

**Headquarters – Request for Proposals  
for EPA to Support the Annual Training Workshop for the Community Action For A  
Renewed Environment (CARE) Program  
Announcement # EPA-HQ--OPPT-08-010**

**OVERVIEW**

**Federal Agency Name:** U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Headquarters, Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics

**Funding Opportunity Title:** Headquarters – Request for Proposal (RFP) to Support the CARE Program Annual Training Workshop

**Announcement Type:** Initial Announcement

**Funding Opportunity Number:** EPA-HQ-OPPT-08-010

**Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) No.:** 66.035

**Action Dates:** Hard copy proposals submitted via commercial delivery service **must be received in the Program Office by the closing date and time.** The deadline for receipt of hard copy proposals is October 3, 2008 at 6:00 pm EST. Proposals submitted via Grants.gov must be received by the closing date and time, **October 3, 2008, 11:59 p.m., EST.** Late proposals will not be accepted. See Section IV for further information. Applicants who are invited to submit final applications will be notified of final application deadlines and requirements after October 24, 2008.

EPA reserves the right to amend this solicitation as deemed necessary. Amendments could be administrative in nature (e.g., change of dates or location), technical, (e.g., change in requirements) or changes which affect the anticipated funding. If this need occurs, EPA will post the amended solicitation on Grants.gov and at <http://www.epa.gov/oppt/>

**Executive Summary**

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Headquarters, Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics is soliciting proposals from eligible entities in support of the Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE) Annual Training Workshop. The CARE Annual Training Workshop is held each year to support CARE's community-based, community-driven, partnership program designed to help communities understand and reduce risks due to toxics and environmental pollutants from all sources. The objective of the training workshop is to educate the CARE program in working collaboratively within the community to increase understanding of new approaches, to facilitate use of proven concepts, and to encourage more innovation in environmental programs. EPA anticipates awarding one cooperative agreement under this solicitation to support the annual training workshop. The amount of the award will be \$150,000 for a period of two years. The grant will be incrementally funded in the first year for approximately \$75,000.

Eligible recipients include Local, Public non-profit institution/organizations, Federally Recognized Indian Tribal Government, Native American Organizations, Private nonprofit institution/organization, Quasi-public nonprofit institution/organization, local government, colleges, universities, interstate and intrastate.

## **FULL TEXT ANNOUNCEMENT**

### **Section I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION**

#### **A. Background**

This funding opportunity is authorized pursuant to the following EPA research and demonstration statutory authorities for the CARE program:

- **Clean Water Act**, Section 104(b) (3);
- **Safe Drinking Water Act**, Section 1442(c)(3)(A);
- **Solid Waste Disposal Act**, Section 8001(a);
- **Clean Air Act**, Section 103(b) (3);
- **Toxic Substances Control Act**, Section 10(a);
- **Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act**, Section 20(a); and,
- **Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act**, Section 203.

EPA developed the CARE program in response to community requests for help in addressing environmental concerns and in recognition of the need for a new approach to help communities develop locally led solutions to address these concerns. While national regulatory approaches have resulted in significant reductions in toxic releases and other environmental improvements, these methods have not always been effective in addressing specific community concerns and cumulative risks. CARE is designed to complement national regulatory approaches and meet community needs by building the capacity of communities to understand and take effective actions at the local level to address existing environmental concerns.

CARE promotes new ways to achieve better environmental results through increased community involvement. One way includes hosting an annual CARE Training/Workshop designed to assist CARE communities with developing new ideas, encourage citizen participation, create new approaches, and share the lessons learned to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the CARE program. While EPA will have staff at the workshop, the primary goal is to assist CARE communities. The training/workshop is designed to help identify and highlight environmental innovations that can help CARE communities learn new ways to achieve better environmental results.

## **B. Project Description**

The project will involve planning up to two training/workshops over a two-year period that brings together CARE communities to share information and engage in dialogues about experiences and issues related to CARE projects. Planning will be done by a Steering Committee consisting of representatives from the recipient, EPA, CARE communities and Health and Human Services' Centers for Disease Control. The Steering Committee, which will have a majority CARE membership, will assist with analyzing environmental innovations, developing workshop agendas, identifying appropriate speakers and presenters, and promoting the event within their respective communities or organizations.

EPA will support a workshop to be held November 18-20, 2008 and another workshop in Fall 2009. EPA funding will be used to support the costs associated with hosting the workshop. For each event, the recipient will arrange for supporting session speakers, lunch, and light refreshments for up to 200 attendees in order to assure attendees' full participation. All session speakers must be present at the working lunch. The recipient will also assist with note-taking and sessions in progress.

