AGENCY: ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA)

TITLE: COMMUNITY ACTION FOR A RENEWED ENVIRONMENT (CARE) PROGRAM

ACTION: Request for Proposals (RFP)

RFP NO.: EPA-OAR-IO 06-01

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE (CFDA) NO: 66.035

DATES: The closing date and time for receipt of initial proposals is April 10, 2006. All proposals submitted must either be postmarked or received in the Program Office by the closing date and time. No late proposals will be accepted.

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 requirement) or, changes which affect the anticipated funding. If this need occurs, EPA will post the amended solicitation at the same location as this announcement.

SUMMARY: This notice announces the availability of funds and solicits proposals for financial assistance to eligible entities through the CARE program. CARE is a unique community based, community driven, multimedia demonstration program designed to help communities understand and reduce risks due to toxics and environmental pollutants from all sources. This is the second CARE RFP; the first was in the spring of 2005. The CARE program will help communities form collaborative partnerships, develop a comprehensive understanding of the many sources of risk from toxics and environmental pollutants, set priorities, and identify and carry out projects to reduce risks through collaborative action at the local level. CARE's long-term goal is to help communities build self-sustaining, community-based partnerships that will continue to improve human health and local environments into the future.

The objective of the CARE grant program is to investigate whether this new cross-Agency, multi-media program provides greater environmental benefits than either non- collaborative or single media approaches. Two types of cooperative agreements will be awarded under this solicitation as part of the CARE grant program. Level I cooperative agreements will support the following types of activities: forming community-based collaborative partnerships; developing a comprehensive understanding of toxic risks; and, setting community risk reduction priorities. Level II cooperative agreements will fund activities to identify and demonstrate actual risk reduction projects "on the ground" in their community. Level II agreements are for communities that have already completed the actions taken in a Level I agreement. Receipt of a Level I cooperative agreement is not a prerequisite to receiving a Level II cooperative agreement.

FUNDING/AWARDS: The financial assistance obtained through this announcement will be awarded as a cooperative agreement. The total estimated funding expected for all awards under this solicitation is $2.7 million for FY 2006 and 2007.
- EPA anticipates awarding 8 - 10 Level I cooperative agreements ranging in expected

value from $75,000 to $100,000. Most Level I agreements are expected to be funded at the level of about $90,000 with a maximum value of a Level I agreement of $100,000.
- EPA also anticipates awarding 6 - 8 Level II cooperative agreements ranging in expected value from $150,000 to $300,000. Most Level II awards are expected to be funded at about $275,000 with a maximum value of a Level II agreement of $300,000.

The CARE program is very competitive. EPA reserves the right to increase or decrease (including to zero) the total number of awards or, change the ratio of Level I to Level II cooperative agreements it awards. Such changes may be necessary as a response to the quality of applications received by EPA, the amount of the funds awarded to the selected applicants, or budget availability.

For information about EPA's grants process, visit EPA grants website at: http://www.grants.gov.

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Section I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Background.

The CARE program was developed in response to community requests for help in addressing environmental concerns and in recognition of the need for new approaches to help communities address these concerns. While national regulatory approaches have resulted in significant reductions in toxic releases and other environmental improvements, they have not always been effective in addressing specific community concerns and cumulative risks resulting from toxic releases from multiple and often diffuse sources.

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 toxic concerns. The CARE program will provide funding, information, training, technical support, help building collaborative partnerships, and improved access to voluntary programs which address community concerns. This will help CARE communities build community capacity to understand and reduce the risks from toxics and environmental pollutants in all environmental media, improving the local environment. This is the second year of the

CARE program. Last year EPA funded 12 projects, seven Level I and five Level II cooperative agreements. Although this is a new solicitation, the fundamental requirements are similar, and applicants may find it useful to go to the CARE website (www.epa.gov/care) and read the descriptions of the 2005 CARE projects.

B. Scope of Work.

1. Goals

The goals of the CARE program are:

      a.   Reduce exposures to toxic pollutants through collaborative action at the local level.
      b.   Help communities gain an understanding of all potential sources of exposure to toxic pollutants.
      c.   Work with communities to set priorities for risk reduction activities.
      d.   Create self-sustaining, community based partnerships that will continue to improve the local environment.

2. Strategies

To achieve these goals, the CARE program will use the following strategies:

      a.   Provide information and a variety of tools to help communities understand and assess toxic risks from all sources in the community.
      b.   Collaborate with community stakeholder groups to prioritize plans for risk reduction.
      c.   Mobilize local resources and utilize EPA voluntary programs to carry out risk reduction activities.
      d.   Link EPA programs together to efficiently support communities.
      e.   Create a positive environment that encourages all members of the community, including businesses and colleges and universities, to join the collaborative partnership.
      f.   Facilitate networking among CARE communities to share experiences and lessons learned.
      g.   Build long-term community capacity to continue improving the local environment.

3. CARE Program definition of toxics:

The CARE program is designed to help communities reduce toxics in their environment and solve environmental problems that affect the health and/or the environment of the people who live in the community or their environment. EPA uses the term toxics to mean environmental pollutants that cause negative health or environmental impacts. These environmental pollutants can be in any environmental media - **air, water, land and/or in the indoor environment**. EPA

is not limiting the term toxics to chemicals listed in one or more environmental statute or regulations. For additional information please refer to question 24 in the CARE Solicitation Questions and Answers. You can find that document on the CARE website, www.epa.gov/care.

4. Definition of a CARE Community:

CARE is designed to help place-based communities build collaborative partnerships that can work to understand and improve environments at the local level. Since the size of local level place-based communities varies, the Community for a Renewed Environment (CARE) program is not strictly defining the term community. A community is the people living in the same area sharing the same environment, including both residents and businesses.   A community will often be in a relatively small area, but in rural locations a larger area such as a watershed would be considered a community. A tribal reservation would normally be considered a community. Eligible CARE partnerships can be formed at the neighborhood level or in larger place-based areas. For purposes of CARE program's focus on building local level capacity, New York City or watersheds the size of the Missouri or the Columbia Rivers, would be considered too large to be a community. However, sections of New York City or the watershed of smaller rivers would be considered communities. Moreover, a subpopulation of a community (e.g., all the schools in a specific area) does not qualify as representing the entire community and would not be eligible for a CARE grant. For additional information please refer to question 24 in the CARE Solicitation Questions and Answers. You can find that document on the CARE website, www.epa.gov/care.

5. Utilization of EPA voluntary programs:

CARE is designed to deliver voluntary programs to communities. Voluntary programs in EPA include a wide variety of programs, initiatives and activities that are based on people taking action not required by statute or regulation. There are two major categories of voluntary programs:

- Category One: Participants specifically sign up for a voluntary program, and must meet certain criteria to be considered members. The motivation for participation is usually based on a combination of a desire for improved environmental performance, economic savings or improved performance and/or recognition. Examples include EPA's Waste-wise, Best Workplaces for Commuters, National Priorities for Environmental Pollutants and Performance Track programs.

- Category Two: Participants are provided information to carry out voluntary programs to reduce health risks to them or others, examples include: EPA's IAQ Tools for Schools, Integrated Pest Management, Pollution Prevention, and Make a Difference Campaign programs.

