

Notice of Funding Opportunity

Applications Due: **Wednesday, September 10, 2025**



Region 3, Chesapeake Bay Program Office

Chesapeake Center for Collaborative Computing

Funding Opportunity Number: EPA-R3-CBP-25-01



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1. Basic Information

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Region 3, Chesapeake Bay Program Office

Chesapeake Center for Collaborative Computing

A. Executive Summary

The Chesapeake Center for Collaborative Computing (C4) is a cloud-based infrastructure that supports collection, aggregation, storage, analysis, and dissemination of data for the Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) partnership. It also provides on-site support to non-federal partners located at the Chesapeake Bay Program Office (CBPO) in Annapolis, MD. The recipient of this award will administer the C4 by operating and maintaining the existing environment, expanding and enhancing the infrastructure to meet partnership needs as they change over time, and assessing technological advances to ensure cost-effectiveness and efficiency of operations. The targeted audience for this funding opportunity is eligible entities listed below capable of managing cloud-based infrastructure for a collaborative regional partnership.

C. Key Dates:

September 10, 2025 11:59 pm ET	Application Submission Deadline
October 2025	Anticipated Notification of Selection
December 2025	Anticipated Award Notification

D. Funding Details:

It is anticipated that up to **1 award** will be made under this announcement. The amount of funding is expected to be **up to \$7,750,000**, 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 a **6-year** project period.

E. Agency Contact Information:

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

Technical Contact: **Holly Waldman; 410-295-1329; [R3 CBPO Grants@epa.gov](mailto:R3_CBPO_Grants@epa.gov)**

F. Other Funding Considerations

EPA will award funding incrementally on an annual basis. Funding is not guaranteed beyond year 1. EPA's financial obligations to the recipient are limited by the amount of federal funding awarded to date as

B. Key Information:

Opportunity Number:

EPA-R3-CBP-25-01

Assistance Listing:

66.466

Announcement Type:

Initial

Funding Available:

\$7,750,000

Number of Awards:

1 Cooperative Agreement

reflected on the award document. If the recipient incurs costs in anticipation of receiving additional funds from EPA, it does so at its own risk.

The table below summarizes the estimated funding available throughout the 6-year project period. These funding levels are intended as estimates only based on the expected scope of work throughout the life of the award. Recipients may propose different funding levels for each project year so long as overall funding request does not exceed the maximum limit of \$7,750,000.

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Total
\$1,100,000	\$1,350,000	\$1,400,000	\$1,300,000	\$1,300,000	\$1,300,000	\$7,750,000

In addition to the funding detailed above in [Section 1.D.](#), EPA may elect to provide in-kind assistance to the selected recipient in the form of workspace at the Chesapeake Bay Program Office in Annapolis, Maryland. EPA in-kind would be in addition to the \$7,750,000 referenced above and would be subject to the match requirements detailed in [Section 2.B.](#) of this NOFO. **Applicants should not budget for EPA in-kind in their application.** EPA will notify the selected applicant of the availability of in-kind workspace in the selection notice and, if requested by the selected applicant, negotiate the level of EPA in-kind to be provided as part of the pre-award process.

2. Eligibility

A. Eligible Applicants

Only these types of organizations may apply:

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

Under section Clean Water Act Section 117(d), 33 U.S. Code § 1267(d)(1), funds are available for technical and general assistance grants to nonprofit organizations, State, tribal (federally-recognized) and local governments, colleges, universities, and interstate agencies. "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. All proposed activities included in the application must directly support the Chesapeake Bay watershed, which includes portions of Delaware, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia, and all the District of Columbia. (Please note that applicants physically located outside the Chesapeake Bay region are eligible to apply provided all proposed activities directly support the Chesapeake Bay.)
2. Applications must address Activities 1-3, as described in [Section 3](#) below. Applications that do not address all three Activities will be deemed ineligible.
3. Applicants must not request more than **\$7,750,000.**
4. Applications must include a minimum **5 percent cost share.**

5. Applicants may 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.

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

B. Cost Sharing

Applicants must demonstrate in their proposal how it will meet the cost share requirement to be considered eligible. Selected recipients must comply with [2 CFR 200.306](#) when meeting a cost share requirement. For this NOFO, EPA has determined that an applicant must provide a minimum of **5 percent** of the total cost of the project as the non-federal cost share.