Chicago, Illinois will be the meeting place for the November 2008 CARE Training Workshop. However, the recipient will evaluate the expected costs for the 2009 workshop location and provide a recommendation to the Steering Committee. This recommendation will be weighed with other factors in making a final decision (e.g., a particular Region's interest in hosting, other meetings in a location or within a certain time frame that might facilitate community participation). In planning the workshop/training event, the recipient will incorporate as many environmentally-sound techniques as possible. (A listing of green meeting techniques can be found on the EPA green meeting website at [www.epa.gov/oppt/greenmeetings](http://www.epa.gov/oppt/greenmeetings)).

## **C. Measuring Environmental Results**

The award under this RFP will support EPA's national CARE Program's annual training workshop. The CARE program awards cooperative agreements to support projects at two different levels. The CARE cooperative agreement recipients are required to attend the annual training workshop to increase their knowledge base and technical skills. Subsequently, the training achieved at the workshop will contribute to CARE recipients overall programmatic required outcomes and outputs.

1. Outcomes – The support training workshop agreement awarded will provide the following:

- Improve technical expertise to CARE recipients about various sources of toxic risk exposure and public health concerns within their neighborhood.
- Educate CARE recipients about EPA environmental programs towards reducing toxic pollution through collaborative action. For example, Healthy Homes or Clean School Bus Voluntary Programs leads to lead abatement in neighborhood homes and reduced bus idling outside school buildings.

2. Outputs – The proposed outputs from the annual training workshop may include:

- Number participants expected to be training at each annual workshop will be up to 200 community stakeholders and EPA staff.
- Scientific, technical and public health exhibits during the annual training workshop will showcase up to 30 different environmental and public health programs.

## **D. EPA Strategic Plan Linkage to CARE**

### **1. EPA's Strategic Plan** (<http://www.epa.gov/ocfopage/plan/plan.htm>)

Awards under the CARE program directly support progress towards EPA Strategic Plan's **Goal 4: Healthy Communities and Ecosystems; Objective 4.2: Communities Sustain, Clean Up, and Restore Communities and the Ecological Systems That Support Them; and Sub-objectives: 4.2.1 (Sustain Community Health); 4.2.2 (Restore Community Health); and Objective 4.3 (Ecosystems); 4.3.1 (Protect and Restore Ecosystems).**

This funding opportunity will support the required annual training workshop for the EPA's national CARE program. In the CARE program, communities select and carry out EPA partnership programs to reduce toxic exposures and protect the environment in their communities. The partnership programs and other actions taken differ from community to community across all environmental media (i.e., air, water, land preservation and restoration, as well as pollution prevention and environmental stewardship).

## **II. AWARD INFORMATION**

The total estimated amount of funding available under this solicitation for FY 2008 is approximately \$75,000.00. The total estimated amount over a two-year period is \$150,000. Proposals received in excess of the maximum value of \$150,000 will not be considered.

The funding for selected projects will be in the form of a cooperative agreement. Cooperative agreements permit substantial involvement between the EPA Project Officer and the selected applicants in the performance of the work supported. Although EPA will negotiate precise terms and conditions relating to substantial involvement as part of the award process, the anticipated substantial Federal involvement for this project may include:

- close monitoring of the recipient's performance;
- reviewing project progress reports;
- collaborating in the performance of the scope of work;
- review proposed procurements, in accordance with 40 C.F.R. 31.36(g);
- approving qualifications of key personnel (EPA will not select employees or contractors employed by the recipient);
- reviewing and commenting on content of publications (printed or electronic) prepared under the cooperative agreement;

EPA reserves the right to reject all proposals and make no awards under this announcement. In appropriate circumstances, EPA reserves the right to partially fund proposals by funding discrete

portions or phases of proposed projects. If EPA decides to partially fund a proposal, it will do so in a manner that does not prejudice any applicants or affect the basis upon which the proposal or portion thereof, was evaluated and selected for award, and therefore maintains the integrity of the competition and selection process.

EPA reserves the right to amend this solicitation as deemed necessary. Amendments could be administrative in nature (e.g., change of dates or location), technical (e.g., change in requirements), or changes which affect the anticipated funding. If this need occurs, EPA will post the amended solicitation on Grants.gov (<http://www.grants.gov>) and at <http://www.epa.gov/oppt/>

### **III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

#### **A. Eligible Applicants**

Eligible recipients include Local, Public non-profit institution/organizations, Federally Recognized Indian Tribal Government, Native American Organizations, Private nonprofit institution/organization, Quasi-public nonprofit institution/organization, local government, colleges, universities, interstate and intrastate. For profit organizations are generally not eligible for funding.

