

Food Quality Protection Act/Strategic Agricultural Initiative Program

Request for Applications (RFA) for FY 2009

OVERVIEW:

Federal Agency Name: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 1, Office of Environmental Stewardship, Pesticides and Toxics Unit

Funding Opportunity Title: Food Quality Protection Act/Strategic Agricultural Initiative Grant Program: Request for Applications-FY 2009

Funding Opportunity Number: EPA-R1-SAI-09-10

Announcement Type: Request for Applications-Initial Announcement FY 2009

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 66.716: Surveys, Studies, Demonstrations, Educational Outreach, and Special Projects within the Office of Prevention, Pesticides, and Toxic Substances

Statutory Authority: Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA Section 20)

<http://www4.law.cornell.edu/uscode/7/ch6.html>

*Postmark date or grant.gov submission date
for Receipt of Application*

Tuesday March 10, 2009 5 PM EST

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

EPA Region 1 Pesticide Program is seeking applications from eligible organizations that will facilitate the implementation of the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA). The program supports efforts to reduce the exposure to toxic pesticides through the adoption of production agriculture pest management practices that transition away from the use of high-risk pesticides in minor crops.

The in-field adoption by farmers of already identified potential low-risk integrated crop or pest management tools and strategies is a priority. The project or projects selected for funding will work towards achieving the adoption of reduced-risk alternatives and /or ecologically-based IPM or biologically integrated farming approaches that are economical.

For this competition, the EPA Region 1 SAI Program has approximately \$100,000 available for assistance awards under this Request for Applications (RFA).

I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION:

Authority:

EPA expects to award grants under the authority provided in Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), Section 20, 7 U.S.C. s/s 135 et seq. (1972) which authorizes the Agency to issue research grants and cooperative agreements for research, development, monitoring, public education, training, demonstrations and studies.

The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) 66.716 states that the intended use of these funds is to: "support Surveys, Studies, Investigations, Training Demonstrations, Educational Outreach and Special Purpose assistance relating to the protection of public health and the environment from potential risk from

toxic chemicals to come.” The statutory authority for awards under this Request for Applications (RFA) is the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), Section 20.

Program Description:

The Strategic Agricultural Initiative (SAI) <http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/grants/aginitiative.htm> was developed as EPA's outreach program to demonstrate and facilitate the adoption of farm pest management practices that will enable growers to transition away from the use of high-risk pesticides.

The SAI encourages the development of pest management practices and products that are safer, effective and support the implementation of the [Food Quality Protection Act \(FQPA\)](#). The in-field adoption by farmers of already identified potential low-risk integrated crop or pest management tools and strategies is a priority. The program supports innovative efforts that enable growers to decrease reliance on agricultural chemicals while maintaining economical outcomes, by developing, demonstrating and/or applying reduced-risk alternatives and ecologically-based integrated approaches to pest management.

Goals and Objectives: The goals of the Strategic Agricultural Initiative Program are:

- Growers significantly reduce or eliminate the use of organophosphate, carbamate or other pesticides impacted by FQPA.
- Implement reduced risk alternatives and /or ecologically based Integrated Pest Management (IPM) adopted on a significant number of acres under commercial agricultural production.
- Engage/work collaboratively with scientists, farmers, commodity organizations/groups, industry, and local and state and federal partners.
- Demonstrate region specific pest management practices/technologies and integrated crop management systems to replace pesticide uses have been canceled under FQPA.
- Use of applicable measuring tools to monitor and record the impacts of the project on the cropping system, pest management practices, human health and the environment.
- Utilize demonstration, extension, outreach and/or education on integrated or sustainable agricultural production practices in partnership with producers, commodity groups and other agricultural stakeholders by making the best use of expert field consultants, USDA research, EPA's reduced risk substitutes, and university supported technical support on alternatives and pest management practices.

Applicants must address at least two of these goals/objectives in their application.

FQPA/SAI Program Linkage to EPA Strategic Plan and Anticipated Outcomes/Outputs:

In order to be successful, the application needs to demonstrate a clear linkage between the relevant goals listed in EPA's Strategic Plan (2006-2011) and the workplan's expected outcomes and outputs.