The proposed cost share must clearly be documented in the application SF-424, SF-424A, and budget detail. Applicants that fail to meet the minimum 5 percent cost share will be rejected.

Applicants must use the following formula to calculate the minimum cost-share requirement:

1. Amount of EPA funding requested \div 95% = 100% of Total Grant Amount
2. 100% of Total Grant Amount \times 5% = Applicant's Minimum Cost Share Amount (must be rounded upward to the next whole dollar)

For example:

1. \$7,750,000 (EPA funding request) \div 95% = \$8,157,894.74
2. \$8,157,894.74 \times 5% = \$407,894.74, which rounds upward to **\$407,895 (minimum cost share)**

3. Program Description

A. Purpose, Priorities, and Activities

The general purpose of the cooperative agreement awarded under this announcement is to support the CBP partnership's Chesapeake Center for Collaborative Computing (C4). C4 enables the [CBP's modeling and monitoring programs](#) by providing the high-performance computing infrastructure and capacity to support specialized models, scientific decision-support tools, and data management systems. This includes collective work to advance restoration and protection of the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem and its watershed through goals, outcomes, and environmental indicators, most of which are time-bound, measurable targets that directly contribute to achieving individual goals. The successful applicant will provide the necessary infrastructure, administration, and technical support needed to operate, maintain and enhance C4.

Role of the CBP Partnership

The [Chesapeake Bay Program](#) (CBP) is a unique regional, state, federal, and local partnership that has directed the restoration and protection of the Chesapeake Bay since 1983. CBP is responsible for supporting the Chesapeake Bay Executive Council (Executive Council) through several actions, including the coordination of federal, state, and local efforts to restore and protect living resources and water quality of the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed. The partnership's work is guided by the [Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement](#), which establishes the plan for collaboration across the Bay's political

boundaries and establishes goals and outcomes for the restoration of the Bay, its tributaries, and the lands that surround them. Additional information on the partnership’s structure, achievements, and commitments can be found at <https://www.chesapeakebay.net/>.

While the CBP partnership is comprised of federal and non-federal organizations, any activities funded under this NOFO shall only directly support the non-federal partners. The recipient of the cooperative agreement awarded under this NOFO may work directly with federal agencies, but the nature of that work will result only in direct benefits to the non-federal agencies, partners, and the public.

Since 2013, C4 has expanded dramatically to include all the CBP partnership’s infrastructure, supporting the Management Board, its goal implementation teams, and other CBP workgroups. The CBP partnership will provide overall direction for the C4 network via the Goal Implementation Teams and workgroups, and the Management Board, which provides strategic planning, priority setting, and operational guidance through implementation of a comprehensive, coordinated, and accountable implementation strategy for the CBP.

Current C4 Technical Environment

The current environment is a hybrid environment with resources residing in Amazon Web Services (AWS), as well as an onsite data center. The cloud-based environment primarily leverages Elastic Compute Cloud (EC2), Elastic Container Service (ECS), Relational Database Service (RDS), Simple Storage Service (S3), and Lambda services to support co-authoring and co-development of modeling and monitoring platforms and applications across the partnership. Onsite resources include networking, file storage, and virtual servers to support administrative functions as well as limited compute capacity for geospatial data processing. The CBP partnership has made substantial investment in AWS for its collaborative computing center and Microsoft Office 365 for its productivity suite of communications and collaboration services. It is expected that the future recipient will build upon the progress already made with the implementation and usage of these platforms.

Resources in AWS are distributed across approximately 10 different AWS accounts. The on-site network is connected to the AWS environment using the Transit Gateway service and a Site-to-Site VPN connection.