A “non-profit organization”, as defined by OMB Circular A-122, means any corporation, trust, association, cooperative, or other organization which: (1) is operated primarily for scientific, educational, service, charitable, or similar purposes in the public interest; (2) is not organized primarily for profit; and (3) uses its net proceeds to maintain, improve, and/or expand its operations. For this purpose, the term "non-profit organization" excludes (i) colleges and universities; (ii) hospitals; (iii) state, local, and federally-recognized Indian tribal governments; and (iv) those non-profit organizations which are excluded from coverage of this Circular in accordance with paragraph 5 of the Circular.

#### **B. Cost Sharing or Matching**

A specific level of cost sharing or matching funds is not required as a condition of eligibility.

#### **C. Threshold Eligibility Criteria**

These are requirements, which if not met by the time of proposal submission will result in elimination of the proposal from consideration for funding. Only proposals that meet all of these criteria will be evaluated against the ranking factors in Section V of this solicitation. Applicants deemed ineligible for funding consideration as a result of the threshold eligibility review will be **notified within 15 calendar days of the ineligibility determination.**

1. Proposals received in the excess of the maximum value of \$150,000 will not be considered.
2. Only one proposal may be submitted per applicant organization.
3. Proposals must be written in English. The minimum acceptable font size for the narrative proposal and the budget is 12 point.

4. Hard copy proposals will only be accepted by an express delivery service. EPA will not accept proposals sent by the U.S. Postal Service. EPA will not accept proposal submitted via FAX or email.
5. Proposals must substantially comply with the proposal submission instructions and requirements set forth in Section IV of this announcement or else they will be rejected. Where a page limit is expressed in Section IV with respect to the proposal, pages in excess of the page limitation will not be reviewed.
6. Hard copy proposals submitted via commercial delivery service **must be received in the Program Office by the closing date and time.** The deadline for receipt of hard copy proposals is October 3, 2008 at 6:00 pm EST. Proposals submitted via Grants.gov must be received by the closing date and time, **October 3, 2008, 11:59 p.m., EST.** Late proposals will not be accepted. Applicants are responsible for ensuring that their proposal reach the designated person/office specified in Section IV of the announcement by the submission deadline.
7. Proposals received after the submission deadline will be considered late and returned to the sender without further consideration unless the applicant can clearly demonstrate that it was late due to EPA mishandling. For hard copy submissions where Section IV requires proposal receipt by a specific person/office by the submission deadline, receipt by an agency mailroom is not sufficient. Applicants should confirm receipt of their proposal with Daria Willis ([willis.daria@epa.gov](mailto:willis.daria@epa.gov)) as soon as possible after the submission deadline – failure to do so may result in your proposal not being reviewed.

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

##### **A. Content and Form of Submittals**

EPA encourages applicants to obtain proposal materials and apply electronically through <http://www.grants.gov>. Applicants may also download individual grant application forms, or electronically request a paper application package and an accompanying computer CD of information related to applicant/grants recipients roles and responsibilities from EPA's Grants and Debarment Web site at: ([http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/how\\_to\\_apply.htm](http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/how_to_apply.htm)). Potential applicants may request a paper copy of the application package by contacting the Agency contact listed in Section VII of this announcement.

##### **B. Content and Format of Proposal**

All proposals must contain the items below. In addition, applicants must submit one original proposal signed by an authorized organization official and two complete copies, unless the proposals are submitted electronically through "www.grants.gov."

I. Standard Form 424 - Application for Federal Assistance

Please note that the organizational Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number must be included on the SF-424. The SF-424 can be found at <http://www.grants.gov>.

II. Standard Form 424A – Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs

III. Narrative Proposal

- The narrative project proposal must be no more than ten (10) typed pages in length. Pages in excess of ten will not be considered.
- Pages should be numbered in order starting with the “Project Title Page” and continuing through the “Programmatic Capability” sections.
- The narrative proposal must contain information that addresses the ranking factors in Section V of this solicitation and should conform to the following outline:

**A. Project Title Page** -- The title page shall contain the name, address and phone number of organization applying and the name of the contact person.

**B. Organization Overview** -- An overview of the applicant’s organization, its mission, and pertinent related experience.