EPA's website includes a Voluntary Program Guide which lists the national EPA voluntary programs that could be of use to communities. The Guide provides information on where to find the requirements for each of the programs listed. (www.epa.gov/care)

6. What resources are provided by EPA through the CARE program?

When recipients receive a CARE Cooperative Agreement, in addition to funding they also receive:

- EPA Program Support: EPA will provide information about EPA programs and support to help CARE recipients use the EPA programs they select;

- EPA Technical Advisor support: EPA will provide regional technical advisory staff who will work directly with the partnership group. The technical support provided by the EPA staff will be both scientific information, such as access to databases, models and other forms of technical support to evaluate and reduce risks, and community organizational support, such as how to make partnerships work better, consensus-building, strategic planning, becoming self-sustaining, among other skills.

- CARE National Training Workshop: CARE grantees will be required to attend annual multi-day, CARE training. Some of the training's objectives will be to help the grantee with strategic planning, grants management, and afford numerous opportunities to network with other CARE community representatives. A single national training will take place each year. Expenses for this training (i.e., travel, lodging, etc.) must be included in the applicants budget narrative proposal (see Appendix B).

- CARE Community Network: All CARE communities are networked together so the communities can provide informal and formal support to each other, share experiences and help each other solve problems. The formal networking will be conducted regularly via email, formal conference calls or other methods. EPA views this portion of the program as one of the keys to its success.

7. Two Levels of CARE funding

CARE funding will be provided to applicants through two different types of Cooperative Agreements, Level I and Level II as follows:

a. Level I cooperative agreement funding will:

- Provide assistance to applicants to create or develop a collaborative partnership dedicated to understanding toxic risks and environmental pollutant impacts in their community. Partnerships should be as inclusive as possible including community residents, representatives of community organizations, small and large businesses, state, tribal, local government agencies, EPA and other federal agencies, colleges and universities, and other organizations and individuals as appropriate.
- Assist these partnerships, with technical support from EPA, states, and other partners, will work to identify all sources of toxics and environmental pollutants in the community, perform a multi-media screening level assessment of the risks from them, and work to

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help determine community priorities for risk reduction.

The goal of Level I projects is to ensure, at completion, that the community has developed an effective problem solving partnership, has an understanding of toxic risks facing the community, and has prioritized those risks.

b. Level II cooperative agreement funding:

- Is designed for communities that have **already** established a broad-based, collaborative, problem solving partnership; that have developed an understanding of the toxic risks and environmental pollutants facing their community; and that have set community priorities for risk reduction.
- Will be used to identify and accomplish risk reduction actions to address the community's priority risks (as identified before the Level II project was started). Risks will be addressed through the selection and use of EPA-programs and technical assistance or other voluntary actions selected by the partnership.
- Will help the community partnership become self-sustaining. (Please note: CARE assistance may include training and assistance in how to attract new resources and partners to support further risk reduction activities but CARE funds can not be used to pay for filling out grant applications or other fund raising activities.)

Demonstrated success of a CARE community will be those who can continue to reduce toxic risks and environmental pollutants and build healthier communities, even after the completion of the funded Level II project.

Applicants are not required to have been a recipient of a Level I agreement in order to receive a Level II agreement.

8. Examples of Suggested Activities for Level I Projects:

- convening, facilitating, and providing information to community stakeholder group(s);
- investigations into different environmental toxic problems in the different environmental media in the community and the preparation of education materials for the community regarding the results of the investigations;
- analyses of the toxics problems in the community and their relative risks and potential solutions.
- providing information to the stakeholder group, community or the general public about any of the above activities and their results.
- activities to evaluate and track progress, and communicate lessons learned with other communities.

9. Examples of Suggested Activities for Level II Projects:

- activities to reduce risks, including: identifying and choosing options for risk reduction and mobilizing local resources to carry out new or existing voluntary programs (e.g. IAQ

Tools for Schools, Design for the Environment, and the Pesticide Environmental Stewardship Program, and pollution prevention of Priority Chemicals);

- convening, facilitating, and providing information to community stakeholder group(s);
- find additional partners and resources to make the project self-sustaining.
- activities to evaluate and track progress, measure results, and communicate lessons learned with other communities.
- providing information to the stakeholder group, community or the general public about any of the above activities and their results

Additional information on the CARE program may be accessed at: www.epa.gov/care

10. What the CARE Cooperative Agreement Program Demonstrates

The CARE Cooperative Agreements are designed to investigate and, demonstrate the long-term value of the CARE program. Specifically, EPA has developed the CARE program as a new approach to address the problems of cumulative risk in communities. While CARE builds on the efforts of previous community-based programs, CARE does offer a new approach. The CARE approach is different in that it combines all of the following factors (each of which may not be unique to CARE but the combination of approaches and tools is unique):

- CARE is a multimedia program that takes a comprehensive view of toxics and environmental pollutants in a community and is not limited to a single media (air, water, land) or source.

- CARE is based on providing the tools and information to communities so they can set their own priorities for risk reduction and select the voluntary programs that best fit their needs.

- CARE creates a network that includes all the CARE communities. This network will allow communities to learn from and support each other.

- Through a single program, CARE grants allow communities to get organized, examine and prioritize toxic risks, and take voluntary actions to reduce those risks;

- CARE uses collaborative stakeholder processes and voluntary programs to bring the various sectors of the community together to solve problems;

- CARE mobilizes a network of EPA staff from across programs and regions to provide support, training, and tools to help communities to achieve success;

- CARE establishes an effective mechanism to deliver the full range of voluntary programs to the communities that need and want them.

- CARE helps develop community capabilities that will be self-sustaining,

collaborative, and will hopefully continue improving the environmental health in the community even after the grant funding expires.

C. EPA Strategic Plan Linkage and Anticipated Outcomes/Outputs.

1. The CARE program directly supports progress towards EPA Strategic Plan
http://www.epa.gov/ocfopage/plan/plan.htm

Goal 4 Healthy Communities and Ecosystems
       Objective 4.2 (Communities Sustain, Clean Up, and Restore Communities and the Ecological Systems That Support Them)
             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).

2. CARE supports other goals in EPA's Strategic Plan. In the CARE program, communities will select and carry out EPA voluntary programs to reduce toxic exposures and protect the environment in their communities.   While the voluntary programs and other actions taken will differ from community to community, overall, the actions taken by communities through the CARE program will support a number of the other goals, objectives and sub-objectives in the EPA Strategic Plan across all the environmental media. They are: (including, but not limited to)

- Goal 1 Clean Air and Global Climate Change:
  Objective 1.1 (Healthier Outdoor Air)
         Sub-Objective 1.1.2 (Reduced Risk from Toxic Air Pollutants)
  Objective 1.2 (Healthier Indoor Air).
- Goal 2 Clean and Safe Water
  Objective 2.1 (Protect Human Health)
         Sub-objective 2.1.1 (Water Safe To Drink)
  Objective 2.2: Protect Water Quality
         Sub-objective 2.2.1: Improve Water Quality on a Watershed Basis.
- Goal 3 Land Preservation and Restoration
  Objective 3.1 (Preserve Land)
         Sub-objective 3.1.1 (Reduce Waste Generation and Increase Recycling)
- Goal 5 Compliance and Environmental Stewardship
  Objective 5.2: Improve Environmental Performance Through Pollution Prevention And Innovation,
         Sub-objective 5.2.1 (Prevent Pollution and Promote Environmental Stewardship by Government and the Public)
         Sub-objective 5.2.2 (Prevent Pollution and Promote Environmental Stewardship by Business)
         Sub-objective 5.2.3 (Business and Community Innovation)

3. Outcomes. Through these agreements EPA expects to work with communities so they can:

- Demonstrate the reduction of risk from exposure to toxic pollutants through collaborative action at the local level.
- Develop a comprehensive understanding of all sources of risk from toxics and set priorities for effective action.
- Create self-sustaining community-based partnerships that will continue to improve local environments.

