

OVERVIEW SECTION

AGENCY: ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA)

TITLE: “CONFERENCES, WORKSHOPS, TRAINING, TRAVEL, AND MEETING SUPPORT ACTIVITIES FOR STATE CO-REGULATORS”

ACTION: Request for Applications (RFA) - Announcement

RFA NO: EPA-OSWER-OSRTI-07-02

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE (CFDA) NO.: 66.813

DATES: The closing date and time for submission or receipt of applications is November 27, 2006, 5:00 p.m. EST. Applications submitted through <http://www.Grants.gov> must be received by November 27, 2006, 5:00 p.m. EST. Applications submitted in hard copy, as described in Section 4(C) of this announcement, must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or, received at EPA via hand delivery by November 27, 2006.

SUMMARY: This notice announces the availability of funds and solicits applications from eligible entities for financial assistance to support technical conferences, workshops or meetings for non-federal personnel that will be planned and held over a five-year period beginning in fiscal year 2007. Funds awarded under this announcement will also be used by the recipient to provide support for the travel expenses of State and tribal environmental agency personnel technical workshops, meetings and conferences on the remediation of contaminated soil and groundwater during the project’s period of performance.

FUNDING/AWARDS: The total estimated funding for this competitive opportunity is \$600,000. EPA anticipates award of one cooperative agreement resulting from this competitive opportunity. (*Refer to Section 2(B).*)

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Section 1 - Funding Opportunity Description.

A. Background.

EPA's Office of Superfund Remediation and Technology Innovation (OSRTI), Technology Innovation and Field Services Division's (TIFSD) primary mission is to promote the development and field application of innovative treatment technologies to remediate contaminated soil and groundwater. This effort will be accomplished by, among other things, providing financial assistance to support technology forums for state, tribal, academic and industry waste site cleanup project managers; development and distribution of technology resource guides, reports, bibliographies, cost and performances data, and market studies; creation of electronic resources including technology databases bases, internet (website) resources; and development and administration of training courses on-line.

The objective of this competitive opportunity is to facilitate improvement of state and international understanding of the performance of innovative and alternative treatment technologies and waste characterization approaches, and to remedy selection planning and decision making that may be implemented in the field to remediate ground water and soils at sites that have been contaminated by hazardous waste.

To accomplish the objective of this competitive opportunity, EPA is soliciting applications from eligible entities for the development and implementation of technical conferences, workshops or meetings that will be planned and held over a five year period beginning in Fiscal Year 2007. EPA will provide financial assistance to a recipient that will act as the non-federal co-sponsor of an International Phytoremediation Experts Conference and a Triad Implementation National Conference and Triad Training Course. EPA will be the federal co-sponsor for these events.

B. Project Description.

The recipient shall perform the following tasks under the proposed assistance agreement:

Task 1: Funding of State Travel

The recipient will provide travel expenses for up to 20 state employees per fiscal year to attend technical workshops, conferences, training or meetings focused on remediation of contaminated soils and ground water. These may be EPA, other Federally or state sponsored, academic events or non-governmental forums. As long as the events and personnel are consistent with the categories established in the EPA approved scope of work, the recipient will be solely responsible for selecting the state personnel attending these events and for identifying the events that are most responsive to the interests of state personnel. Applicants must describe and provide examples of events and specify categories of state personnel in their proposal.

Task 2: Organize and Host an International Phytoremediation Experts Conference

The recipient shall perform the following event planning logistical activities and others identified by the recipient for this conference.

1. Select the location, date and meeting space to accommodate a minimum of 250 attendees at the conference.
2. Develop and distribute conference announcement brochures including location, date, agenda, registration and program contact information. This announcement shall be in the format and size for electronic mailing to potential participants. This shall include a call for papers, presentations, and posters. Final acceptance or rejection of these documents shall be the responsibility of the recipient.
3. Create and manage the conference registration fee system. The registration process shall include a standard registration form and accounting system as well as other features the applicant proposes to demonstrate its ability to effectively manage non-federal participation in the conference. The registration process must be able to accommodate web-based, mail in, and on-site registration.
4. The applicant must develop a plan for that identifies and describes how it will effectively carry out logistical tasks necessary to ensure non-federal participation in the conference.
5. Provide reimbursement of travel and per diem expenses for international and state speakers. Applicants must identify and explain the basis for the number of international and state speakers that it intends to support with travel expenses and provide its registration fee waiver policy. Applicants may, but are not required to, waive fees for federal speakers.
6. Develop instructions for presentations and abstracts. Applicants must include their instructions for presentations and abstracts in their proposal.
7. Manage all hotel and non-federal speaker logistics and audio-visual (AV) needs prior to, and during, the conference.
8. Provide a record of each speakers presentation at the conference by collecting all abstracts, slide shows, and papers submitted for reproduction and distribution on a compact disk.