1. *Linkage to EPA Strategic Plan/GPRA Architecture.* The assistance agreements expected to be awarded under the Request for Applications (RFA) will support EPA Strategic Plan Goal 4 - Healthy Communities and Ecosystems; Objective 4.1 - Chemical, Organism and Pesticide Risks; Sub-objective 4.1.5: Realize the Value from Pesticide Availability. Through 2011, ensure the public health and socio – economic benefits of pesticide availability and use. To see EPA’s 2006-2011 Strategic Plan:

www.epa.gov/ocfo/plan/plan.htm

2. *Outcomes.* The awards under this Request for Applications (RFA) are expected to: 1) increase the number of growers using reduced-risk/IPM tools and techniques; 2) measure quantitative and qualitative benefits to human health, the environment, and communities; and 3) support partnerships between crop producers, EPA, other federal/state/local agencies, and other interested stakeholders to implement reduced-risk/IPM programs, disseminate project outcomes to producers and increase the scope of the FQPA/SAI program.

3. *Outputs.* The anticipated general outputs of the awards under this Request for Applications (RFA) projects include: 1) educational and outreach materials for growers; 2) production plans for growers that include reduced- risk pest management; 3) presentations conferences, seminars, and on-site field training; 4) partnerships established between federal and non-federal programs to provide reduced- risk/IPM programs for crop producers.

3 additional specific *outputs* of the awards are required to be:

- Acres impacted by the project-under management that include pesticide risk reduction practices. If applicable, include those acres treated with biopesticides or reduced risk pesticides and/or those pest management techniques that do not employ chemical methods.
- Percent reduction or pound per acre reduction expected in the use of highly toxic active ingredients.
- Explanation of how the project ensures public health and the socio-economic benefits of pesticide availability and use.

II. AWARD INFORMATION:

Under this competition, the Region anticipates awarding a total of approximately \$100,000 to eligible applicants and anticipates making 1 or 2 grant awards to eligible applicant(s) up to \$100,000. Funding and project periods can extend for no more than two years. The suggested start date for the project is May 1, 2009. Please note, based on the availability of funds and the quality of applications received, EPA reserves the right to make no awards under this Request for Applications (RFA). Costs incurred prior to any award will not be reimbursed.

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION:

A. Eligible Applicants:

Assistance under this Request for Applications (RFA) is generally available to any State, U.S. territories or possession, federally recognized Indian Tribal governments, Native American Organizations, public and private universities, hospitals, laboratories, commodity organizations, farmers groups, other public or private non-profit institutions and individuals. 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.

B. Eligibility Criteria:

To be eligible for funding consideration under this Request for Applications (RFA), applications must meet the following threshold criteria. Failure to meet any of the following criteria will result in the disqualification of the application for funding consideration. 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.

- All organizations submitting applications in response to this solicitation must meet the eligibility criteria as outlined in Section III A of this announcement.
- Applicants must address at least two of the objectives listed in the "Goals and Objectives" in Section I.
- The project **must** have the following measures:
 1. Acres impacted by the project-under management that include pesticide risk reduction practices. If applicable, include those acres treated with biopesticides or reduced risk pesticides and/or those pest management techniques that do not employ chemical methods.
 2. Percent reduction or pound per acre reduction expected in the use of highly toxic active ingredients.
 3. Declared IPM Transition Index number from the "SAI Transition Index" as listed below.

Strategic Agricultural Initiative (SAI) Transition Gradient

- | | |
|----------|--|
| 0 | No transition, growers resist any change. |
| 1 | Growers are interested in learning about reduced-risk pest management practices |
| 2 | Reduced-risk pest management practices have been initiated at the grower level on a pilot basis. |
| 3 | Growers utilize key management practices to determine pest management needs. |
| 4 | Full implementation of reduced-risk pest management practices. |
| 5 | Adoption of a <i>whole systems</i> approach. |

4. Projects must declare measures either direct or surrogate measures. These measures are to be expressed as a benefit to human health and the environment as well as demonstrating results from the use of the reduced-risk practices or integrated pest management (IPM) program that can be tracked throughout the project. Direct measures identify actual environmental changes occurring with IPM program adoption. In contrast, surrogate measures identify changes in strategies or behavior that contribute to environmental changes
- Proposed projects must take place in one or more of the EPA Region 1 States (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont).
 - All proposed project activities and costs must be eligible under the authorizing statute, FIFRA Section 20, as discussed in Section I.