4.   Outputs.

The anticipated output for the CARE projects will vary from community to community. The main outputs are the following:

- CARE Level I project: The creation of a broad based community stakeholder group that has developed an understanding of the toxic risks and environmental pollutants in their community and engaged the community through a consensus process;

- CARE Level II project: Consensus is reached by the community regarding the selection of voluntary programs chosen and used to address the community's priority risks (to address the risks identified in a Level I or similar project). While different communities will select different voluntary programs they will be expected to achieve the specific outputs/outcomes of the programs they choose.

5.   Developing Performance Measures

To receive a cooperative agreement under the CARE program, the applicant must develop performance measures to be achieved through the activities proposed and funded. *The performance measures should focus on solid, quantitative actions related to the applicant's activities, outputs and outcomes*. These performance measures will help gather insights concerning successful process and outcome strategies and will provide the basis for developing lessons to inform future CARE recipients.

During the two-year grant period, every CARE grant recipient is encouraged to measure performance success in the environmental, economic, and social dimensions.   While the CARE project may not lead to dramatic improvement in all three of these dimensions, the CARE applicant is encouraged to think long-term on how the environmental, economic and/or social progress of the project could be monitored long-time through data collection.

Level II grant recipients are encouraged to address actual environmental and human health improvement, whether it is through reduced impact, a more effective use of materials, control of toxics and other pollution sources, healthier ecosystem (land, air, water) functioning, or other measures. In addition, Level II grant recipients should collect and/or use data to measure and track progress towards defined success over both the short and long term.

See Appendix A for the Level I and Level II for the list of specific performance measures that must be reported to EPA and examples of the kinds of measures projects could use. Wherever possible for Level I projects, and in all Level II projects, measurable environmental outcomes must reported

D.   Supplementary Information.

CARE National Webcast

The CARE program will conduct two identical national training sessions for potential applicants via a national webcast on the following dates and times:

   February 21, 2006: 3:00 - 4:30 p.m. (eastern time)
   February 24, 2006: 10:00 - 11:30 a.m. (eastern time)

To register for the upcoming CARE Internet Seminar for either of the above dates, please go to: http://www.cluin.org/studio/seminar.cfm#upcoming and click on the registration link for the "CARE Request for Proposals Q&A".

After the two national training webcast sessions are completed, a recorded version of the full webcast will available on: https://www.clu-in.org/live/archive.

EPA CARE grants will be awarded under EPA's research and demonstration authorities:
   ▪ **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.

To be selected for funding, a project must consist of activities within the statutory terms of EPA's research and demonstration grant authorities. Most of the statutes authorize grants for the following activities: "research, investigations, experiments, training, demonstrations, surveys and studies." These activities relate generally to the gathering or transferring of information or advancing the state of knowledge. The application of established practices may qualify when they are part of a broader project which qualifies under the term "research."
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Applicants must be aware that there are certain statutory restrictions related to EPA's annual Appropriation Acts**. Therefore, EPA funds for awards under this solicitation cannot be used for projects within the scope of activities covered by other appropriation accounts within the EPA Appropriation Act. For example, CARE grants cannot be used**:

- To equip school buses with diesel retrofit technology or to replace older school buses in order to reduce diesel emissions.
- To develop and enhance state and tribal efforts to protect wetlands or to implement State and Tribal wetland programs**..**
- Under this Announcement, EPA will not consider proposals that have a principal purpose of providing training, research, and technical assistance to individuals and organizations to facilitate the inventory of brownfield sites, site assessments, remediation of brownfield sites, community involvement or site preparation.   EPA funds these types of projects with State and Tribal Assistance Grant appropriations under the Office of Brownfields Cleanup and Redevelopment's "Brownfields Training, Research, and Technical Assistance Grants and Cooperative Agreement Program", catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance Number 66.814.
- for response actions and other associated activities (including Technical Assistance Grants) under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act, as amended (CERCLA);
- to survey more than 9 members of the public without prior approval by the Office of Management and Budget of the survey instrument.

Section II. Award Information

A. What is the amount of funding available?

The total estimated amount of funding available under this solicitation for FY 2006/07 is $2.7 million. Cooperative agreements resulting from this announcement will be funded incrementally over a two year period.

B. How many cooperative agreements will EPA award in this competition?

The EPA anticipates awards of 8 - 10 Level I cooperative agreements ranging in value from $75,000 to $100,000 with a maximum value of $100,000, and 6 – 8 Level II cooperative agreements ranging in value from $150,000 to $300,000, with a maximum value of $300,000. However, EPA reserves the right to make no awards, partial awards, multiple awards, subject to the availability of funds and the quality of proposals submitted. Proposals evaluated but not selected for this funding may be retained for a period of four months after the original selection recommendations for possible award under this solicitation, subject to the availability of additional funds.   Furthermore, EPA reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and make no awards under this solicitation.

Funding will be awarded as a cooperative agreement. The financial assistance mechanism permits and EPA expects to have substantial involvement between the EPA Project Officer and the selected applicants in the performance of the work supported. EPA sees its role as providing

training, tools, technical assistance and other support. EPA will not be making decisions for the community. 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, for example:

- close monitoring of the recipient's performance;
- reviewing project progress reports;
- collaborating in the performance of the scope of work;
- approving substantive terms of proposed contracts;
- 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 (the final decision on the content of reports rests with the recipient);

C. What is the project period for award(s) resulting from this solicitation?

CARE cooperative agreements are intended to last for two years. The estimated project period for awards resulting from this solicitation is October 2006 through September 2008.

D. Can funding be used to acquire services or fund partnerships?

Funding may be used to acquire services or fund partnerships, provided the recipient follows procurement and subaward or subgrant procedures contained in 40 CFR Parts 30 or 31, as applicable. Successful applicants must compete their contracts for services and products and conduct cost and price analyses to the extent required by these regulations. The regulations also contain limitations on consultant compensation. Applicants are not required to identify contractors or consultants in their proposal. Moreover, the fact that a successful applicant has named a specific contractor or consultant in the proposal EPA approves does not relieve it of its obligations to comply with competitive procurement requirements.

Subgrants or subawards may be used to fund partnerships with non profit organizations and governmental entities. 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 to carry out its cooperative agreement. For profit organizations are not eligible subgrant recipients under this announcement. The nature of the transaction between the recipient and the 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.

E. Can Projects be Partially Funded?

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

Section III.   Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Entities.

Local, Public non-profit institution/organizations, Federally Recognized Indian Tribal Government, Sponsored organizations, Native American Organizations, Private nonprofit institution/organization, Quasi-public nonprofit institution/organization both interstate and intrastate are all eligible.

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.

Non-profit organizations described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engage in lobbying activities as defined in Section 3 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 are not eligible to apply.

State governments or their agencies are not eligible to apply. EPA hopes to work with State agencies as partners to support CARE communities, where appropriate.

B. Threshold Eligibility Factors.

All applications will first be reviewed for eligibility. To be selected for funding, a project must consist of activities within the statutory terms of EPA's research and demonstration grant authorities. Most of the statutes authorize grants for the following activities: "research, investigations, experiments, training, demonstrations, surveys and studies." These activities relate generally to the gathering or transferring of information or advancing the state of knowledge. Applicants can apply for either a Level I or Level II agreement, not both. Applicants for Level I or Level II agreements whose proposals do not meet the following

threshold eligibility factors, will not be evaluated any further.