Task 3: Organize and Host Triad Implementation National Conference and Triad Training Course.

Task 3 activities shall result in a 4-day Conference/Training Session. The recipient shall perform two Triad support activities. The support activities include: (a) organizing and

managing a 3-day National Triad Conference; and (b) providing facilities for a Triad training course.

The recipient shall perform the following event planning logistical activities, and others identified by the recipient, for the Triad conference and training course.

1. All conference planning/logistical activities listed in Task 2 above, specifically, numbers, 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 and 8.
2. The recipient shall issue a call for papers, presentations, and posters. Final acceptance or rejection of these documents shall be the responsibility of the recipient.
3. The conference agenda shall provide multiple tracks of the full array of advanced Triad topics, with the focus on implementation.
4. As part of the National Triad Conference, the recipient shall coordinate a 1 ½ - 2-day Triad Training session co-located with the National Conference. Applicants must submit a detailed training plan including the number of trainees, an agenda, and course materials, and a fee waiver policy. EPA will provide some of the training materials as a form of in-kind assistance.

To better facilitate the understanding of what a Triad conference may look like, an example of a previous conference is included in the appendices. The example is intended for informational purposes only. Future conferences are not expected to follow this format, rather, EPA seeks effective and innovative alternative approaches.

Task 4: Additional Innovative Technology Conferences/Meeting/Seminar and Training Sessions

For planning purposes, applicants should plan/budget for no more than 3 such additional events. EPA anticipates supporting approximately one major conference event per year.

Topics for additional conference/meeting/training sessions under this task may include, but are not limited to: nanotechnology, triad, mining site remediation and characterization, sediment containment, emerging contaminants, DNAPL investigations, phytoremediation, combined in situ remedies, and ecological restoration.

(Note: Activities under this task shall be determined based upon program budget and initiatives. EPA reserves the right to not fund Task 4 activities.) (Refer to Section 2(C).)

Subject to the requirements described in Section 2(E) of this announcement, two or more eligible applicants may form a partnership and submit a single application under this announcement. However, one of the applicants must be identified as the recipient organization under the

proposed award and will be accountable for tracking project outputs, outcomes, proper expenditures of funds, and financial transactions between the group.

C. EPA Strategic Plan Linkage.

The project selected for award through this competition will support progress towards EPA Strategic Plan Goal 3, (Land Preservation and Restoration, Objective 3.2, Restore Land, Sub-Objective 3.2.2, Clean up and Reuse Contaminated Land); and Objective 3.3, Enhance Science and Research, Sub objective 3.3.2, Conduct Research to Support Land Activities. Specifically, the conferences, workshops, training, travel, and meeting support activities help state officials and communities with waste remediation information needs and public outreach; assist State representatives in discussing and sharing experiences on emerging remedial technologies and strategies, and exchanging current remediation research findings; provides for hazardous substances management training to State personnel to enhance their capabilities to evaluate hazards to human health; and supports hazardous substances research and the evaluation of the effects on human health and the environment.

D. Measuring Environmental Results: Anticipated Outcomes/Outputs.

Pursuant to EPA Order 5700.7, “*Environmental Results under EPA Assistance Agreements*,” EPA requires that all grant recipients adequately address environmental outputs and outcomes. Outputs and outcomes differ both in their nature and in how they are measured. Applicants must discuss environmental outputs and outcomes in their proposed work plan.

1. **Outcomes.** Outcomes refer to the result, effect, or consequence that will occur from carrying out the activities or outputs of the project. Outcomes may be environmental, behavioral, health-related or programmatic, must be quantitative, and may not necessarily be achievable during the project period.

EPA anticipates outcomes from projects expected to be awarded under this announcement will include: enhanced state, tribal and international understanding of phytoremediation technology in support of technical and policy decisions; support of practical knowledge and field implementation of the “Triad” process (*Systematic Planning, Dynamic Work Strategies, Measurement Techniques, Data Assessment Techniques, and General Management*); improvement of the technical skills, expertise, and scientific knowledge of state and federal officials, academic groups, industrial site responsible parties, and international community; increased protection of human health and the environment.