- Applications must not include activities that involve basic research; however, projects may include a component for *applied on farm research*, supported by: surveys, studies, investigations, training, demonstrations and educational outreach/extension.
- Applications must substantially comply with the application submission instructions and requirements set forth in Section IV of this announcement or else they will be rejected. However, where a page limit is expressed in Section IV with respect to the application and/or parts of the application, pages in excess of the page limitation (30 double spaced pages) will not be reviewed. If a single spaced proposal is submitted, it will only be reviewed up to the equivalent of the 30 page, double spaced page limit for proposals specified in Section IV-excess pages will not be reviewed. (Section IV establishes a 30 page double spaced proposal page limit which would be the equivalent of 15 single spaced pages; any single spaced pages in excess of 15 will not be reviewed).
- Applications must be postmarked or received through grants.gov by the EPA on or before Tuesday, March 10, 2009 5 PM EST as specified in Section IV of this announcement. Applicants are responsible for ensuring that their application reaches the designated person/office as specified in Section IV of this announcement by the submission deadline.
- Applications postmarked or received through grants.gov 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 or because of technical problems solely attributable to the grants.gov website and not the applicant. For hard copy submissions, where Section IV requires application receipt by a specific person/office by the submission deadline, receipt by an agency mailroom is not sufficient. Applicant should confirm their receipt of their application with Andrea M. Szylvian as soon as possible after the submission deadline—failure to do so may result in the application not being reviewed.
- Project periods are not to exceed 2 years.
- Only 1 application per primary investigator/project coordinator may be submitted. Multiple applications from the same primary investigator/project coordinator will not be considered. The first application received will be considered and returned to the sender without consideration.

C. Cost Sharing:

Cost sharing is not required.

IV. APPLICATION & SUBMISSION INFORMATION:

A. Application Package:

Please follow the instructions provided in the section below titled, "Content and Form of Application Submission." Application kits are available at :<http://www.epa.gov/ogd/forms/forms.htm> or by contacting the EPA Contact listed below. Completed paper applications should be submitted to:

Andrea M. Szylvian
US EPA Region 1 Pesticide Program
1 Congress Street Suite 1100 SEP
Boston, Massachusetts 02114

Telephone: 617-918-1198
szylvian.andrea@epa.gov

If you wish to submit your application electronically, you must use the electronic package available at: <http://www.grants.gov/>.

B. Content and Form of Application Submission:

Project Narratives must be double spaced, typed in 12 point or larger print with minimum 1 inch horizontal and vertical margins. Pages must be numbered in order starting with the cover page and continuing through the document. Project Narratives cannot exceed 30 pages double spaced. If a single spaced proposal is submitted, it will only be reviewed up to the equivalent of 30 pages double spaced page limit for Project Narratives.

If you are applying via the hard copy method, 2 original hard paper copies are required. If you are applying via the grants.gov method, no hard paper copy is required. (See Section IV.C. "Other Submission Requirements" of this announcement for more information about applying via grants.gov)

Application Materials

The following forms and documents are required to be submitted under this Request for Applications (RFA) regardless of mode of submission:

1. Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
2. Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)
3. EPA Key Contacts Form 5700-54
4. Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B)
5. Grants.gov Lobbying Form
6. EPA Form 4700-4 – Preaward Compliance Review Report
7. Project Narrative-[prepared as described below]
8. Budget Narrative Attachment Form (Budget Detail)
9. Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL), if applicable
10. Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, if applicable

Application for Federal Assistance Standard Form (SF- 424)

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. Clearly state the **TOTAL** funding amount requested for the **ENTIRE** project period in Block 15.

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.