- Applicants can apply for only one CARE agreements either a Level I or a Level II but not both. However, an organization can be a partner in more than one CARE project
- Proposals not in English will not be considered.
- The minimum acceptable font size for proposal materials shall be 10 point; material in smaller font sizes will not be considered.

  o LEVEL II Cooperative Agreements have an additional threshold factor - applications/proposals for Level II cooperative agreements that do not meet the following criterion will not be considered further:

  There must be an established broad-based stakeholder group that has developed an understanding of toxic risks in the communities and established priorities for risk reduction. In order to be eligible for a Level II cooperative agreement, the applicant:
  a) must be leading or representing an existing collaborative partnership that represents the various constituencies in the community: citizens, businesses, government (additional appropriate partners can also be part of the partnership);
  b) the partnership must have completed a detailed examination of toxics in the community which includes more than one environmental media (air, water, etc.),
  c) must have come to consensus on the specific community priorities for risk reduction;
  d) be prepared to choose a risk reduction program to address community priorities;

C. Are matching funds required?

A specific level of cost sharing or matching is not required as a condition of eligibility, or otherwise, for proposals selected for award. However, for Level II projects, the ability to leverage additional resources, technical or financial, from other applicants or partners will be evaluated (See Section V.A, Evaluation Criteria)

Section IV. Application and Submission Information

A. How to Obtain Application Package.

Applicants may apply by sending a hardcopy submission to EPA or by applying electronically thru grants.gov as explained below in Section D. Applicants must submit the information required below as part of their grant proposal and follow the stated guidelines. Section C below explains what is needed as part of the content and form of your proposal. Note that only the applicants selected for award will be asked to submit a full grant application package for federal

assistance. Selected applicants may 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). Potential applicants may request a paper copy of the application package by contacting one of the agency contacts listed in Section VII of this announcement. Note that only the applicant selected for award will be asked to submit a full application package.

B.   Submission Requirements

Please note that you may choose to apply under this announcement in one of two ways. If you wish to apply with a hard copy submission, please follow the instructions under "Hard Copy Submission" below. If you wish to apply electronically via Grants.gov, please follow the appropriate instructions under "Electronic Submission" below. EPA encourages applicants to submit their application/proposal materials electronically through http://www.grants.gov.

C. Content and Form of Proposal Submission.

All submissions must contain a narrative proposal containing a discussion of all other elements listed below, and a Detailed Itemized Budget:

1**. Narrative Proposal** The narrative proposal must not exceed a maximum of **10** pages in length. Applicants must submit one original proposal signed by an authorized organization official and two complete copies, unless the applications are submitted through grants.gov. Pages must be numbered in order starting with the project title and continuing through the biographical sketch. The narrative proposal must conform to the following outline and contain the information described below.

        a. An overview of the organization, its mission, and related experience.

        b. A profile of the community served including political and geographical boundaries, basis as a community, and other information that would be useful. Please specify how you are defining the community whether by political boundary such as county, by geographical boundary such as watershed or valley, by neighborhood or other.

        c. A summary of the project and an explicit description of how the proposed project specifically addresses each of the evaluation criteria in Section V.

        d. Brief biographical sketches of key technical experts who will be involved in the proposed project.

        e. A detailed budget (example provided as Appendix B)

f. To assist potential applicants in the preparation of their proposals, EPA has provided "suggested types of information" below (see #2) that if followed, will help the applicant respond to the requirements of the Evaluation Criteria elements specified in Section V.A of this solicitation.

g. Environmental Results. The proposal must include processes/mechanisms for tracking and measuring the outputs and outcomes identified in Section I and Appendix A of this announcement. This includes the collection and analysis of data and information. In addition, the applicant must provide information on their history of satisfactorily reporting on expected outputs/outcomes under prior/current assistance agreements, or satisfactorily explain why they were not attained.

h. Programmatic Capability. Applicants are required to submit information in the proposal that addresses their programmatic (technical) capability ranking factors outlined in Section V of this solicitation.

2. **Detailed Itemized Budget:** Your budget should reflect the tasks/activities proposed for your CARE project. See Appendix B for an example of a detailed budget.

Please provide the following types of information (to the extent that you have these costs) in your detailed itemized budget:
- Personnel Cost (if any)
- Fringe Benefits (if any)
- Contractual Costs
- Travel
- Equipment
- Supplies
- Other
- Total Direct Costs
- Total Indirect Costs

3**. Suggestions for Writing Your Narrative Proposal**

Section V.A contains the evaluation criteria. EPA is providing this section to give the applicant a description of the types of material we are looking for in your narrative. The same numbering system is being applied in this section as in the Evaluation Criteria to make it easier to follow.

The following list is applicable to Level I Projects only

1. **Extent of environment and public health problems:**

Level I projects should be designed to help communities assess and prioritize risks, so communities are not be expected to present a detailed analysis of community risks and impacts. Available information and community knowledge can be used to present a preliminary picture of community risk and impacts.
- Describe the environmental problems that cause the applicant to seek a Level I CARE cooperative agreement.
- Using available information, describe the nature of pollution in your community and identify any health and/or environmental impacts that may be related to toxics.

2. **Community involvement/collaboration/partnerships:**

- Describe what you will do to bring the community together for the purpose of collaboratively, identifying, and reducing exposure to toxics in the community.
- The narrative should explicitly describe what groups (i.e. community, business government and others as appropriate) the applicant will work with.
- List all groups that have already agreed to work with you on this project and their reason for inclusion. Indicate if you have ever worked with any of these groups in the past, and if so, when and what were the results.
- To the extent known, spell out the roles the different organizations will play and the processes through which the organizations will work together and communicate.
- For any organization listed include a contact name with a phone number in order for EPA to consider that organization to be part of the partnership.
- Please include letters of commitment from your partners wherever possible. (The discussion of the organizations you will work with will count against your page total - the letter of commitment will not). EPA reserves the right to contact organizations to verify their involvement.
- Explain your plans for providing meaningful stakeholder participation in the decision-making process and facilitating stakeholder meetings and your plans and/or process for bringing the diverse group of stakeholders together to achieve consensus.
- Also, include (if known) partners within your community that may need to be involved but are not a part of this proposal. Explain why these partners are not included.

3. **Alignment with CARE Strategies:**

Discuss the connection between the three specific CARE strategies listed in Section V.A, Evaluation Criteria 3 and the problems the CARE project is intended to address, the approach the applicant plans to use, and how the proposed work aligns with these strategies. EPA recommends a separate short write-up for each strategy.

4. Project Goals and Performance Plan and Budget Accountability:

- Specifically identify measurable project goals, outcomes and outputs;
- Describe how the project work planned will directly address the community's needs.
- Enumerate in the proposal tasks, and milestones (i.e. dates by which tasks will be carried out and outputs will be produced.)
- Identify what persons or organizations will have lead responsibility for tasks and milestones.
- The budget narrative should show support and alignment with the project goals and performance plan.

5. Tracking and Measuring Environmental Results:

- Describe the applicant's plan for tracking environmental results and what performance measures will be used (outputs and outcomes). Outputs are what is done and what the level of effort is (i.e. will hold a number of meetings throughout the district). Outcomes are the quantitative and qualitative effects of the results from the actions taken (i.e. the meetings engaged four additional neighborhood groups to commit to the project).
- Identify indicators and performance measures the applicant will use to determine at the conclusion of the project if goals were achieved and if the project is a success.