**C. Project Description** -- A summary of the project, an explanation of how you will support the training workshop, and an explicit description of how the proposed project specifically addresses each of the applicable evaluation criteria in Section V. Also include a section on **tracking and measuring environmental results, outlining a plan with milestones for tracking and measuring progress towards achieving the expected project’s outcomes and outputs**

**D. Key Personnel** -- Brief biographical sketches of key staff who will be involved in the proposed project.

**E. Budget** – A detailed budget reflects the tasks proposed for the project. Please provide written explanations of costs listed on the SF 424A detailed itemized budget pertaining to:

- Personnel Cost (if any )
- Fringe Benefits (if any)
- Contractual Costs
- Speakers Fees (up to \$2,000.00 per speaker)
- Travel
- Equipment
- Supplies
- Other

- Total Direct Costs
- Total Indirect Costs

**F. Environmental Results Past Performance:** Submit a list of federally funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include Federal grants and cooperative agreements but not Federal contracts) that your organization performed within the last three years ( no more than 5, and preferably EPA agreements), and describe in a outline or plan how you documented and/or reported on whether you were making progress towards achieving the expected results (e.g., outputs and outcomes) under those agreements.

Applicant must submit a detailed plan to track and measure outputs and outcomes listed in section I. The proposal will be evaluated on the effectiveness of the proposed plan for tracking and measuring of the expected environmental results, particularly documenting progress toward finalizing project activities and achieving the expected project outputs and outcomes; including those identified in Section I.C of the solicitation. The applicants should clearly specify the performance measures they will be tracking. The performance measures should focus on solid, quantitative measures related to the project activities, outputs, and outcomes.

If you were not making progress, please indicate whether, and how, you documented why not. In evaluating applicants under this factor in Section V, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources, including information from EPA files and from current and prior Federal agency grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information provided by the applicant). If you do not have any relevant or available environmental results past performance information, please indicate this in the proposal and you will receive a neutral score for this factor under Section V. If you do not provide any response for this item, you may receive a score of 0 for this factor.

**G. Programmatic Capability:** Submit a list of federally funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include Federal grants and cooperative agreements but not Federal contracts) similar in size, scope and relevance to the proposed project that your organization performed within the last three years (no more than 5, and preferably EPA agreements) and describe (i) whether, and how, you were able to successfully complete and manage those agreements and (ii) your history of meeting the reporting requirements under those agreements including submitting acceptable final technical reports. In evaluating applicants under these factors in Section V, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources, including information from EPA files and from current and prior Federal agency grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information provided by the applicant). If you do not have any relevant or available past performance or reporting information, please indicate this in the proposal and you will receive a neutral score for these factors under Section V. If you do not provide any response for these items, you may receive a score of 0 for these factors.

In addition, provide information on your organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project, and your staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project.



### C. Proposal Submission Dates and Times

Hard copy proposals submitted via commercial delivery service **must be received in the Program Office by the closing date and time**. The deadline for receipt of hard copy proposals is October 3, 2008 at 6:00 pm EST. Proposals submitted via Grants.gov must be received by the closing date and time, **October 3, 2008, 11:59 p.m., EST**. Late proposals will not be accepted. Applicants who are invited to submit final applications will be notified of final application deadlines and requirements after October 24, 2008.

### D. Instructions for Hard Copy Submission.

Hard copies will only be accepted if sent by an **express delivery service**. EPA will not accept proposals sent by U.S. Postal Service. Applicants must send one original proposal signed by an authorized organization official and two complete copies (a total of three copies) to:  
Express Delivery Address (FedEx, UPS, DHL, etc.)

US EPA  
Attn: CARE Program (Daria Willis)  
Mail Code: 8102R Rm. 41148  
Ronald Reagan Building  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20460  
Phone: 202-566-2217

### E. Instructions for Submission via Grants.gov.

The electronic submission of your application must be made by an official representative of your institution who is registered with Grants.gov and is authorized to sign applications for Federal assistance. For more information, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on "Get Registered" on the left side of the page. *Note that the registration process may take a week or longer to complete.* If your organization is not currently registered with Grants.gov, please encourage your organization to designate an Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) and ask that individual to begin the registration process as soon as possible. **Please note the registration process may take a week or longer and therefore, the AOR should register as soon as possible**

To begin the proposal/application process under this grant announcement, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on the "Apply for Grants" tab on the left side of the page. Then click on "Apply Step 1: Download a Grant Application Package" to download the compatible Adobe viewer and obtain the application package. **To apply through grants.gov you must use Adobe Reader applications and download the compatible Adobe Reader version (Adobe Reader applications are available to download for free on the Grants.gov website. For more information on Adobe Reader please visit the Help section on grants.gov at <http://www.grants.gov/help/help.jsp> or [http://www.grants.gov/aboutgrants/program\\_status.jsp](http://www.grants.gov/aboutgrants/program_status.jsp)).**

Once you have downloaded the viewer, you may retrieve the application package by entering the Funding Opportunity Number, EPA-HW-OPPT-08-010, or the CFDA number that applies to the announcement (CFDA 66.035), in the appropriate field. You may also be able to access the

proposal/application package by clicking on the Application button at the top right of the synopsis page for this announcement on <http://www.grants.gov> (to find the synopsis page, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on the “Find Grant Opportunities” button on the left side of the page and then go to Search Opportunities and use the Browse by Agency feature to find EPA opportunities).