Budget Information for Non Construction Programs-Standard Form (SF- 424A)

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.

Assurances non-Construction Program Certification (SF- 424B)

Complete the form. There are no attachments.

Certification regarding Lobbying

Complete the form. There are no attachments.

EPA Form 5700-54, Key Contacts Form

Complete the form. There are no attachments.

If additional pages are needed, attach these additional pages to the electronic application package by using the "Other Attachments Form" in the "Optional Documents" box. (See Application Preparation and Submission Instructions below for more details.)

EPA Form 4700-4, Pre-Award Compliance Review Report

Complete the form. There are no attachments.

Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if indirect costs are included in the project budget)

Use the "Other Attachments Form" in the "Optional Documents" box to attach a copy of your organization's Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, if applicable. (See Application Preparation and Submission Instructions below for more details.)

You must submit a copy of your organization's Indirect Cost Rate Agreement as part of the application package if your proposed budget includes indirect costs.

*** Please note if you are submitting your application via grants.gov, the forms will be included in the electronic application package.

Project Narrative:

The document, prepared as described below, should be readable in PDF, MS Word for Windows and consolidated into a single file. The number of pages must not exceed 30 double spaced pages.

PROJECT NARRATIVE FORMAT:

a. Cover Page

Provide the following information:

Title and Date of this Funding Opportunity Announcement:

Food Quality Protection Act/Strategic Agricultural Initiative Grant Program: Request for Applications-FY 2009

Funding Opportunity Number:

EPA-R1-SAI-09-10

PROJECT TITLE:

PROJECT COORDINATOR:

Organization:

Address:

Telephone:

E-mail address:

Fax:

PROJECT DURATION:

TOTAL BUDGET REQUEST:

First Year Funding:

Second Year Funding:

Total Funding EPA Funding Request:

b. Executive Summary:

The Executive Summary shall be a stand-alone document, should not exceed one page. It should contain the specifics of what is proposed and what the project will accomplish regarding measuring or movement toward achieving project goals. This summary shall identify the measurable results expected such as: agronomic impacts, pest impacts, impacts on pesticide use, environmental impacts and potential human health benefits.

c. Table of Contents:

A one page table listing the different parts of the application and the page number on which each part begins.

d. Narrative Workplan:

The narrative workplan should include the information below and address all the criteria in Section V.

Part 1. Project Title:

Part 2. Objectives:

A numbered list (1, 2, etc.) of concisely written project objectives - in most cases, each objective can be stated in a single sentence. Identify which of the goals/objectives from Section I are addressed by the project.

Part 3. Justification:

For each goal/objective listed in Part 2 above, discuss the potential outcome in terms of pesticide risk and/or pesticide use reduction, agronomic impacts, environmental and human health. If appropriate, the target pest(s) and crop(s) pesticide product(s) should be explicitly stated. This section should be numbered with a justification corresponding to each objective.

The project objectives must reflect the **“Goals and Objectives”** as outlined above.

Part 4. Project Narrative/Workplan:

Describe in detail how the project will be carried out.

Include main project activities, expected outcomes and deliverables. Describe how the system or approach will achieve the program goals. Describe in detail how the project will work with various partners, for example: producers, USDA Cooperative Extension Specialists, agricultural product marketing professionals, etc.

Describe in detail how the information gained from the project will be shared with the agricultural community and other stakeholders.

Part 5. Performance Measures and Expected Outcomes/Outputs:

The project timetable must include a plan for tracking and measuring progress towards achieving the expected environmental outputs/outcomes in Section I of this Request for Applications (RFA). For example, the timetable should explain what will be accomplished under each of the objectives during the project, the individuals responsible for the activity, and when completion of each objective is anticipated.

Also, identify how you will evaluate the success of the program in terms of measurable environmental results. How and with what measures will humans or ecosystems be better protected as a result of the program.