For additional information regarding performance measures and tracking, refer to "Developing Performance Measures" Section I.C.5 for general information and Appendix A "CARE Required Performance Measures" for specific information.

6. Programmatic Capacity:

- Describe other projects that have been successfully managed, or organizational features and controls that will help ensure the project can be effectively managed and successfully completed.
- Describe and provide substantiation of the applicant's ability to manage this CARE project.
- Describe the system(s) that will be used to appropriately manage, expend, and account for federal funds.
- If the applicant is, or has been, a recipient of an EPA grant/cooperative agreement in the last 3 years the applicant must provide information regarding compliance reporting measures, and annual financial status reporting.

The following list is applicable to Level II Agreements *only*.

1. **Environmental issues and concerns:**

   ▪ Include information from the stakeholder group's multi-media investigation of the risks in the community.
   ▪ Specifically identify the extent of the environmental and human health toxic problems in the community.
   ▪ Describe the severity of the environmental and human health problems in the community.

2. **Success of Broad-Based Stakeholder Group:**

   This criterion is designed to inform us about the work that you did in the past so we can judge if you are ready to be a CARE Level II community. Therefore, when answering this question you need to focus on what you have done not what you will do.
   ▪ Describe the community's risk reduction priorities and describe the process through which the community priorities were identified.
   ▪ Describe how broad-based the stakeholder group is. Explain how the group represents all relevant constituencies in the community? Provide specific information on how all sectors of the community, especially community residents, were involved in the process.
   ▪ Describe how consensus was built within the partnership and the community to determine the community's priorities.
   ▪ Describe how effective the stakeholder group has been in examining the toxic problems in the community?
   ▪ Describe how the community members and partnerships have participated and will participate in the planning, performance, and evaluation of the Level II proposed project.
   ▪ substantiate the group and it's its accomplishments by submitting information about the already formed Stakeholder Group including membership, meeting notes and any reports or work products produced

3. **Ability to Leverage New Resources and Sustain Community Efforts to Understand and Improve the Environment**:

   ▪ Describe funds or other resources that have been committed, will be committed and/or have been sought to support the goals of this project (in addition to the EPA CARE proposal).
   ▪ Detail if there are current or future plans to solicit funding from any other EPA source(s) for work related to this proposal.
   ▪ Include letters of commitment from your partners wherever possible. Letters of

commitment do <u>not</u> count toward the page limitation.
- Provide a plan for leveraging local and national funding resources to address community priorities and can describe how Level II CARE funds will be used as a part of this broader plan.
- Describe how the applicant will develop a partnership and community infrastructure so that the stakeholder group can continue the community-based environmental and health protection work in the future.

4. Alignment with CARE Strategies:

Discuss the connection between the 2 strategies listed in Section V.A, Evaluation Criteria #4, the problems the CARE project is intended to address, the approach the applicant plans to use, and how the proposed work aligns with the three strategies. EPA recommends, but does not require, a separate short write-up for each strategy.

5. Project Goals and Performance Plan and Budget Accountability:

- Specifically identify measurable project goals and outputs;
- Describe how the planned project work will directly address the community's needs.
- Enumerate in the proposed tasks, each task's milestones (i.e. dates by which tasks will be carried out and outputs will be produced.)
- Identify what persons or organizations will have lead responsibility for tasks and milestones.
- The budget narrative should show support and alignment with the project goals and performance plan.

6. Tracking and Measuring Environmental Results:

- Describe the applicant's plan for tracking environmental results and what performance measures will be used (outputs and outcomes). Outputs are what is done and what the level of effort is (i.e. will hold a number of meetings throughout the district). Outcomes are the quantitative and qualitative effects of the results from the actions taken (i.e. the meetings engaged four additional neighborhood groups to commit to the project).
- Identify indicators and performance measures the applicant will use to determine at the conclusion of the project if goals were achieved and if the project was a success.

For additional information regarding performance measures and tracking, refer to "Developing Performance Measures" Section I.C.5 for general information and Appendix A "CARE Required Performance Measures" for specific information.

7. Programmatic Capacity:

- Describe other projects that have been successfully managed, or organizational features and controls that will help ensure the project can be effectively managed and

successfully completed.

- Describe and provide substantiation of the applicant's ability to manage this CARE project.
- Describe the system(s) that will be used to appropriately manage, expend, and account for federal funds.

If the applicant is, or has been, a recipient of an EPA grant/cooperative agreement in the last 3 years the applicant must provide information regarding compliance reporting measures, and annual financial status reporting

D.   Proposal Submission Dates and Times.

1. The deadline for submission of initial proposal packages is April 10, 2006. All proposal packages must be received by the closing date in order to be considered for funding. Proposals received after the closing date will not be considered for funding. Facsimile transmission of proposals will not be accepted.

2. Final full grant applications will be accepted only from those eligible entities whose initial proposals have been tentatively selected for funding. Additional instructions for final application packages will be provided once the proposal is tentatively selected for funding.

(Hard Copy Submissions) Initial proposals must be addressed to:

Express Delivery Address (FedEx, UPS, DHL, etc.)

> US EPA
> Attn: CARE Program
> Mail Code 8001A
> 5426 ARN
> 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
> Washington, DC 20460
> Phone: 202-564-7400

4. 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.

5. Applicants are strongly advised to **avoid submission of extraneous materials**. All material that exceeds the maximum page limitation for your proposal described in Section IV.C.1 will not be considered. The maximum page length does not include any pieces documenting third party commitments (e.g. references or letters confirming commitments) or substantiating material

(e.g., membership lists, meeting notes, reports, etc.) submitted as requested under Section III. B (Threshold Eligibility Factors). All proposal materials must be completed in English. Proposals not in English will not be considered. The minimum acceptable font size for proposal materials shall be 10 point; material in smaller font sizes will not be considered.

6. Electronic proposals **must be submitted in Microsoft Word, WordPerfect, or PDF format** to: Grants.gov. Proposals will be considered timely upon receipts, not transmission. An e-mail response confirming receipt of electronic proposals will be provided.

7. 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 visiting the D&B website at: http://www.dnb.com.

8. Questions regarding this solicitation must be submitted in writing to the following **website:** www.epa.gov/care**.**   All questions must be received no later than 14 calendar days prior to the closing of this announcement. Answers to questions received will be posted at the same location as this announcement.

E. Mode of Transmission

All proposals/applications, however transmitted (electronic or hard copy submission), must conform to the requirements set forth in Section C above and must contain the following mandatory items:
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   I. Narrative Proposal
   II. Detailed Itemized Budget
   III. SF424 and SF424A

F. Submission of Grant Proposals

All proposals must be postmarked or submitted through Grants.gov on or before April 10, 2006. All proposal postmarked or submitted through Grants.gov after this due date will not be considered for funding.

G. Electronic Submission

If you wish to apply electronically via Grants.gov, the electronic submission of your proposal/ application must be made by an official representative of your institution who is registered with Grants.gov and authorized to sign applications for Federal assistance. For more information, go to http://www.grants.gov and click on "Get Started," and then click on "For AORs" (Authorized Organization Representative) 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 office to designate an AOR and ask that individual to begin the registration process as soon as possible.