2. **Outputs.** Outputs refer to an environmental activity, effort, and/or associated work products related to an environmental goal or objective, that will be produced or provided during the project period.

EPA anticipates the output from the projects expected to be awarded under this announcement will be:

- a. Attendance of over 800 scientists, engineers, state and federal officials, remedial Managers, researchers, vendors and other industry representatives at expert conferences and training sessions.
- b. Papers presented on current status of phytoremediation technologies, triad implementation success stories, and other emerging technical topics and initiatives.
- c. Publishing of information, conference summaries and reports on the state of the art practices of phytoremediation and other innovative treatment approaches/initiatives.
- d. Identification of research needs, limitations and successful field applications of phytoremediation and other innovative treatment technologies.
- e. Technical training that will enhance EPA's mission to protect human health and the environment.
- f. Publishing of technical field results in scientific journals and publications.

(View EPA's Strategic Plan on the internet at: <http://www.epa.gov/ocfopage/plan/2003sp.pdf>.)

E. Supplementary Information.

The statutory authority for this action is "The Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act" of 1980 (Superfund), Sections 311 (A) i-iii, (B) i-iii, Section 311 (b)(3) and (b)(8), Technology Transfer Provision; Section 102(2)(F) of the National Environmental Policy Act.

Section 2 - Award Information.

A. What is the amount of available funding?

The total estimated funding available under this competitive opportunity is \$600,000.

EPA reserves the right to make additional awards under this competition, consistent with Agency policy, if additional funding becomes available. Any additional selections for awards will be made no later than four months from the date of original selection decision.

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

EPA anticipates award of one cooperative agreement resulting from this competitive opportunity.

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

1. Close monitoring of recipients performance to verify the results proposed;
2. Collaboration during performance of the scope of work;
3. Providing course materials for the Triad Training Course as a form of in-kind assistance;
4. Under 40 CFR 30.36 and 40 CFR 31.34, EPA has the right to publish and disseminate all products and papers submitted and accepted for conferences for federal purposes;
5. EPA shall retain the right to use all marketing materials generated by the grantee to market the conference as needed;
6. In accordance with 40 CFR 30.44(e) and 40 CFR 31.36(g), review proposed procurements;
7. Approving qualifications of key personnel (EPA will not select employees or contractors employed by the award recipient);
8. Review and comment on reports prepared under the cooperative agreement (the final decision on the content of reports rests with the recipient)
9. Review project outputs for consistency with the EPA approved scope of work..

C. Will proposals be partially funded?

EPA reserves the right to partially fund proposals/applications by funding discrete activities, portions, or phases of proposed projects. If EPA decides to partially fund a 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.

EPA reserves the right to reject all applications and make no awards under this announcement, or make fewer awards than anticipated.

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

The estimated start date for project(s) resulting from this solicitation is January, 2007. All project activities must be completed within the negotiated project performance period of five years.

E. Can funding be used to acquire 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 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. For profit organizations are not eligible for subawards or subgrants under this announcement but may enter into procurement contracts with recipients.

Successful applicants must compete 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. **Recipients may only award subgrants to eligible entities as described in Section 3(A) below.** 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. 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.

Section 3 - Eligibility Information and Threshold Criteria.

A. Eligible Entities.

Applications will be accepted from states, territories, Indian Tribes, and possessions of the U.S., including the District of Columbia, public and private universities and colleges, hospitals, laboratories, other public or private nonprofit institutions, and individuals. In some instances, EPA will consider applications from profit makers, proposing projects with significant technical merit and relevance to EPA's Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response. EPA does not allow recipients to charge profit or any other charges beyond direct or indirect costs to their agreements. Nonprofit 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. Cost Sharing or Matching.

In accordance with CERCLA 311(b)(3), applicants must contribute a minimum of 10 percent of the total project cost. The cost-share may be provided in the form of cash or an “in-kind” contribution. An in-kind contribution is the reasonable value of property and services that benefit the project. All cost sharing must meet the requirements of 40 CFR 30.23 or 40 CFR 31.24 as applicable.