The project **must** have the following measures:

- Acres impacted by the project-under management that include pesticide risk reduction practices. If applicable, include those acres treated with biopesticides or reduced risk pesticides and/or those pest management techniques that do not employ chemical methods.
- Percent reduction or pound per acre reduction expected in the use of highly toxic active ingredients.
- Declared IPM Transition Index number from the “SAI Transition Index”

Strategic Agricultural Initiative (SAI) Transition Gradient

- 0 No transition, growers resist any change.
 - 1 Growers are interested in learning about reduced-risk pest management practices
 - 2 Reduced-risk pest management practices have been initiated at the grower level on a pilot basis.
 - 3 Growers utilize key management practices to determine pest management needs.
 - 4 Full implementation of reduced-risk pest management practices.
 - 5 Adoption of a *whole systems* approach.
- Explanation of how the project ensures public health and the socio-economic benefits of pesticide availability and use.
 - Environmental Performance Measures Categories must be clearly identified by the applicant.

These measures are to be expressed as a benefit to human health and the environment as well as demonstrating results from the use of the reduced-risk practices or integrated pest management (IPM) program that can be tracked throughout the project. Direct measures identify actual environmental changes occurring with IPM program adoption.

In contrast, surrogate measures identify changes in strategies or behavior that contribute to environmental changes.

- Projects must declare these measures either direct or surrogate measures.

Part 6. *Environmental Results Past Performance:*

Submit a list of federally funded assistance agreements that your organization performed within the last 3 years (no more than 5, and preferably EPA agreements), and describe 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. 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.

Part 7. *Programmatic Capability:*

Submit a list of federally funded assistance agreements 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 whether, and how, you were able to successfully complete and manage those agreements and 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).

Provide information on your experience in the field of the proposed activity and staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, resources or the ability to obtain them and the infrastructure to successfully achieve the goals of the project.

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.

Part 8. *Major Participants:*

List all participating farmers/ranchers, farm/ranch organizations, researchers, educators, and conservationists and others having a role in the project. Provide name, organizational affiliation/occupation (such as farmer) and a description of the role each will play in the project. A brief resume must be submitted for each major researcher or other educator.

Part 9. *Project Budget Narrative:*

Please submit a detailed budget with narrative, explaining the need for funding under each of the appropriate budget categories. List the anticipated amount of funding and associated staff needed to achieve the project objectives. Include the requested federal and any non-federal cost share in these

estimates. Link each task or activity from the project work plan to the associated resources that are needed to accomplish the activity.

Under travel, include the travel location(s), estimated number of trips, estimated total mileage, and number of nights lodging required throughout the entire project period. Describe how leveraged resources will be obtained (if applicable) and what role EPA funding will play in the overall project. Include enough detail for EPA to determine if the costs are eligible, allocable, reasonable, and allowable. For more information, see <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/recipient/tips.htm>.

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.

Contracts and Subawards:

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.

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.

C. Other Submission Information:

Confidential Business Information (CBI): In accordance with 40 CFR 2.203, applicants may claim all or a portion of their application package as confidential business information. EPA will evaluate confidentiality claims in accordance with 40 CFR Part 2. Applicants must clearly mark applications, or parts thereof, 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. However, competitive proposals/applications are considered confidential and protected from disclosure prior to the completion of the competitive selection process.

DUNS Requirement: All applicants applying for funding, including renewal funding must have a Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number. The DUNS number must be included in the data entry field labeled: "Organizational Duns" on the Form SF 424. Instructions on obtaining a DUNS number can be found at: <http://www.grants.gov/GetStarted>. A DUNS number can also be obtained by calling: 1-866-705-5711. The DUNS Number used be a certified unique number.

Grants.gov: Applicants applying through Grants.gov will find the instructions for doing so listed in Section IV D. Submission.

Commitment Letters: Letters of Commitment from all partners collaborating on projects must be submitted with the full application package, not sent separately. Letters must be submitted on letterhead (if applicable), signed by the project partner(s), and include the partner's telephone number and address. The commitment letters should be addressed to the applicant and be submitted as part of the full application package as described below. Commitment letters sent directly to EPA New England will not be accepted. Commitment letters must describe the role of the project partner(s) in the project. Applications for projects that have listed partners but do not include commitment letters from every listed project partner may face a reduction in score during the evaluation process. Please do not send letters of general support or others not directly involved in the project; they will not be used in the evaluation and review process.