To begin the application process for this grant program, go to http://www.grants.gov and click on the "Apply for Grants" tab at the top of the page. Then click on "Apply Step 1: Download a Grant Application Package and Application Instructions" to download the PureEdge viewer and obtain the application package and instructions for applying under this announcement using grants.gov (https://apply.grants.gov/forms_apps_idx.html). You may retrieve the application package and instructions by entering the Funding Opportunity Number, **EPA-OAR-IO-06-01**, or the CFDA number 66.035, in the space provided. Then complete and submit the application package as indicated. You may also be able to access the application package by clicking on the button at the bottom right side of the synopsis on grants.gov that says **Apply for Grant Electronically**.

Application/proposal materials submitted through grants.gov will be time/date stamped electronically.

Please be sure to view the additional instructions for applying electronically under this announcement through use of grants.gov that are available for download on Grants.gov.

If you have any technical difficulties while applying electronically, please refer to http://www.grants.gov/CustomerSupport.

H. Final Application Packages

The applicants whose proposals are selected will be required to submit a final cooperative agreement application package to their EPA Regional office. This package will include an EPA-approved work plan, a final budget, and the required financial assistance application forms. Approved cooperative agreements will also include specific terms and conditions. These terms and conditions will be binding on the grant recipient and cover areas such as complying with all applicable federal and state laws and ensuring that the projects protect human health and the environment. EPA will work closely with the successful applicant to process and finalize the cooperative agreement package.

Applicants will also be required to submit progress reports in accordance with grants regulations found in 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 30.51 or 40 CFR 31.40. In addition, successful applicants will be required to provide a Dunn and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number.

Section V. Proposal Review Information

A. Evaluation Criteria.

Each eligible proposal will be evaluated according to the criteria set forth below. **Applicants must clearly and explicitly address these criteria as part of their application submittal and must state whether they are applying for a Level I or Level II agreement.** Each proposal will be rated under the specific Levels' point system, with a total of 100 points possible. Refer to the guidance in Section IV.B.2. when writing your proposal.

For the award of Level I cooperative agreements, the applicants will be evaluated on the following criteria:

LEVEL I CRITERIA	Maximum Points per criterion
1. Extent of environment and public health problems: Describe the extent to which the community is impacted by toxic pollution in various environmental media (air, water, land, indoor environments, etc.), including significant community exposures to toxics and environmental pollutants from multiple sources and/or multiple stresses to the local environment, and/or the extent to which there are multiple stresses on economically disadvantaged communities and/or vulnerable communities and populations. More points will be given to communities able to describe multiple concerns. Information that is specific to your community will be given more weight than information that is very general.	**15**
2. Community Involvement/Collaboration/Partnerships: The applicant will be evaluated based on the extent to which they have organized or will be able to organize and then run an effective collaborative partnership of all the various stakeholders in and supporting the community (e.g., citizens, businesses, governments, academic institutions, nonprofit organizations) and any other appropriate partners. The partnership must include all parties necessary to identify sources of toxics and environmental pollutants, and set priorities. Applications with letters of commitment will be scored higher than applications which do not have them. Applications with letters of commitment from multiple stakeholders representing different types of interests will be scored higher then those with only a few stakeholders or with only a few types of interests represented. .	**25**
3. Alignment with CARE Strategies: In the Scope of Work section (I.B.2) of this solicitation, the CARE program has identified seven strategies to achieve its goals. Discuss how the work proposed for the Level I cooperative agreement aligns with the following four CARE strategies. 　　　　1- Provide information and a variety of tools to help communities understand and assess toxic risks from all sources in the community 　　　　2- Mobilize local resources and utilize EPA voluntary programs to	**15**

carry out risk reduction activities 3- Create a positive environment that encourages all members of the community, including businesses and colleges and universities, to join the collaborative partnership. Each strategy is worth 5 points.	
4. Project Goals and Performance Plan: The applicant will be evaluated on the extent to which the project has a well thought out performance plan to achieve the goals of the CARE project while remaining in line with the project budget.	**20**
5. Tracking and Measuring Environmental Results: The applicant will be evaluated on the effectiveness of applicant's plan for tracking and measuring progress toward achieving expected outputs and outcomes identified in Section I.C of the announcement. The performance measures should focus on solid, quantitative measures related to the applicant's activities, outputs and outcomes.	**10**
6. Programmatic Capability: The applicant will be evaluated based on its demonstrated ability to effectively manage the proposed project (including the ability to successfully manage federal funds) to ensure that it is performed successfully. In addition, EPA will also take into account such factors as the applicants: (i) past performance in successfully completing federally and/or non-federally funded projects similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project, (ii) past performance on reporting environmental outputs and outcomes, (iii) history of meeting reporting requirements on prior or current assistance agreements with federal and/or non-federal organizations and submitting acceptable final technical reports**,** (iv) history of satisfactorily reporting on expected outputs/outcomes under prior/current assistance agreements, or satisfactorily explaining why they were not attained. (v) organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the project, and (vi) staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the project. In evaluating applicants under this factor, the Agency will consider the information supplied by the applicant and may consider relevant information from other sources including prior/current grantors and Agency files. In addition, applicants with no relevant or available past performance information or reporting history (items i, ii and iii under this factor) will	**15**

receive a neutral score for those elements of this factor.	

LEVEL II EVALUATION CRITERIA

For the award of Level II cooperative agreements, applicants will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Points per criterion
Environmental issues and concerns: The Applicant will describe the extent to which the community is impacted by toxic pollution in various environmental media (air, water, land, indoor environments, etc.), including significant community exposures to toxics and environmental pollutants from multiple sources and/or multiple stresses to the local environment, and/or the extent to which there are multiple stresses on economically disadvantaged communities and/or vulnerable communities and populations. Additional points will be given to communities able to describe multi-media concerns and how those concerns were prioritized. Information that is specific to your community will be given more weight than information that is very general**.**	**10**
2. Success of Broad-Based Stakeholder Group: Discuss the inclusiveness, effectiveness and overall success of the collaborative partnership up to this point. Inclusiveness looks at how broad based the partnership is and whether the participants represent the various interests in the community. Effectiveness looks at breadth and reasonableness of the examination of toxics and environmental pollutants in the community. Success looks at the group's ability to build consensus on priority risks	**20**
3. Ability to Leverage New Resources and Sustain Community Efforts to Understand and Improve the Environment: Discuss the extent to which the broad-based stakeholder group can demonstrate its ability to use the work and results of the CARE program to leverage other resources, including technical assistance, and volunteers, to expand and sustain its efforts to understand and improve the local environment.	**15**

4. Alignment with CARE Strategies: In the Scope of Work section (I.B.2) of this solicitation, the CARE program has identified seven strategies to achieve its goals. Discuss how the work proposed for the Level II cooperative agreement aligns with the following three CARE strategies.
 	