Amazon Web Services:

Service	Quantity	Notes
Elastic Compute Cloud (EC2)	60 Instances, 60TB Drive Space	30% Windows, 70% Linux
Simple Storage Service (S3)	300TB of data	
Elastic Container Service (ECS)	65 Services across 12 Clusters	Dev/Test/Prod Websites
Lambda	200 Functions	
Elastic Beanstalk	10 Applications	Public Websites
Relational Database Service (RDS)	5 Clusters, 15 DB Instances, 10TB Drive Space	SQL databases, Public Website databases

On-site Hardware:

Service	Quantity
Networking	4x Cisco Switches, 1 SonicWall Firewall, Access Points
Servers	6 Dell Servers (1TB RAM, 200TB storage, 124 Cores)

Licensing:

Product	Notes
Microsoft Office 365 E5	80 E5 licenses
Administrative Software	Various software required to manage and maintain the environment, including: DigiCert, Netwrix, Nexpose, Veeam, Puppet, Patch Manager Plus, Ubuntu, Hover, CloudCraft, Symantec Endpoint Protection
Scientific Software	axe DevTools, Balsamiq, Tableau, Matlab, Esri ArcGIS Online & Hub, Redgate, Visual Studio/MSDN, Telerik, PhpStorm, Resharper, FileZilla Pro, Navicat
Collaboration Software	Atlassian, Survey Monkey, Adobe, Web conferencing, Resource scheduling software, CraftCMS, Cludo, Camtasia, Snagit

Priorities and Activities

Applicants must propose a plan for administering the C4 network that meets the needs and priorities of the Chesapeake Bay Program partnership through the following activities:

1. Perform administration, operations, and maintenance of existing C4 infrastructure
2. Fully develop the C4 data storage architecture to fully support the collaborative needs of the partnership
3. Monitor trends and emerging technologies in high-performance computing and cloud-based infrastructure and evaluate them for implementation in C4

If your organization has an interest and the experience to accomplish the activities described below and is eligible to receive a federal assistance agreement as described in [Section 2](#) of this NOFO, we encourage you to apply. Each eligible application will be evaluated using the criteria described in [Section 6](#).

Applicants must address each activity below in their application to be considered eligible.

Activity 1: Perform administration, operations, and maintenance of existing C4 infrastructure

A description of the current C4 technical environment can be found above. It is expected that the future recipient will build upon the progress already made with the implementation and usage of these platforms. The full C4 environment must remain operational during any transition phase as well as through the duration of this award. The operation of the C4 cloud-based and onsite infrastructure must comply with and adhere to all relevant organizational IT cybersecurity policies, procedures, and industry best practices.

Examples of activities applicants may propose to fulfill the requirements of this activity include, but are not limited to:

- Working with incumbent and the Management Board, developing any necessary transition plans to ensure continual operation of C4 during any transition phase.
- Identifying cost-effective procurement approaches that take advantage of AWS's Compute Savings Plans as well as exploring alternate purchasing methods to reduce overall spend.
- Procuring and/or developing additional infrastructure, platforms, software, and environments, as needed, to address the evolving needs of the Management Board, its goal implementation teams, and relevant workgroups.
- Working with the Management Board, its goal implementation teams, and relevant workgroups to continually reassess requirements to make necessary improvements to meet the ever-evolving CBP partnership requirements and needs.
- Developing a multi-year capacity and implementation plan for supporting the anticipated growing requirements and needs of the Management Board, its goal implementation teams, and relevant workgroups to ensure C4 will be capable of scaling as necessary to support anticipated growth in the cumulative computing needs of the CBP partnership.
- Working with the Management Board, the goal implementation teams, and relevant workgroups to seek opportunities to appropriately scale HPC environments to ensure that adequate resources are available during periods of high usage/demand, and that costs are minimized during periods of low usage/demand.
- Maintaining existing onsite computing network capable of supporting the CBP's non-federal partners located within EPA's Annapolis office.
- Ensuring that the infrastructure, environments and/or platforms managed under this agreement meet the applicant's security standards by conducting security audits and implementing security controls.
- Seeking opportunities to standardize environments and platforms to achieve the most cost-effective method for procuring the necessary infrastructure while supporting the current C4 infrastructure.