Intergovernmental Review: Note that final applications will be subject to review under Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs. If your application is selected for funding, further information will be provided.

Pre-Application Assistance and Communication: 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.

D. Submission:

Please note applicants may choose to apply one of two ways: *hard copy submission* or via *grants.gov*.

Applications must be postmarked or submitted via Grants.gov no later than: ***Tuesday, March 10, 2009, 5 PM EST.***

Please select only 1 option for submitting your application.

OPTION 1: DIRECTIONS FOR HARD COPY SUBMISSION TO EPA

2 hard copies are required.

Hard copy applications must be sent to:

**Andrea M. Szylvian
US EPA Region 1
Pesticide Program
1 Congress Str Suite 1100 Mail Code: SEP
Boston, Massachusetts 02114**

OPTION 2: DIRECTIONS FOR ELECTONIC SUBMSSION via WWW. GRANTS.GOV

The electronic submission of your application must be made by an official representative of your institution who is registered with Grants.gov. 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 office to designate an AOR and ask that individual to begin the registration process as soon as possible.

To begin the 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-R1-SAI-09-10** or the CFDA number that applies to the announcement (**CFDA 66.716**), in the appropriate field. You may also be able to access the 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).

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 ***Tuesday, March 10, 2009, 5 PM EST.***

Please refer to **Section IV. B. Application & Submission Information** of this announcement and submit *all* of the application materials as described.

Application Preparation and Submission Instructions

Documents 1 through 6 listed under Application Materials above in Section IV B of this announcement should appear in the “Mandatory Documents” box on the Grants.gov Grant Application Package page.

For documents 1 through 6, 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 documents 7 and 8, you will need to attach electronic files. Prepare your proposal as described above in Section IV. B. of this announcement and save the document to your computer as an MS Word or

WordPerfect file. (U.S. EPA prefers to receive documents in MS Word, but documents prepared in WordPerfect will also be accepted.) 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.” Follow the same general procedures for attaching document 8 – the Detailed Itemized Budget – using the “Budget Narrative Attachment Form.”

Documents 9 and 10 are listed in the “Optional Documents” box, but *please note that these so-called “optional” documents must also be submitted as part of the application package, if applicable to your organization.* You are only required to submit document 9 – SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities – if your organization is involved in lobbying activities. You are required to submit document 10 – Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement – if you have included any indirect costs in your proposed budget. To attach document 10 and document 11, use the “Other Attachments Form” in the “Optional Documents” box. After attaching the documents, please remember to highlight the “Other Attachments Form” and click “Move Form to Submission List” in order to move the documents to the box that says, “Optional 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 – FY09 – Assoc Prog Supp – 1st Submission” or “Applicant Name – FY 09 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 – FY09 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., FY09), 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: Andrea M. Szylvian Region 1 SAI Program Grant Program Coordinator via email; szylvian.andrea@epa.gov or by telephone at (617) 918-1198.

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

If you have not received a confirmation of receipt from EPA (*not from grants.gov*) within 30 days of the application deadline, please contact Andrea M. Szylvian, Region 1 SAI Program Grant Program Coordinator via email; szylvian.andrea@epa.gov or by telephone at (617) 918-1198. Failure to do so may result in your application not being reviewed.

V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION:

Criteria: Total Points: 100

Applications that pass the threshold eligibility review in Section III will be evaluated using the criteria below. Applications may receive up to **100 points**.

1) Qualifications, Experience and Past Performance (14 points):

The applicants experience in the field of the proposed activity and its staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, resources or the ability to obtain them, and infrastructure to successfully achieve the goals of the project. (8 points)

The applicant's history of meeting reporting requirements on federally funded agreements performed within the last two years similar in size, scope and relevance to the proposed project and submitting acceptable final technical reports under these agreements. (2 points)

The applicants past performance in successfully completing and managing federally funded agreements performed within the last two years that are similar in size and scope and relevance to the proposed project. (4 points)

In evaluating applicants past performance and reporting history, 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 reporting information, please indicate this in the proposal and you will receive a neutral score for these factors.