      1- Mobilize local resources and utilize voluntary programs to carry out risk reduction activities
      2 Create a positive environment that encourages all members of the community, including businesses and colleges and universities, to join the collaborative partnership
 	
Each strategy is worth 5 points.
	10

5. Project Goals and Performance Plan: The applicant will be evaluated on the extent to which the project has a well thought out performance plan to achieve the goals of the CARE project while remaining in line with the project budget.	**20**
6 Tracking and Measuring Environmental Results: The applicant will be evaluated on the effectiveness of applicant's plan for tracking and measuring progress toward achieving expected outputs and outcomes identified in Section I.C of the announcement. The performance measures should focus on solid, quantitative measures related to the applicant's activities, outputs and outcomes.	**10**
7 Programmatic Capability: The applicant will be evaluated based on its demonstrated ability to effectively manage the proposed project (including the ability to successfully manage federal funds) to ensure that it is performed successfully. In addition, EPA will also take into account such factors as the applicants: (i) past performance in successfully completing federally and/or non-federally funded projects similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project, (ii) past performance on reporting environmental outputs and outcomes, (iii) history of meeting reporting requirements on prior or current assistance agreements with federal and/or non-federal organizations and submitting acceptable final technical reports, (iv) history of satisfactorily reporting on expected outputs/outcomes under prior/current assistance agreements, or satisfactorily explaining why they were not attained, (v) organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the project, and (vi) staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the project. In evaluating applicants under this factor, the Agency will consider the information supplied by the applicant and may consider relevant information from other sources including prior/current grantors and Agency files.	**15**

In addition, applicants with no relevant or available past performance information or reporting history (items i, ii and iii under this factor) will receive a neutral score for those elements of this factor.	

B. Other Selection Factors:

In addition to exploring the effectiveness of the CARE program, EPA is also trying to investigate whether CARE is more or less successful in specific situations or with specific types of grantees. In addition to addressing the evaluation factors detailed in Section V.A., Evaluation Criteria, EPA will consider the following factors in making final decisions
- a good balance of Level I and Level II grants,
- geographic balance of projects among the EPA Regions,
- the diverse nature of the projects (major environmental concerns),
- type of community (rural, urban, etc.),
- type of grantee (community group, local government agency, university),
- the projected use of the funds,
- projects whose environment and/or public health benefits can be sustained after the cooperative agreement is completed, and,
- projects that are consistent with the priorities established in the Regional Strategic Plans. Regional Strategic Plans can be found at: www.epa.gov/ocfo/regionplans/regionalplans2.htm.
- geographic diversity of all CARE projects, so two projects in the same city or county are unlikely.

C. Review and Selection Process.

EPA Regional Review and Evaluation
All Level I and II proposals will first be evaluated by EPA Headquarters staff to see if they meet the Threshold Criteria identified in Section III. Those that do not will not be scored or considered further. The Evaluation Team in each EPA regional office will then evaluate the eligible proposals from their region based on the ranking criteria described in Section V.A. The two highest ranked Level I and Level II proposals from each of the ten regional offices will then be forwarded to the National Selection Committee (described below).

EPA National Selection Committee Determination
As described above, the highest ranked proposals from each region based on the evaluation of the proposals against the Section V.A. criteria will be referred to the National Selection Committee for further evaluation. The National Selection Committee will consider and review the applications against the "other factors" identified in Section V.B. The National Selection Committee will consist of staff from a cross section of EPA Programs and Regions and may include staff from State environmental departments. Final award selection recommendations will be made by the National Selection Committee to the Selecting Official from among the highest ranked proposals.

Final Applications. Final applications will be requested only from those eligible entities whose initial proposals have been tentatively selected for funding**.** EPA will notify selected applicants on or before October 1, 2006.

Section VI.   Award Administration Information

A.   Award Notices.

Following final selections, all applicants will be notified regarding their application's status

> 1. EPA anticipates notification to *successful* applicant(s) will be made via telephone, electronic or postal mail by October 1st. This notification, which advises that the applicant's proposal has been selected and is being recommended for award, is <u>not</u> an authorization to begin performance. The award notice signed by the EPA grants officer is the authorizing document and will be provided through postal mail. At a minimum, this process can take up to 90 days from the date of selection.

> 2. EPA anticipates notification to *unsuccessful* applicant(s) will be made via electronic or postal mail by October 1st. In either event, the notification will be sent to the original signer of the application.

B.   Administrative and National Policy Requirements

> 1. 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.

> 2. This program may be eligible for coverage under E.O. 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs." An applicant should consult the office or official designated as the single point of contact in his or her State 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.

> 3. 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.

> 4. Programmatic Terms and conditions will be negotiated with the selected recipient.

C.   Reporting Requirement.

Quarterly progress reports and a detailed final report will be required. Written quarterly reports summarizing technical progress, planned activities for next quarter and summary of expenditures are required, they 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 will be established by EPA, after award. The schedule for submission of quarterly progress reports and any specific required information required in the reports will be established, by EPA, after award.

While the Agency will negotiate precise terms and conditions relating to substantial involvement as part of the award process, EPA expects to closely monitor the successful applicant(s) performance, collaborate during the performance of the scope of work, approve the substantive terms of proposed grants, approve the qualifications of key personnel, review and comment on reports prepared under the resulting cooperative agreement, and evaluate the engineering improvements on an EPA demonstration project. EPA will not select employees or contractors employed by the recipient(s) and the final decision on the content of reports rests with the recipient(s).

After award and during administration of the resulting cooperative agreements, the EPA Project Officer(s) expects to hold monthly telephone conference calls with all successful award recipients. A template will be furnished on those items to be discussed.

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 hopes that the applicant will be willing to provide such information when requested.

D.   Annual and Other Training Requirements

Organizations submitting initial proposals that are selected will be provided training by the Environmental Protection Agency for managing the CARE grant and meeting the goals of the CARE program. Organizations whose proposals are selected for CARE grants are required to attend and participate in the training provided to the CARE grantees. We expect to hold annual training sessions of 3 to 5 days. This travel is an allowable cost and should be included in an applicant's budget. (See Appendix B)

E. 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://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20051800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2005/05-1371.htm Copies of these procedures may also be requested by contacting Larry Weinstock at weinstock.larry@epa.gov

Section VII.   <u>Agency Contacts</u>

A. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:
We have prepared a Question and Answer document which can be found on the CARE website (www.epa.gov/CARE). Any additional questions or comments must be communicated in writing via postal mail, facsimile, or by using our website listed above. Answers will be posted, bi-weekly, until the closing date of this announcement at the OAR Grants/Funding webpage (http://www.epa.gov/air/grants_funding.html).

Send mail to:

> US EPA
> Attn: CARE Program
> Mail Code 8001A
> 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
> Washington, DC 20460

Send fax to:
> 202-564-7739 (attention CARE program)

Go to our website, and click on the words contact us at the bottom of the screen:
> www.epa.gov/care

Section VIII. <u>Other Information</u>

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

Appendix A
CARE Required Performance Measures

Describe the applicant's process to achieve its project objectives. The method for collecting or tracking applicant's data will depend on the specifics of the project. For example, administering a pre and post survey (surveys involving 10 or more subjects will require OMB clearance.) to trained participants may be appropriate for one project, while another project may document pre and post project changes in the physical environment, such as decreased environmental degradation resulting from the project. Measures of environmental or human health benefits resulting from the project may be estimated or projected.

Questions to consider when developing measures of quantitative and qualitative results include: 1) What are the measurable short term and longer term results the project will achieve? 2) How does the plan measure progress in achieving the expected results (including outputs and outcomes) and how will the approach use resources effectively and efficiently?

Example measures:

If a project goal is to meet regularly with partners to plan for and conduct business or other outreach activities to involve others in pollution prevention activities, you may wish to measure:
Outputs: The frequency of these meetings, whether you develop an outreach action plan.
Outcomes: The percentage of targeted businesses involved in pollution prevention programs or efforts—before and after outreach, the results of this contact (e.g., financial, technical, or in kind assistance).