#### **PROPOSAL SUBMISSION DEADLINE**

Your organization’s AOR must submit your complete application electronically to EPA through Grants.gov (<http://www.grants.gov>) no later than **October 3, 2008 at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Standard Time**.

**The following forms and documents are required to be submitted under this announcement:**

- I. Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
- II. Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)
- III. Narrative Proposal - **see section IV.B**

**THE PROPOSAL PACKAGE MUST INCLUDE ALL OF THE FOLLOWING MATERIALS:**

#### **I. Standard Form (SF) 424, Application for Federal Assistance**

Complete the form. There are no attachments. Please be sure to include organization fax number and email address in Block 5 of the Standard Form SF 424.

Please note that the organizational Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number must be included on the SF-424. Organizations may obtain a DUNS number at no cost by calling the toll-free DUNS number request line at 1-866-705-5711.

#### **II. Standard Form SF 424A – Budget Information:**

Complete the form. There are no attachments.

The total amount of federal funding requested for the project period should be shown on line 5(e) and on line 6(k) of SF-424A. If indirect costs are included, the amount of indirect costs should be entered on line 6(j). The indirect cost rate (i.e., a percentage), the base (e.g., personnel costs and fringe benefits), and the amount should also be indicated on line 22.

#### **III. Narrative Proposal - see section IV.B**

#### **Application Preparation and Submission Instructions**

**Documents I through III** listed under Proposal Materials above should appear in the “Mandatory Documents” box on the Grants.gov Grant Application Package page.

For documents I and II, click on the appropriate form and then click “Open Form” below the box. The fields that must be completed will be highlighted in yellow. Optional fields and completed fields will be displayed in white. If you enter an invalid response or incomplete information in a field, you will receive an error message. When you have finished filling out each form, click “Save.” When you return to the electronic Grant Application Package page, click on the form you just completed, and then click on the box that says, “Move Form to Submission List.” This action will move the document over to the box that says, “Mandatory Completed Documents for Submission.”

For document III, you will need to attach electronic files. Prepare your narrative proposal as described above in IV B of the announcement and save the document to your computer as an MS Word, PDF or WordPerfect file. When you are ready to attach your proposal to the application package, click on “Project Narrative Attachment Form,” and open the form. Click “Add Mandatory Project Narrative File,” and then attach your proposal (previously saved to your computer) using the browse window that appears. You may then click “View Mandatory Project Narrative File” to view it. Enter a brief descriptive title of your project in the space beside “Mandatory Project Narrative File Filename;” the filename should be no more than 40 characters long. If there other attachments that you would like to submit to accompany your proposal, you may click “Add Optional Project Narrative File” and proceed as before. When you have finished attaching the necessary documents, click “Close Form.” When you return to the “Grant Application Package” page, select the “Project Narrative Attachment Form” and click “Move Form to Submission List.” The form should now appear in the box that says, “Mandatory Completed Documents for Submission.”

Once you have finished filling out all of the forms/attachments and they appear in one of the “Completed Documents for Submission” boxes, click the “Save” button that appears at the top of the Web page. It is suggested that you save the document a second time, using a different name, since this will make it easier to submit an amended package later if necessary. Please use the following format when saving your file: “Applicant Name – FY08 – Assoc Prog Supp – 1st Submission” or “Applicant Name – FY 08 Assoc Prog Supp – Back-up Submission.” If it becomes necessary to submit an amended package at a later date, then the name of the 2nd submission should be changed to “Applicant Name – FY08 Assoc Prog Supp – 2nd Submission.”

Once your proposal package has been completed and saved, send it to your AOR for submission to U.S. EPA through Grants.gov. Please advise your AOR to close all other software programs before attempting to submit the application package through Grants.gov.