Applicants can meet the cost share requirement by charging a registration fee that meets the program income requirements of 40 CFR 30.24 or 40 CFR 31.25, as applicable. Fees that cover allowable costs (room rental, speaker fees, audio visual materials, working lunches) would qualify as a cost share. Fees for entertainment events such as receptions and other entertainment related activities would not qualify as cost share. Applicants must provide detailed information regarding resources (cash/in-kind items and activities) that they, or a project partner, will commit to the conferences/training to meet the cost share requirement. EPA will also consider the amount and type of commitments offered under the “*Resources*” criterion of this announcement.

Applications which do not meet the minimum cost share requirement will not be considered further. Matching funds must comply with 40 CFR 31.24.

C. Threshold Criteria.

EPA must assure that an application selected for funding meets the following “threshold criteria,” applied on a pass/fail basis. Applications that fail any one of the threshold criteria will not be considered further. EPA will notify applicants who do not meet the threshold criteria within 15 calendar days of the “fail” determination. Applications that meet the threshold criteria, will then be evaluated based on the factors disclosed in *Section 5(A), Evaluation Criteria*. The threshold criteria are:

- a. Proposals must address the scope of work described in *Section 1, Project Description* of this announcement.
- b. Proposed project budget must have a maximum value of \$600,000. Proposals requesting assistance funding in excess of this value will not be considered.
- c. Applications must provide demonstrative examples of all technical knowledge and experience requirements as described in *Section 3(D)* of this announcement.
- d. Organizations proposing to utilize proprietary information must provide evidence of permission to use the information.
- e. Applications must substantially conform to the outline and content detailed in *Section 4(B), Content and Form of Application* of this announcement or they will be rejected. Pages in excess of the page limitations expressed in *Section 4(B), Content and Form of Application* of this announcement will not be reviewed.
- f. Applications must be received by the EPA or through <http://www.Grants.gov> on or before the solicitation closing date and time published in *Section 4* of this announcement. Applications received after the published closing date and time will be returned to the sender without further consideration.
- g. All application materials must be submitted in English.

D. Technical Knowledge and Experience Requirements.

1. **Experience with conference planning.** The applicant must have demonstrated experience hosting, planning, and managing a minimum of two national workshops, seminars, forums, meetings or conferences, with over 100 attendees, focusing on environmental issues (contamination, site characterization, and remediation). The events must have been technical in nature and in the form of presentations of professional papers.
2. **Training Experience.** The applicant must have demonstrated experience in all aspects of hosting, coordinating, conducting, and management of technical training sessions.
3. **Experience with Technical Disciplines.** The Applicant must have demonstrated experience working with technical experts in the scientific, engineering and environmental management disciplines.
4. **Technical Knowledge.** The Applicant must have demonstrated engineering, scientific, and practical knowledge of alternative/innovative clean up technologies, techniques and processes, including Phytoremediation, Nanotechnology and other methods.
5. **Technical Knowledge.** The Applicant must have demonstrated knowledge and understanding of EPA's site cleanup programs using the "triad" approach.

Section 4 - Application and Submission Information.

A. How to Obtain an Application Package.

Applicants may download individual grant application forms, or electronically request a paper application package and an accompanying computer CD of information related to applicants/grant recipients roles and responsibilities from EPA's Grants and Debarment website by visiting: http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/how_to_apply.htm.

B. Content and Form of Application.

The following documents are required for all applications, irrespective of the mode of submission. All applications must contain a "Narrative Proposal," and one completed and signed "Federal Grant Application Package." The "Narrative Proposal" must explicitly describe the applicant's proposed project and specifically address how it meets each of the evaluation criteria disclosed in *Section 5(A), Evaluation Criteria, and the Section 3(C) threshold eligibility criteria.*

1. The “**Federal Grant Application Package**” application must substantially conform to the following outline and content:
 - a. Standard Form 424 (SF-424), Application for Federal Assistance, with original signature;
 - b. SF-424A, Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs;
 - c. SF-424B, Assurances for non-construction programs
 - d. Certification Regarding Lobbying
 - e. EPA Form 4700-4 Pre-award Compliance review report
 - f. EPA Form 5700-54, Key Contacts Form
 - g. SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities, if applicable
 - h. Copy of Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, if applicable.