If a project goal is to reduce idling at schools through an anti-idling campaign, you may wish to measure:
Outputs: The number of schools that are a part of the campaign, the percentage of the target population you reach with the anti-idling message.
Outcomes: Reductions in air toxic emissions, calculated based on pre and post campaign estimates of idling at the schools.

Information submitted by the grantee in their quarterly progress report will be tracked.

Level I Cooperative Measures

- Whether you form or focus a broad, results-oriented, collaborative, multi-stakeholder partnership to address toxics and environmental pollutants within 18 months of beginning work
- How many and which toxic awareness raising and analytical risk screening and assessment tools did the stakeholder group use. .
- Did the stakeholder group obtain consensus on a list of priority toxic concerns?
- The amount of reductions of toxics and environmental pollutants and associated benefits achieved, if any
- Did the applicant apply for a CARE Level II cooperative agreement grant?

- Other organizations with whom the grantee is partnering.
- The resource contributions (dollar and other) the partnership has obtained from other organizations

Level II Cooperative Measures

- Did the stakeholder group reach consensus and produce a set of priority actions based on their priority toxics concerns within nine months of beginning work
- Which voluntary programs are carried out
- The amount of toxics and environmental pollutants reductions and associated benefits achieved
- Whether the stakeholder group is reaching your priority action targets?
- Whether the partnership is meeting their milestones to achieve sustainability, as outlined in the work plan
- Other organizations with whom the grantee is partnering.
- The resource contributions (dollar and other) the partnership has obtained from other organizations
- The amount of money the partnership has raised after CARE grant funding ends
- Does the partnership continues to exist after CARE grant funding ends

Appendix B
Sample Budget Narrative

The budget narrative for the project should correspond to the project goals and performance plan. This is only one example and is for illustrative purposes only.

Personnel (these costs are for the CARE recipient employees, if any are hired)

$_____

Fringe Benefits (tied to any personnel costs identified above) $_____
Overhead Rate $_____

Travel
Meetings with Partners ___miles @ .45 $____
National Training Workshop
    Airfare Estimated $550
    Hotel 2 nights @$150 = $300
    Per Diem 3 days @$46 = $138
    Total $988
Total Estimated Travel $_____

Equipment (only items over $5,000 should be included)

Supplies

To complete tasks for project goal (s) ____ to do _____requiring office supplies such as pens, staplers, notebooks, etc.
   Paper $____
   Computer and Printer Supplies $____
   Envelopes $____
   Pencils/Pens $____
   Folders $____
Educational brochures on environmental issues related to project goal _____ to do____
   5,000 brochures @ $____ each $_____
Total Supplies $_____

Other
Printing ___environmental education signs for project goal ___ to do____ $_____
Postage for 2500 mailings (issues of newsletter plus meeting announcements, other literature, and required documents) @ .37 each $_____
Telephone charges to conduct outreach for project goal _____ $_____

Total Other Costs $_____

<u>Contractual</u>

ABC Lead Abatement to support project goal_____ $_____
XYZ Company to conduct ____ to support project goal ____. $_____
Total Contractual Costs $_____

    Total Project Estimate $_____

Attachment A – Grants.gov Instructions

A. General Application Instructions

The electronic submission of your application must be made by an official representative of your institution who is registered with Grants.gov and is authorized to sign applications for Federal assistance.. For more information, go to http://www.grants.gov and click on "Get Started," and then click on "For AORs"(Authorized Organization Representative) 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 office to designate an AOR and ask that individual to begin the registration process as soon as possible.

To begin the application process for this grant program, go to http://www.grants.gov and click on the "Apply for Grants" tab at the top of the page. Then click on "Apply Step 1: Download a Grant Application Package and Application Instructions" to download the PureEdge viewer and obtain the application package for the announcement (https://apply.grants.gov/forms_apps_idx.html). To download the PureEdge viewer click on the "PureEdge Viewer" link. Once you have downloaded the viewer, you may retrieve the application package by entering the Funding Opportunity Number, EPA-OAR-IO-06-01, or the CFDA number that applies to the announcement, in the appropriate field. You may also be able to access the application package by clicking on the button at the bottom right side of the synopsis located on grants.gov that says **Apply for Grant Electronically**.

Application Submission Deadline: Your organization's AOR must submit your complete application electronically to EPA through Grants.gov (http://www.grants.gov) no later than **April 10, 2006**.

Please submit *all* of the proposal/application materials described below. To view the full funding announcement, go to http://www.grants.gov and click on "Find Grant Opportunities" at the top of the page and then click on "Browse by Agency" and select Environmental Protection Agency.

B. Proposal/Application Materials

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

      I.   Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424) and SF 424A
      II. Narrative Proposal
      III. Detailed Itemized Budget

I. **Standard Form(SF) 424,** Application for Federal Assistance. Complete the form. Include one completed and signed copy. 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. **Narrative Proposal**. The narrative proposal must not exceed a maximum of __ pages in length. Pages must be numbered in order starting with the project title and continuing through the biographical sketch and must conform to the following outline:

a.   An overview of the organization, its mission, and related experience
b.   A profile of the community served including political and geographical boundaries, basis as a community, and other information that would be useful. Please specify how you are defining the community whether by political boundary such as county, by geographical boundary such as watershed or valley, by neighborhood or other.
c.   A summary of the project and an explicit description of how the proposed project specifically addresses each of the evaluation criteria in Section V.
d.   Brief biographical sketches of key technical experts who will be involved in the proposed project.
e.   A detailed budget (example provided as Appendix B)
f.   To assist potential applicants in the preparation of their proposals, EPA has provided "suggested types of information" that if followed will help the applicant respond to the requirements of the Evaluation Criteria.

g.   Environmental Results. The proposal must include processes/mechanisms for tracking and measuring the outputs and outcomes identified in Section I and Appendix A of this announcement. This includes the collection and analysis of data and information. In addition, the applicant must provide information on their history of satisfactorily reporting on expected outputs/outcomes under prior/current assistance agreements, or satisfactorily explain why they were not attained.

h. Programmatic Capability. Applicants are required to submit information in the proposal that addresses their programmatic (technical) capability ranking factors outlined in Section V of this solicitation.

III. **Detailed Itemized Budget:** Your budget should reflect the tasks/activities proposed for your CARE project. See Appendix B for an example of a detailed budget.

Please provide the following types of information (to the extent that you have these costs) in your detailed itemized budget:
- Personnel Cost (if any)
- Fringe Benefits (if any)
- Contractual Costs
- Travel
- Equipment
- Supplies
- Other
- Total Direct Costs
- Total Indirect Costs

Applicants are strongly advised to avoid submission of extemporaneous materials. Pages exceeding the maximum length will not be considered. The maximum page length shall include any pieces that may be submitted by a third party (e.g., references or letters confirming commitments). All application materials must be completed in English to be considered for award under this solicitation. The minimum acceptable font size for application materials, excluding the SF-424a, shall be 12 pitch.

C. Application Preparation and Submission Instructions

Documents I through III listed under Application 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 Section…..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 – FY06 – Assoc Prog Supp – 1st Submission" or "Applicant Name – FY 06 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 – FY06 Assoc Prog Supp – 2nd Submission."

Once your application 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., FY06), 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 support@grants.gov or contact weinstock.larry@epa.gov .

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

If you have not received a confirmation of receipt from EPA within 30 days of the application deadline, please contact weinstock.larry@epa.gov. Failure to do so may result in your application not being reviewed.