In the “Application Filing Name” box, your AOR should enter your organization’s name (abbreviate where possible), the fiscal year (e.g., FY08), and the grant category (e.g., Assoc Prog Supp). The filing name should not exceed 40 characters. From the “Grant Application Package” page, your AOR may submit the application package by clicking the “Submit” button that appears at the top of the page. The AOR will then be asked to verify the agency and funding opportunity number for which the application package is being submitted. If problems are encountered during the submission process, the AOR should reboot his/her computer before trying to submit the application package again. [It may be necessary to turn off the computer (not just restart it) before attempting to submit the package again.] If the AOR continues to experience submission

problems, he/she may contact Grants.gov for assistance by phone at 1-800-518-4726 or email at <http://www.grants.gov/help/help.jsp> or contact [DARIA WILLIS].

Proposal packages submitted thru grants.gov will be time/date stamped electronically.

If you have not received a confirmation of receipt from EPA (*not from grants.gov*) within 30 days of the proposal deadline, please contact DARIA WILLIS at [willis.daria@epa.gov](mailto:willis.daria@epa.gov). Failure to do so may result in your proposal not being reviewed.

### **Confidential Business Information .**

In accordance with 40 CFR 2.203, applicants may claim all or a portion of their application/proposal as confidential business information. EPA will evaluate confidentiality claims in accordance with 40 CFR Part 2. Applicants must clearly mark applications/proposals or portions of applications/proposals they claim as confidential. If no claim of confidentiality is made, EPA is not required to make the inquiry to the applicant otherwise required by 40 CFR 2.204(c)(2) prior to disclosure

### **Pre-proposal/Application Assistance and Communications.**

In accordance with EPA's Assistance Agreement Competition Policy (EPA Order 5700.5A1), EPA staff will not meet with individual applicants to discuss draft proposals, provide informal comments on draft proposals, or provide advice to applicants on how to respond to ranking criteria. Applicants are responsible for the contents of their applications/proposals. However, consistent with the provisions in the announcement, EPA will respond to questions from individual applicants regarding threshold eligibility criteria, administrative issues related to the submission of the proposal, and requests for clarification about the announcement.

### **Management Fees**

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

### **Can funding be used for the applicant to make subawards, acquire contract services, or fund partnerships?**

EPA awards funds to one eligible applicant as the recipient even if other eligible applicants are named as partners or co-applicants or members of a coalition or consortium. The recipient is accountable to EPA for the proper expenditure of funds.

Funding may be used to provide subgrants or subawards of financial assistance, which includes using subawards or subgrants to fund partnerships , provided the recipient complies with applicable requirements for subawards or subgrants including those contained in 40 CFR Parts 30 or 31, as appropriate. 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 40 CFR Parts 30 or 31, as appropriate. The regulations also contain limitations on consultant compensation. Applicants are not required to identify subawardees/subgrantees and/or contractors (including consultants) in their proposal/application. However, if they do, the fact that an applicant selected for award has named a specific subawardee/subgrantee, contractor, or consultant in the proposal/application EPA selects for funding does not relieve the applicant of its obligations to comply with subaward/subgrant and/or competitive procurement requirements as appropriate. Please note that applicants may not award sole source contracts to consulting, engineering or other firms assisting applicants with the proposal solely based on the firm's role in preparing the proposal/application.

Successful applicants cannot use subgrants or subawards to avoid requirements in EPA grant regulations for competitive procurement by using these instruments to acquire commercial services or products from for-profit organizations to carry out its assistance agreement. The nature of the transaction between the recipient and the subawardee or subgrantee must be consistent with the standards for distinguishing between vendor transactions and subrecipient assistance under Subpart B Section .210 of OMB Circular A-133 , and the definitions of subaward at 40 CFR 30.2(ff) or subgrant at 40 CFR 31.3, as applicable. EPA will not be a party to these transactions. Applicants acquiring commercial goods or services must comply with the competitive procurement standards in 40 CFR Part 30 or 40 CFR Part 31.36 and cannot use a subaward/subgrant as the funding mechanism.

**b. How will an applicant's proposed subawardees/subgrantees and contractors be considered during the evaluation process described in Section V of the announcement?**

Section V of the announcement describes the evaluation criteria and evaluation process that will be used by EPA to make selections under this announcement. During this evaluation, except for those criteria that relate to the applicant's own qualifications, past performance, and reporting history, the review panel will consider, as appropriate and relevant, the qualifications, expertise, and experience of:

- (i) an applicant's named subawardees/subgrantees identified in the proposal/application if the applicant demonstrates in the proposal/application that if it receives an award that the subaward/subgrant will be properly awarded consistent with the applicable regulations in 40 CFR Parts 30 or 31. For example, applicants must not use subawards/subgrants to obtain commercial services or products from for profit firms or individual consultants.
- (ii) an applicant's named contractor(s), including consultants, identified in the proposal/application if the applicant demonstrates in its proposal/application that the contractor(s) was selected in compliance with the competitive Procurement Standards in 40 CFR Part 30 or 40 CFR 31.36 as appropriate. For example, an applicant must demonstrate that it selected the contractor(s) competitively or that a proper non-competitive sole-source award consistent with the regulations will be made to the contractor(s), that efforts were made to provide small and disadvantaged

businesses with opportunities to compete, and that some form of cost or price analysis was conducted. EPA may not accept sole source justifications for contracts for services or products that are otherwise readily available in the commercial marketplace.