2) Environmental Results Past Performance (5 points):

Applicants will be scored based on the extent and quality to which they adequately documented and/or reported on their progress towards achieving the expected results (e.g., outcomes and outputs) under Federal agency assistance agreements performed within the last two years, and if such progress was not being made whether the applicant adequately documented and/or reported why not. 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) Project description and justification: (Total of 24 points)

Applications will be scored on the following components:

- a. Consistency of applicant's proposed project with the risk reduction goals of the FQPA/Strategic Agricultural Initiative and whether the project demonstrates and facilitates the adoption of pest management decisions and practices that provide growers with "a reasonable transition" away from the highest risk pesticides. In addition, whether the project implements reduced use or reduced risk control techniques and products, or demonstrates the potential for implementation of project results will be evaluated. (4 points)
- b. Likelihood that the project can be replicated in other areas by other agricultural organizations to their benefit (4 points).
- c. Whether it addresses a significant geographically/regionally specific or widespread agricultural and/or environmental concern (4 points).
- d. The extent and quality to which it addresses the sociological or economic forces that support adoption, or those impediments that limit adoption of environmentally sensitive production systems (4 points).
- e. The extent and quality to which it demonstrates potential for long-term benefits (4 points).
- f. The extent and quality to which it addresses multiple-components of the agro-ecosystem such as soil, water, air, plant, animal, and human resources (4 points).

4) Project Strategy: (14 points)

Applications will be scored based on their organizational experience and the extent and quality to which they include a well-conceived strategy to achieve the project goals and objectives and a reasonable schedule for the execution of the tasks associated with each goal.

5) Measurement of Environmental Results: (Total of 20 points)

Applications will be scored on the following components:

- a. Progress Measures (10 points). The extent to which the proposed project contains clear measures of success for each major task or product, and provides a description of the format in which these measurements will be reported as well as a plan for tracking project progress towards achieving these identified measures.

- b. Environmental Performance Measures (10 points): The application will be evaluated on the extent to which it incorporates Environmental Performance Measures. These measures can be either “direct” or “surrogate” measures. Direct measures identify actual environmental changes occurring with the adoption of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) practices. In contrast, surrogate measures identify changes in strategies or behavior that should lead to environmental changes.

The project should address two or more, but is not limited to, the following measures:

- 1) Changes in behavior of growers toward the use of lower-risk practices.
- 2) Reductions in number of detections of fruits and/or vegetables with tolerance violations, particularly organophosphates.
- 3) Comparison of the levels of residues on fruit and/or vegetables from conventional vs. reduced-risk pesticide practices.
- 4) Reduction of mortality to non-target aquatic and terrestrial organisms caused by pesticides.
- 5) Populations of beneficial organisms in fields and adjacent habitat.

6) Innovation: (5 points)

Applications will be scored based on the extent and quality to which the proposed project provides innovative efforts that enable growers to decrease reliance on agricultural chemicals while maintaining economical outcomes, by developing, demonstrating and/or applying reduced-risk alternatives and ecologically-based integrated approaches to pest management.

7) Partnerships: (5 points)

Applications will be scored based on the extent to which the project makes effective use of partnerships and the involvement of local agricultural stakeholders, builds upon existing efforts, or leverages other significant activities or institutional efforts. Partners must provide a Commitment Letter(s) from an official within the organization, specifying and confirming their specific contributions to the project.

8) Outreach: (8 points)

Applications will be scored based on the extent and quality to which the project supports innovative agricultural extension such as farmer-to-farmer education or farmer-scientist interaction, outreach and technology transfer.

9) Budget: (5 points)

Applications will be scored based on the adequacy of the budget information provided, and whether the budget breakout is reasonable and acceptable, and demonstrates effective and judicious use of Federal funds.

REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS:

A panel comprised of EPA Region 1 staff will evaluate and rank each eligible application using the criteria outlined in Section V of this Request for Applications (RFA). The panel will submit the highest

ranked proposals to the Selection Official. The Selection Official will select the highest ranked proposal or proposals for award.

