants for instructions on how to submit.
- Make sure your application passes the Grants.gov validation checks.
- Do not encrypt, zip, or password protect any files.
- Your application must be submitted by an official representative of your organization who is registered with Grants.gov and is authorized to sign applications for Federal financial assistance.
- If you receive an error or the button is grayed out, it may be because you do not have the appropriate role to submit in your organization. Contact your organization’s EBiz point of contact or contact Grants.gov for assistance at 1-800-518-4726 or support@grants.gov.
- See Grants.gov Errors for information on other Grants.gov errors.
- The UEI listed on the application must be registered to the applicant organization's SAM.gov account. If not, the application may be deemed ineligible.

D. Technical Issues with Submission

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

- Contact Grants.gov Support Center before the application deadline date.
- Document the Grants.gov ticket/case number.
- Send an email with the EPA-R5-GL2025-FMSP in the subject line to GLRI-RFA@epa.gov before the application deadline time and date and must include the following:
 - Grants.gov ticket/case number(s)

- Description of the issue
- The entire application package in PDF format.

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

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

E. Intergovernmental Review

The application is not subject to Intergovernmental Review.

6. Application Review Information

A. Responsiveness Review

Applications must meet the threshold criteria requirements described in [Section 2](#) to be evaluated. Applicants not meeting these requirements will be deemed ineligible and will be notified within 15 calendar days of the determination.

- Applications must adhere to the page limit requirements. Any pages over the limit(s) in [Section 4](#) will not be reviewed.
- Initial applications must be submitted *on or before* the application deadline through Grants.gov or through limited circumstances as expressed in [Section 5](#). The EPA will not evaluate applications that are not submitted on time.
- *Technical difficulties applying:* Applicants having technical difficulties applying must contact the Grants.gov hotline at 1-800-518-4726 *and* then must email a PDF of the full application to the EPA contact listed in [Section 1](#). The submission must be received prior to the application deadline for consideration.

B. Review Criteria

Applicants should provide enough detail to explain how the proposed approach satisfies each of the scoring criteria detailed in the table below.

Criteria	Criteria Description	Points
Technical Approach	<p>Project Summary and Design (10 points) Applications will be evaluated based on the extent to which they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) 8 points – describe what work will be done, by whom, how, and when it will be accomplished; and (2) 2 points – include a milestones table with significant achievements, deliverables, and date. <p>Sample Analysis (16 points) Applications will be evaluated based on the extent to which they demonstrate effective plans to:</p>	58

	<p>(1) 14 points – analyze all collected fish tissue samples for persistent toxic chemicals currently and parameters on the GLFMSP analyte list for samples collected at GLFMSP stations;</p> <p>(2) 2 points –store and archive fish sample homogenates and excess fish tissues for the duration of the six-year agreement.</p> <p>Data Management and Quality Assurance (12 points) Applications will be evaluated based on the extent to which they provide enough detail to demonstrate effective plans to:</p> <p>(1) 2 points – develop, implement, and maintain a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) that uses reliable and reproducible quality assurance and quality control measures (<i>e.g.</i>, fish sample analysis protocols, standard operating procedures, routine quality checks of data, etc.). Please see Quality Assurance Resources for GLRI Grantees for more information;</p> <p>(2) 4 points – proactively and effectively manage large datasets;</p> <p>(3) 2 points – submit final verified data to GLNPO within 12 months of sample collection year;</p> <p>(4) 4 points – retain comparability and continuity with historic GLFMSP data.</p> <p>Data Interpretation, Statistical Analysis, and Report Writing (6 points) Applications will be evaluated based on the extent to which they demonstrate effective plans to:</p> <p>(1) 2 points – integrate recent and historical data into reports and interpret changes in persistent toxic chemicals in Great Lakes top-predator fish;</p> <p>(2) 2 points – submit progress reports, contribute to EPA technical reports, and State of the Great Lakes reports;</p> <p>(3) 2 points – expediently provide monitoring and assessment information to Great Lakes stakeholders (local, state, and Tribal environmental managers and the scientific community) in a wide variety of formats, including journal articles, annual interpretive reports, conference presentations, and internet products.</p>	
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New and Emerging Chemical Surveillance and Special Studies (10 points)

Applications will be evaluated based on the extent to which they demonstrate effective plans and methods to:

- (1) Analyze SCCPs in top predator fish in GLFMSP samples from all five Great Lakes collected in 2025, 2027, 2029. The approach proposed must include the development of new analysis methods or use of existing analysis methods and plans to compare environmental results to other published fish tissue SCCPs datasets in the Great Lakes.
- (2) Identify and assess new and emerging chemicals of concern in Great Lakes top predator fish. Applicants must also discuss how additional special studies and/or enhancements to the long-term monitoring program will be implemented. Surveillance and special study activities could include but are not limited to: targeted and non-targeted screening for new chemicals; emerging chemicals research; analysis of persistent toxic chemicals from additional sites. Studies designed solely to assess contaminant concentrations in environmental media (e.g. atmospheric deposition, water) or lower food web organisms will not be considered. Applicants must discuss how these activities contribute to the goals and objectives of GLFMSP, the GLRI and the GLWQA.