Activity 2: Fully develop the C4 data storage architecture to fully support the collaborative needs of the partnership

Of key interest to the CBP partners is the development and implementation of a comprehensive data management strategy. CBP has vast amounts of geospatial, monitoring, and modeling data stored across both onsite and cloud-based filesystems. Determining an approach for discovering, cataloging, and publishing this data is a high priority for the CBP partnership.

Examples of activities applicants may propose to fulfill the requirements of this activity include, but are not limited to:

- Working with the Management Board to determine the approaches and technical procedures allowing partners to share documents, data, and content across the partnership in support of the Management Board, goal implementation teams, and relevant workgroup goals and objectives.
- Working with the Management Board, its goal implementation teams, and relevant CBP workgroups to develop a long-term data storage strategy, primarily focusing on comparing hybrid and cloud-only solutions and determining the best long-term approach.
- Ensuring that data maintained within the infrastructure are accessible and available to the Management Board, its goal implementation teams, and relevant CBP workgroups.
- Working with the Management Board to implement a cost-effective data and document storage and management approach, which may include utilizing intelligent tiering and data archiving technologies in support of data management across the full data lifecycle.

Activity 3: Monitor trends and emerging technologies in high-performance computing and cloud-based infrastructure and evaluate them for implementation in C4

The CBP partnership recognizes the potential for rapid evolution and proliferation of technology that may become available to support this need, particularly over the 6-year timeframe of this project. The expectation is that the recipient will monitor and assess technological improvements and, through the Management Board, report technologies and approaches that may yield more cost-effective and/or efficient results. EPA is especially interested in incorporating emerging and innovative cloud technologies (e.g., serverless computing, edge computing, predictive analytics, natural language processing, etc.) where appropriate to realize improved performance and decreased costs.

Examples of activities applicants may propose to fulfill the requirements of this activity include, but are not limited to:

- Evaluating emerging tools and trends in the areas of natural language processing and unstructured machine learning to enhance exploratory capabilities of CBP data.
- Evaluating existing C4 infrastructure supporting the CBP partnership models and scientific systems for opportunities to increase performance and reduce costs by adopting specific HPC technologies, standardizing environments and platforms, and procuring additional software/infrastructure, as necessary.
- Working with the Management Board to determine the technical specifications and approaches for implementing a virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI) to support end user compute capacity needs.
- Evaluating and managing the implementation of dedicated, private network connectivity between the onsite data center and AWS using AWS DirectConnect service.
- Developing the technical specifications required to support the collaborative needs of the Management Board, its goal implementation teams, and relevant CBP workgroups; and provision the necessary software to support these collaborations, seeking opportunities to standardize platforms across the CBP partnership's diverse array of agencies and organizations where possible.

Expected 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 grants awarded under these guidelines may include but are not limited to:

- Development of a transition plan for ensuring operations of the C4 network during the transition phase from the incumbent to the new recipient, if applicable.
- Development of a multi-year capacity and implementation plan for meeting the current and future anticipated needs of the CBP partnership.
- Regular review (at least quarterly) of the technical environment to identify opportunities for increased cost-efficiency, such as utilizing AWS's Compute Savings Plans and exploring alternate purchasing methods to reduce overall spend.

- Regular review (at least weekly) of the technical environment to ensure all infrastructure, environments, and/or platforms managed under this agreement meet the applicant's security standards, via security scanning, auditing and implementing security controls.

Outcomes are the result, effect, or consequence that will occur from carrying out the activities under the grant. 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 projects awarded under this announcement may be an increase in the capacity to:

- Provide more effective management actions to carry out the goals identified in outcomes of the *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement* due to improved access to collaborative documents, data, and enhanced models.
- Increase transparency into CBP partnership decision-making due to increased and improved access to the environmental data and associated models used in the partnership's collaborative decision making.
- Improve public participation and engagement resulting from full publication of web content, data, and documents regarding progress and management actions taken toward achieving the goals and outcomes of the *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement*.

B. Program Goals and Objectives

The activities to be funded under this funding announcement support Pillar 1: Clean Air, Land, and Water for Every American of [Administrator Zeldin's Five Pillars](#).

This Notice of Funding Opportunity is being offered under Assistance Listing 66.466.