The applicant organizations whose application (s) is/are selected for award will be notified electronically on or around Tuesday, April 14, 2009. The applicants not selected will be also notified electronically, consistent with the Agency's Disputes Procedures. (Note that applications will be subject to review under Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs.)

VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION:

Award Notices:

Successful applicants whose final applications have been selected and approved can expect to receive an award document. Please note that only a duly authorized grant officer can bind the government following approval of your final application. The award will not be official and final until a notice of award approval is issued by the EPA award official and affirmed by your organization.

As the assistance agreement is a legal document, an authorized representative of your organization must indicate acceptance by signing and returning the appropriate copies to the EPA Region 1 Grants Office. Specific instructions will be provided with the award document. The mailing address for the Region 1 Grant Office is:

**EPA Region 1 Grants Management Office (MGM)
Office of Administration and Resource Management
1 Congress Street Suite 1100
Boston, Massachusetts 02114**

Dispute Resolution:

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:

**Andrea M. Szylvian
US EPA Region 1 Pesticide Program
1 Congress Street Suite 1100 SEP
Boston, Massachusetts 02114
Telephone: 617-918-1198
szylvian.andrea@epa.gov**

Administration and National Policy Requirements:

Award recipients must comply with all requirements set forth in 40 Code of Federal Regulations (40 CFR), Part 31 (Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments) and 40 CFR, Part 30 (Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and other Non-Profit Organizations), as applicable.

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.

Nonprofit Administrative Capability Clause:

Non-profit applicants that are recommended for funding under this announcement 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). 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.

Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP): Awards involving the collection of environmental data will be subject to the requirements of a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) and will require coordination with the EPA Region 1 QAPP Office located at the Region 1 Laboratory, North Chelmsford, Massachusetts.

Funding Restrictions: Regulations governing these assistance agreements are found at: 40 CFR Part 30 for institutions of higher education, colleges and universities, and non profit organizations; 40 CFR Part 31 for States, federally recognized Indian Tribes and local governments; 40 CFR Part 32, governing government wide debarment and suspension; and, 40 CFR Part 34 regarding restrictions on lobbying. All costs incurred under this program must be allowable under the applicable OMB Cost Circulars: A-87 (States and local governments); A-122 (non profit organizations); or A-21 (universities). Copies of these circulars may be found at: <http://whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars>.

In accordance with EPA policy, and the OMB circulars, as appropriate, any recipient of funding must agree not to use assistance funds for lobbying, fund raising, or political activities(e.g. lobbying members of Congress or lobbying for other Federal grants, cooperative agreements or contracts) See 40 CFR Part 34.

Please refer to the applicable cost principles in the Office of Management and Budget Circulars; e.g.

OMB Circular A-21, Educational Institutions

OMB Circular A-87, State and Local Governments

OMB Circular A-122, Non-Profit Organizations

These circulars can be viewed at: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/>

Award will not allow for the reimbursement of pre-award costs. Indirect cost rates will not increase the award funding amount.

Reporting:

Progress Reports:

Written reports describing tasks accomplished, results achieved to date including any problems encountered and how problems were overcome, and a summary of funds expended will be required on a quarterly basis, as stated in 40CFR§31.40 and 40CFR§30.51. Reports should be submitted electronically if possible.

A format and timetable for the written reports will be sent electronically to the grantee after the award has been made.

Final Reports:

Are required at the completion of the project, as stated in 40CFR§31.40 and 40CFR§30.51. The report will include copies of any agreed-upon work-product(s) resulting from the project, and copies of materials generated in connection with project activities (e.g., workshop announcements, workshop sign in sheets, newspaper/newsletter announcements, articles or releases, press packets, pamphlets, etc.). Any additional requirements will be stated in the Special Conditions of the Award document.

VII. Agency Contact:

Andrea M. Szylvian
EPA Region 1
Pesticide Program Mail Code: SEP
1 Congress Str. Suite 1100
Boston, Massachusetts 02114
Telephone: (617) 918-1198
szylvian.andrea@epa.gov