EPA will not consider the qualifications, experience, and expertise of named subawardees/subgrantees and/or named contractor(s) during the proposal/application evaluation process unless the applicant complies with these requirements.

### **Data Universal Number System (DUNS) Number**

All applicants **are required** to provide a Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number when applying for a federal grant or cooperative agreement. Applicants can receive a DUNS number, at no cost, by calling the dedicated toll-free DUNS Number request line at 1-866-705-5711, or by visiting the D&B web-site at: <http://www.dnb.com>.

## **V. Application Review Information**

### **A. Evaluation Criteria.**

Each applicant's proposal that meets the threshold criteria in Section III will be evaluated according to the criteria set forth below. The following criteria (with quantitative weight for each criterion given in parenthesis) will be used in the review of application.

#### **1. Technical Soundness**

**(50 points)**

Applicant's proposal is technically sound, structured to accomplish the proposal requirements and includes measures for demonstrating success. Measures should outline prior experience with managing conferences, supporting appropriate community speakers and presenters, negotiating hotel vendor contracts, and managing exhibit halls.

#### **2. Environmental Results Past Performance Criterion:**

**(12.5 points)**

Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on the extent and quality to which they adequately documented and/or reported via an outline or plan on their progress towards achieving the expected results (e.g., outcomes and outputs) under Federal agency assistance agreements (assistance agreements include Federal grants and cooperative agreements but not Federal contracts) performed within the last three years, and if such progress was not being made whether the applicant adequately documented and/or reported why not.

#### **Tracking and Measuring Environmental Results:**

**(12.5 points)**

Applicant must submit a detailed plan to track and measure outputs and outcomes listed in section I. The proposal will be evaluated on the effectiveness of the proposed plan for tracking and measuring of the expected environmental results, particularly documenting progress toward finalizing project activities and achieving the expected project outputs and outcomes; including those identified in Section I.C of the solicitation. The applicants should clearly specify the performance measures they will be tracking. The performance measures should focus on solid, quantitative measures related to the project activities, outputs, and outcomes.

Note: In evaluating applicants under this factor, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources including agency files and prior/current grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information supplied by the applicant). Applicants with no relevant or available past performance reporting history will receive a neutral score for this factor.

**3. Programmatic Capability: (25 points)**

Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on their ability described in an outline or plan to successfully complete and manage the proposed project taking into account the applicant's: (i) past performance in successfully completing and managing federally funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include Federal grants and cooperative agreements but not Federal contracts) similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project performed within the last 3 years, (ii) history of meeting reporting requirements under federally funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include Federal grants and cooperative agreements but not Federal contracts) similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project performed within the last 3 years and submitting acceptable final technical reports under those agreements, (iii) organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project, and (iv) staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project.

Note: In evaluating applicants under this criterion, the Agency will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources including agency files and prior/current grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information supplied by the applicant). Applicants with no relevant or available past performance or reporting history (items i and ii above), will receive a neutral score for those elements of this criterion.

**B. Review and Selection Process**

All proposals will first be evaluated by a panel of EPA staff to see if they meet the threshold criteria identified in section III. Those proposals that do not meet the threshold criteria will be considered ineligible and will not be scored or considered further. For proposals that meet the threshold criteria, they will then be evaluated against the evaluation criteria as stated above. Recommendations for award will be submitted to the selection official who will make the final award decision.

**C. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates**

EPA expects to make a selection by October 2008. EPA anticipates giving official notice of award in October – November 2008 timeframe. As described in Section 1 of this announcement, EPA anticipates funding this work incrementally over a two-year period.

**D. Funding Restrictions**

The applicable cost principles are found in OMB circular A-21 for educational institutions, OMB Circular A-87 for State and Local governments and Indian Tribes, and OMB Circular A-122 for nonprofit organizations.

This project includes funds for support for expert speakers, meals and refreshments for all participants at the Training/Workshop. EPA funds can be used for these purposes so long as these items are deemed necessary to allow full participation and assure that the main goal of the event - information sharing among CARE Communities is achieved.