The activities that will be performed under this award support fulfillment of the statutory requirements of the Chesapeake Bay Program under Clean Water Act under Clean Water Act Section 117(b)(2)(B), 33 U.S. Code § 1267(b)(2)(B), through administration of the infrastructure necessary to support the CBP partnership's communication, modeling, monitoring, and data management systems.

C. Statutory Authority

EPA has authority to award grants and cooperative agreement for the purposes of carrying out the Chesapeake Bay Program and its efforts to restore and protect the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem and its living resources. This statutory authority is contained in Clean Water Act Section 117(d), 33 U.S. Code § 1267 (d).

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:

- Quarterly meetings with EPA and other staff on C4 technology advancements and improvements;
- Reviewing and monitoring monthly AWS service usage;

- Close monitoring of the successful applicant’s performance to verify the results proposed by the applicant;
- In accordance with [2 CFR 200.317](#) and [2 CFR 200.318](#), review of proposed procurement;
- Approving qualifications of key personnel (the EPA will not select employees or contractors employed by the award recipient);
- Reviewing and commenting on reports prepared under the cooperative agreement (the final decision on the content of reports rests with the recipient).
- Joint operational involvement, participation, and/or collaboration between EPA and the recipient.

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

4. Application Contents and Format

A. Application Forms

The following forms and documents are required under this announcement:

Mandatory Documents:

1. Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
2. Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)
3. EPA Key Contacts Form 5700-54
4. EPA Form 4700-4 Preaward Compliance Review Report: [Tips for Completing EPA Form 4700-4](#), Pre award Compliance Review Report for All Applicants and Recipients Requesting Federal Financial Assistance
5. Project Narrative Attachment Form: See requirements below
6. Budget Narrative Attachment Form: See requirements below

Optional Documents:

- Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, if applicable: For more information, see [Indirect Cost Policy and Guidance for Recipients of EPA Assistance Agreements](#)

B. Project and Budget Narrative Requirements

Project Narrative Attachment

The project narrative must not exceed **25 single-spaced pages** and be on letter-size pages (8 ½ X 11 inches) with margins of no less than 1 inch. Font size may be no smaller than 10. 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. Excess pages will not be reviewed. Applicants are encouraged to be concise and do not need to use all the pages within the page limit.

The project narrative must follow the below format. All contents of the project narrative (Sections 1-3) must be submitted as one attachment. Please do not zip the file or use a zip extension for your attachment because it will not be accepted. Any additional attachments submitted with the application will not be reviewed.

Section 1: Executive Summary

The Executive Summary must include the below elements:

- a. Funding Opportunity Number: The NOFO number is EPA-R3-CBP-25-01.
- b. Project Title: Please limit to 60 characters. EPA reserves the right to change the project title for its administrative convenience.
- c. Application Contact Information: Include the name, title, email, and phone number for the primary contact for the application.
- d. Amount of EPA Funds Requested: Identify the total dollar amount requested from EPA.
- e. Proposed Cost Share: Identify the total proposed cost share.
- f. Organization Description: Briefly describe your organization and how your organization meets the eligibility requirements detailed in [Section 2.A.](#)
- g. Brief Project Description: In 200 words or less, summarize the proposed project plan in a clear, succinct manner using plain language.

Section 2: Project Plan

The project plan must explicitly describe how the project meets the guidelines established in Section 1-3 of this NOFO and must address each evaluation criteria set forth in [Section 6](#). The structure should follow the format below. Details for how EPA will score each application, including associated point values, are described in [Section 6.B.](#) of the NOFO.

- a. Project Scope and Approach
 - i. Project Summary and Design
 - ii. Innovation
 - iii. Cybersecurity Management
 - iv. Seamless Transition
- b. Results
 - i. Outputs and Outcomes
 - ii. Transferability of Results
- c. Programmatic Capability and Past Performance
 - i. Past Performance Managing Agreements
 - ii. Staff Expertise
 - iii. Past Performance Meeting Reporting Requirements
- d. Budget and Internal Controls
 - i. Reasonability of Proposed Budget
 - ii. Timely Expenditure of Grant Funds

Section 3: Supplemental Information and Support Documentation (*optional*)

This section should include any supplemental information and/or documentation the recipient elects to provide to support their application, including but not limited to:

- maps, diagrams, and other figures;
- curriculum vitae for the Principal Investigator and other project staff;
- references;
- letters of support; and
- letters of commitment to the project or to contribute to cost sharing.