Collaboration (4 points)

Applications will be evaluated based on the extent to which they demonstrate how their approach to performing the project will promote collaborative efforts and generate support from other partners or environmental monitoring programs. Applicants should list the proposed partners that will be involved in the project and any related projects and studies, and what each of the partners' roles will be in the project's staffing, funding, design, and implementation. Applicants should describe the type of collaboration/support proposed, how you will ensure that it will materialize during project performance, and what role it will play in the overall project. Any letters demonstrating evidence of collaboration and support from the public or private sector should be attached as part of the Application Materials listed in Section 4. Applicants should describe how they will coordinate activities of the project with related or complementary projects and studies. If applicants intend to provide EPA funds to any collaborating

	<p>organization, they must carefully review provisions on “contracts and subawards” here.</p>	
<p>Results</p>	<p>The significance of environmental outputs and outcomes the applicant expects to achieve will be considered under the evaluation criteria and must be addressed in the application.</p> <p>Outputs (8 points)</p> <p>Applications will be evaluated based on the extent to which they demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A quantification of persistent toxic chemicals in Great Lakes top-predator fish samples, with attention to continuity and consistency of those measurements. • Evaluation of the spatial and temporal trends of persistent toxic chemicals in Great Lakes top-predator fish. • Surveillance of new emerging chemical threats to the Great Lakes. • Development of Great Lakes scientists through the education of graduate and undergraduate students in Great Lakes ecosystem science and environmental chemistry. • Delivery of quality assured data to EPA in appropriate timeframes. • Support development of the <i>Toxic Chemicals in Whole Fish</i> sub-indicator report for the 2028 and 2031 State of the Great Lakes reports. • Dissemination of results via peer-reviewed journal articles and other media. • how the outputs will be achieved; • effective plans for tracking progress towards achieving the outputs; • how the project outputs support the GLRI Action Plan IV (Focus Area 5, Objective 5.2), EPA FY 2022-2026 Strategic Plan (Goal 5, Objective 5.2), and 2012 GLWQA; and • effective, innovative approaches towards achieving the outputs. 	<p style="text-align: center;">12</p>

	<p>Outcomes (4 points)</p> <p>Applications will be evaluated based on the extent to which they demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased understanding of the spatial and temporal trends of atmospheric deposition of persistent toxic chemicals in Great Lakes top predator fish. • Increased understanding of the impacts of persistent toxic chemical reduction strategies on Great Lakes top-predator fish. • Increased understanding of emerging toxic chemicals in the Great Lakes. • how the outcomes will be achieved; • effective plans for tracking progress towards achieving the outcomes; • how the project outcomes support the GLRI Action Plan IV (Focus Area 5, Objective 5.2), EPA FY 2022-2026 Strategic Plan (Goal 5, Objective 5.2), and 2012 GLWQA; and • effective, innovative approaches towards achieving the outcomes. 	
<p>Programmatic Capability and Past Performance</p>	<p>Applicants should submit a list (of no more than 5 each) of federally funded assistance agreements (including but not limited to previous GLRI awards from EPA or other federal sources) similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project that the applicant and the applicant’s institution has previously performed. Information provided will be evaluated according to the criteria listed within this section.</p> <p>If applicants do not have any relevant or available past performance or reporting information, please indicate this in the proposal and applicants will receive a neutral score of for these factors (a neutral score is half of the total points available in a subset of possible points). Failure to indicate this may result in 0 points for these factors.</p> <p>In evaluating applicants under these factors in Section 6, 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 and prior federal agency grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information provided by the to successfully manage applicant</p> <p>(1) Principal Investigator’s past history of managing agreements (2 points)</p>	<p>15</p>