While EPA funds cannot be used for entertainment purposes, EPA can cosponsor an event that has a social component (such as a modest reception), as long as the event has a primarily educational purpose that is related to the Agency's mission. EPA funds cannot be used for events that have a primary purpose of entertaining participants.

None of the funds for this project may be used to pay for travel of federal employees or other costs associated with federal participation in this project.

## **SECTION VI.--Award Administration Information**

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

A listing and description of general EPA Regulations applicable to the award of federal assistance agreements may be viewed at: [http://www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/applicable\\_epa\\_regulations\\_and\\_description.htm](http://www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/applicable_epa_regulations_and_description.htm). This program may be eligible for coverage under Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs." An applicant should consult the office or official designated as the single point of contact in the state where the proposed project will be conducted for more information on the process the state requires to be followed in applying for assistance, if the state has selected the program for review (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/spoc.html>). This review is not required with the initial proposal and not all states require such a review.

Grants and agreements with institutions of higher education are subject to 40 CFR Parts 30 and 40 and OMB circular A-122 for non-profits and A-21 for institutions of higher learning. Programmatic terms and conditions in the cooperative agreements will be negotiated between EPA and the selected recipient.



## **B. Non-profit Administrative Capability**

Non-profit applicants that are recommended for funding under this solicitation are subject to pre-award administrative capability reviews consistent with Section 8b, 8c and 9d of EPA Order 5700.8 -*Policy on Assessing Capabilities of Non-Profit Applicants for Managing Assistance Awards* ([http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/award/5700\\_8.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/award/5700_8.pdf)). In addition, non-profit applicants that qualify for funding may, depending on the size of the award, be required to fill out and submit to the Grants Management Office the Administrative Capabilities Form with supporting documents contained in Appendix A of EPA Order 5700.8.

## **C. Reporting Requirement**

Quarterly progress reports and a detailed final report will be required. These quarterly reports will be required to be written and sent electronically to the official EPA regional Project Officer.

They will summarize the technical progress, any planned activities for the next quarter, and give a summary of expenditures. These quarterly reports should also include: a summary of performance progress-to-date, detailed expenditures-to-date, problems encountered, successes achieved, and lessons learned.

The final report shall be completed within 90 calendar days of the completion of the period of performance. The schedule for submission of quarterly reports and any additional specific information required in the reports will be established, by EPA, after award.

As part of EPA's efforts to evaluate the long-term effectiveness of the CARE program, EPA or its contractors or future grantees may attempt to follow up with community stakeholders groups involved in the CARE program from time to time to ask a series of questions from the applicant regarding the accomplishments of the community after the end of the cooperative agreement. Such questions would be of a general nature such as to additional funding received and programs accomplished. EPA expects that the cooperative agreement recipients will be willing to provide such information when requested.

## **D. Disputes**

Assistance agreement competition-related disputes will be resolved in accordance with the dispute resolution procedures published in 70 FR (Federal Register) 3629, 3630 (January 26, 2005) which can be found at <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/competition/resolution.htm>. Copies of these procedures may also be requested by contacting Daria Willis at [willis.daria@epa.gov](mailto:willis.daria@epa.gov).

**Data Access and Information Release :** The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-110 has been revised to provide public access to research data through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) under some circumstances. Data that are (1) first produced in a project that is supported in whole or in part with Federal funds and (2) cited publicly and officially by a Federal agency in support of an action that has the force and effect of law (i.e., a regulation) may be

accessed through FOIA. If such data are requested by the public, the EPA must ask for it, and the grantee must submit it, in accordance with A-110 and EPA regulations at 40 C.F.R. 30.36.

[http://intranet.epa.gov/ogd/competition/compet/competition\\_announcement\\_boiler\\_plate\\_provisions\\_and\\_guidance.htm#Final\\_App\\_Submission](http://intranet.epa.gov/ogd/competition/compet/competition_announcement_boiler_plate_provisions_and_guidance.htm#Final_App_Submission)

## **Section VI--Agency Contacts**

### **Send mail to:**

US EPA

Attn: CARE Program (Daria Willis)

Mail Code: 8102R Rm. 41148

Ronald Reagan Building

1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.

Washington, DC 20460

Phone: 202-566-2217

Email: [willis.daria@epa.gov](mailto:willis.daria@epa.gov)

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE CARE PROGRAM: Go to our Web site, and click on the words contact us at the bottom of the screen: [www.epa.gov/care](http://www.epa.gov/care).

## **Section VII --Other Information**

The EPA Grant Award Officer is the only official that can bind the Agency to the expenditure of funds for the project resulting from this announcement.