All supplemental information and documentation must be fully incorporated into the Project Narrative Attachment submitted with the application. EPA will not review supplemental information and support documents submitted as a separate attachment.

Budget Narrative Attachment

For each year of the project, provide a budget breakdown that details proposed costs for each of the major budget categories presented in the application SF-424A:

- Personnel
- Fringe benefits
- Travel
- Equipment
- Supplies
- Contractual costs
- Construction
- Other costs
- Indirect costs.

The budget narrative must address the total estimated project funding, including both the federal share and cost share. All budget information must be presented in **whole dollar format** (no cents). The contents of the budget narrative may be organized in a spreadsheet or presented as a written narrative, at the applicant's discretion, so long as the budget narrative, when printed, does not exceed **5 pages**.

Additional guidance regarding budget development, including a sample Budget Narrative, is available at [Interim General Budget Development Guidance for Applicants and Recipients of EPA Financial Assistance](#). The Chesapeake Bay Program also provides an optional multi-year budget detail template in its [Chesapeake Bay Program Grant Guidance](#).

C. 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 requirements in 2 CFR Part 200.321 and 40 CFR Part 33 Subpart C.

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. Other Program Specific Application Information

Quality Assurance Project Plans and Quality Management Plans

Quality assurance documentation (i.e., quality assurance project plans and/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 assurance documentation. Applicants that do not do so may have to fund the quality assurance documentation and any necessary project changes out of their own funds.

Following selection, the Chesapeake Bay Program Quality Assurance Coordinator will review the successful applicant’s proposed project plan to determine specific quality assurance requirements for the award, which will be incorporated into the Programmatic Terms and Conditions.

Administrative Cost Cap

Recipients of Chesapeake Bay Program assistance agreements must adhere to the requirement for “Administrative Costs” under CWA Section 117 (d)(4), 33 U.S.C. Section 1267 (d)(4), which states that administrative costs shall not exceed **10 percent** of the annual grant award. Administrative costs are distinct from and should not be confused with indirect costs. Under CWA Section 117(a)(1), the term “administrative cost” means the cost of salaries and fringe benefits incurred in administering a grant under this section.

Salaries and fringe benefits charged against the project or program element for the sole purpose of administering the grant/cooperative agreement shall not exceed 10% of the annual grant award (federal and cost share). 100% of the salaries and fringe benefits related to these functions are considered administrative costs. Examples of administrative costs include, but are not limited to, preparation and submission of grant applications, fiscal tracking of grants funds, maintaining project files, and collection and submission of deliverables.

Salaries and fringe benefits related to the implementation of the project or program element of the grant/cooperative agreement are not considered administrative costs. None of the salaries and fringe benefit costs related to these functions shall be considered administrative costs. As an example, the salaries and fringe benefits for technical staff to conduct work to accomplish specific Chesapeake Bay Program goals as outlined in the program or project elements are not administrative costs.

5. Submission Requirements and Deadlines

A. Submission Dates and Times

September 10, 2025 11:59 pm ET Application Submission Deadline

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 Funding Opportunity Number (FON): EPA-R3-CBP-25-01 in the subject line to R3_CBPO_Grants@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 eligibility 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