	<p>a. Applicants will be scored on how well the principal investigator has been able to successfully and in a timely manner complete and manage those agreements in accordance with the initial project schedule.</p> <p>(2) Institution’s past history of managing agreements (1 points)</p> <p>a. Applicants will be scored on how well the institution was able to successfully, and in a timely manner, complete and manage those agreements in accordance with the initial project schedule. Applicants will be scored on the institution’s ability to successfully manage those agreements.</p> <p>(3) Principal Investigator’s history of meeting reporting requirements (2 points)</p> <p>a. Applicants will be scored on their description of the Principal Investigator’s ability to report progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes of those agreements (and if not, explain why not), and how the applicant adequately complied with the terms and conditions of previous awards. Please include a description of the Principal Investigator’s past history of submitting acceptable final technical reports. Applicants should describe the Principal Investigator’s history of meeting the reporting requirements under those agreements, including whether the Principal Investigator adequately and timely reported on progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes of those agreements (and if not, explain why not), and how the applicant adequately complied with the terms and conditions of previous awards.</p> <p>(4) Institution’s history of meeting reporting requirements (2 points)</p> <p>a. Applicants will be scored on how well they describe their institution’s history of meeting the reporting requirements under those agreements, including whether your institution adequately and timely complied with the terms and conditions of previous awards (and if not, explain why not).</p> <p>(5) Timely Expenditure of Grant Funds (3 points)</p> <p>a. Applicants will be scored on previous expenditure experience. If an applicant or an applicant’s institution has previously received a GLRI award, or awards issued between 2019-2024, please provide an explanation and supporting documentation of</p>	
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	<p>the project’s quarterly rate of expenditure on those prior GLRI projects.</p> <p>(6) Staff Expertise (5 points)</p> <p>a. Applicants will be scored on staff expertise / qualifications that demonstrate successful achievement of goals of the project. Applicants will also be scored on how well they demonstrate expertise in low-level persistent toxic chemical measurements through publications in the literature relevant to the Great Lakes and environmental science, chemistry, and technology. Resumes or a curriculum vitae (CV) may be attached as optional documentation according to section 4.</p>	
<p>Budget</p>	<p>(1) Detailed Budget Narrative (10 points)</p> <p>a. Applications will be evaluated based on the reasonableness, necessity and allowability (of costs) of the proposed budget for the level of work proposed and for the expected benefits to be achieved.</p> <p>b. An applicant’s budget and budget narrative must account for both federal funds and any non-federal funds. Applicants will not be scored or evaluated solely on the inclusion of voluntary committed cost share. Applicants must precisely describe in their budget narrative how they will account for any voluntary cost-sharing or other non-EPA funds if applicable and what role EPA funding will play in the overall project.</p> <p>(2) Expeditious Spending and Sufficient Progress in the use of GLRI Funds (5 points)</p> <p>a. Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on their approach, procedures, and controls for ensuring that awarded grant funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner.</p>	<p>15</p>

Applicants will be evaluated based on the extent and quality to which they demonstrate that they have the capability to successfully perform the project as described in [Section 3](#) of this funding opportunity.

Only eligible entities whose applications meet the threshold criteria in [Section 2](#) of this announcement will be evaluated. **Applicants should explicitly address these criteria as part of their application**

package submittal in the project narrative. Each application will be rated using a point system. Applications will be evaluated based on a total of 100 possible points.

C. Review and Selection Process

Applications will first be evaluated against the threshold factors listed in [Section 2](#). Only those applications which meet all the threshold factors will be evaluated using the evaluation criteria listed above by a review panel composed of federal agency staff.

Final funding decisions will be made by the selection official. In making the final funding decision, the selection official will consider the review panel rankings and recommendations and may also consider program priorities.

(1) Other Evaluation Factors

Final funding decisions will be made by the selection official. In making the final funding decisions, the selection official will consider the review panel rankings and recommendations and may consider other program or agency priorities.

D. Risk Review

The EPA will consider any comments by the applicant, along with information available in the responsibility/qualification records in SAM.gov., when doing the risk review as required by [2 CFR 200.206](#).

7. Award Notices

The EPA anticipates notification to successful applicants will be made by Admin Lead for this NOFO, Victoria Raymond. The notification will be sent to the original signer of the application or the project contact listed in the application. This notification is not an authorization to begin work. The official notification of an award will be made by **EPA Region 5 Grants Management Officer**. Selection does not guarantee an award will be made. Statutory authorization, funding, or other issues during the award process may affect the ability of the EPA to make an award. The award notice, signed by an EPA grants officer, is the authorizing document and will be provided through electronic or postal mail. The successful applicant may need to prepare and submit additional documents and forms, which must be approved by the 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.

8. Post-Award Requirements and Administration

A. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

The recipient and any sub-recipient must comply with the applicable [General Terms and Conditions](#). These terms and conditions are in addition to the assurances and certifications made as part of the award, terms and conditions, and restrictions reflected on the official assistance award document.

Awards issued as a result of this funding opportunity are subject to the requirements of the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards; Title [2 CFR Part 200](#) and [2 CFR Part 1500](#).

B. Reporting

[EPA's General Terms and Conditions](#) in the Notice of Award will have information on performance and financial reports, including:

- How often you will report.
- Any required form or formatting.
- How to submit them.

C. FFATA and FSRS Reporting

The [Federal Financial Accountability and Transparency Act](#) (FFATA) requires:

- Data entry at the FFATA Subaward Reporting System (FSRS) for all subawards and subcontracts you issue for \$30,000 or more.
- Reporting executive compensation for both recipient and subaward organizations.

9. Other Information

A. Additional Provisions for Applicants

Additional provisions that apply this funding opportunity and/or awards made under this funding opportunity, can be found at [EPA NOFO Clauses](#). If you are unable to access these provisions electronically at the website above, please contact the EPA point of contact to obtain the provisions.