Criteria Name and Description	Points

<p>a) Project Scope and Approach</p> <p>i. Project Summary and Design (20 points) Applicants will be evaluated based on the effectiveness of the project design to meet partnership needs and project milestones over the six-year project period and achieve the expected results.</p> <p>Within the Project Narrative, applicants should provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clear plan for providing administering C4 that addresses each of the three required Activities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Activity 1: Perform administration, operations, and maintenance of existing C4 infrastructure ○ Activity 2: Fully develop the C4 data storage architecture to fully support the collaborative needs of the partnership ○ Activity 3: Monitor trends and emerging technologies in high-performance computing and cloud-based infrastructure and evaluate them for implementation in C4 • A plan for coordinating and collaborating with CBP partners to ensure the project is effectively meeting needs as they change over time. <p>ii. Innovation (10 points) Applicants will be evaluated based on how well the proposal demonstrates the applicant’s ability to incorporate new, emerging, and innovative cloud-based technologies to enhance the project’s effectiveness.</p> <p>iii. Cybersecurity Management (5 points) Applicants will be evaluated based on how well the proposal demonstrates the applicant’s approach to monitoring and maintaining cybersecurity (in accordance with applicant’s relevant organizational policies).</p> <p>iv. Seamless Transition (10 points) Applicants will be evaluated based on how well they can become fully functional in the roles described in the announcement once a cooperative agreement is awarded and how the applicant will bring about a “seamless” transition in the provision of the described support to the CBP partnership and its management structure. This may include description of a transition plan, outlining specific steps, timelines, and responsible parties to ensure a seamless transition.</p>	<p>45</p>
<p>b) Results</p> <p>i. Outputs and Outcomes (5 points) Applicants will be evaluated on the extent to which the application includes:</p>	<p>10</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clearly defined, measurable outputs and outcomes, • a reasonable timeline for achieving results, and • an effective plan for tracking progress toward achieving the expected outputs and outcomes. <p>ii. Transferability of Results (5 points) Applicants will be evaluated based upon the degree to which the application includes an adequate plan to gather information and lessons learned from the project <u>and</u> transfer the results (documentation, information, data, and recommendations) to CBP partners and stakeholders across the Chesapeake Bay watershed in a timely manner.</p>	
<p>c) Programmatic Capability and Past Performance Applicants should submit a list of no more than 5 assistance agreements (including but not limited to previous 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>The EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant under items (i) and (iii) of this criterion and may 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 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 subfactors (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.</p> <p>i. Past Performance Managing Agreements (10 points) Applicants will be evaluated based on past performance in completing and managing the identified assistance agreements in accordance with the initial project schedule, including whether the applicant successfully achieved the project objectives.</p> <p>ii. Staff Expertise (10 points) Applicants will be evaluated based on staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project. This will include consideration for how well the applicant demonstrates expertise in cloud-based computing platforms and infrastructure management.</p> <p>iii. Past Performance Meeting Reporting Requirements (5 points) Applicants will be evaluated based on history of meeting the reporting requirements under the identified assistance agreements,</p>	<p>25</p>

<p>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>d) Budget and Internal Controls</p> <p>i. Reasonability of Proposed Budget (15 points) Applicants will be evaluated based on the effectiveness of the proposed budget to meet project milestones over the six-year project period and achieve the expected results, as well as the reasonableness, necessity and allowability of proposed costs. In evaluating these factors, reviewers will consider the overall budget breakdown, including overhead costs, and the applicant’s responses to the below Project Narrative elements.</p> <p>Within the Project Narrative, applicants should provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A summary of the applicant’s strategy for budgeting costs (federal and cost share) to meet project milestones over the six-year project period and achieve expected results. • A description of the applicant’s approach to continual monitoring of project costs and controls that are in place to ensure cost-effectiveness. • To the extent possible, a description of the sources of funding that will be used to meet the minimum 5 percent cost-share requirement. <p>ii. Timely Expenditure of Grant Funds (5 points) 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>20</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

Following close of the application deadline, applications received will be evaluated against the threshold eligibility criteria listed in [Section 2](#). Those applications that fully meet the threshold eligibility criteria will then be evaluated and scored by a review panel consisting of subject matter experts with relevant technical expertise and an understanding of the operational needs of Chesapeake Bay Program partnership against the evaluation criteria listed above. Following scoring, the review team will forward the highest-ranked applications and recommendations to the selection official for final selection. In

making the final funding decision, the selection official will consider the review panel ranking results and recommendations, as well as program and agency goals and 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 Holly Waldman, Chesapeake Bay Program NOFO Coordinator. 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 the EPA Region 3 Grants Management Office. 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. Subaward and Executive Compensation Reporting

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

- Data entry at SAM.gov for all subawards and subcontracts issued 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.