Individual grant application forms may be downloaded from EPA’s Grants and Debarment website by visiting: <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/application.htm>

2. The “**Narrative Proposal**” shall be typed, single-line spaced, on 8 ½ " x 11" pages with 1" margins. The “Narrative Proposal” must substantially conform to the following outline and content:
 - a. **Cover Letter.** The cover letter must include a brief description of your project, be written on your organization’s official letterhead, and signed by an official with the authority to commit your organization to the proposed project. The cover letter must also include:
 - i. Project Title;
 - ii. Summary Statement. Brief summary description of proposal describing the types of activities to be conducted;
 - iii. Applicant Information. Include applicant (organization) name, address, contact person, phone number, fax, e-mail address, and DUNS number (*Refer to Section 4 (E).*);
 - iv. Funding Requested. Specify the amount you are requesting from EPA;
 - v. Project period. Provide beginning and ending dates (for planning purposes, applicants should assume a project start date of January, 2007;
 - vi. Cooperative Partnerships. Provide names and phone numbers of individuals and organizations that have agreed to participate in the implementation of the project:
 - b. **Detailed Project Description.** The project description must provide a concise overview of how the applicant will implement and conduct its operation and **discuss how the proposal addresses each of the selection criteria in Section 5 of this announcement.** The description must include:
 - i. **Project Work Plan.** Provide a well-supported statement of how your organization will implement the tasks identified in *Section 1(B), Project Description* including a description of all tasks; specific actions and methods to be undertaken, an estimated time line for each task, the responsible parties, dates of completion, products and deliverables, and proposed budget. Include a

discussion of demonstrative examples of all technical knowledge and experience requirements as described in Section 3(D) of this announcement.

Applicants are not required to duplicate previous formats or approaches, and are encouraged to propose alternatives that will enhance the effectiveness of the technical program. Describe your method for developing the technical program for the meetings and conferences, including: development of conference themes, topics, and sessions, and managing the call for presentations. The project work plan should:

1. Describe the major considerations for locating the conferences sites.
2. Describe your process for choosing and inviting speakers for the sessions.
3. Describe your process for choosing or rejecting papers and presentations, and for inviting speakers for the sessions.
4. Describe how you would obtain advice from technical experts concerning the design of the conferences.
5. Describe how you would support state and other non-federal government attendance to the conferences. This description may include an attendance percentage goal with registration and or travel compensation.
6. Describe how you would identify any trends or new findings from the conferences presentations, and your process for transferring this information to stakeholders.
7. Describe how you would identify the training needs of Triad practitioners (current and potential), and how you would respond to those needs during meetings/training sessions.
8. Describe your process for designing and implementing a full-scale marketing strategy to ensure widespread communication about the conferences purpose, technical program, and participants. Describe how this marketing strategy will be developed and implemented early in the conference planning stages and consistently adhered to throughout the planning stages and at the conference. You may include coordination with EPA Project Officers to leverage EPA Triad community of practice contact list, etc, and how these may be utilized.
9. Describe your process of creating and placing conference advertisements in professional journals, newsletter, and Internet site (as applicable) as well as newspapers, magazines, and other media outlets.
10. Describe your process for sharing the created material with other co-sponsors, as they are made available.
11. Describe how you will prepare printing materials, (i.e. press releases, ads, and brochures) regarding the conference.
12. Describe your plan for obtaining additional financial and in kind support for your efforts as the lead non-federal co-sponsor for the conferences. Please note that fund-raising costs are not allowable costs under OMB Cost Principles.

- ii. **Anticipated Outcomes and Performance Measurement.** Specify the expected environmental project outcomes, including those described in *Section 1(D), Measuring Environmental Results: Anticipated Outcomes/Outputs*, of this announcement. Discuss how you propose to track and measure your progress in achieving the project outcomes and results (*Refer to Section 5(A), Evaluation Criteria, "Performance Measurement."*)
- iii. **Anticipated Outputs.** Identify the expected project outputs, including those described in *Section 1(D), Measuring Environmental Results: Anticipated Outcomes/Outputs*, of this announcement, and how you will track and measure your progress towards achieving them. Outputs, quantitative or qualitative, must be measurable during the project performance period.
- iv. **Programmatic Capability.** Submit a list of Federally and/or non-Federally funded projects similar in size, scope and relevance to the proposed project that your organization performed within the last three years (limit 5, preferably EPA agreements) and describe (i) whether, and how, you were able to successfully complete and manage those agreements and (ii) your history of meeting the reporting requirements under those agreements including submitting acceptable final technical reports. In evaluating applicants under these factors in Section 5, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources, including information from EPA files and from current and prior Federal agency grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information provided by the applicant). If you do not have any relevant or available past performance or reporting information, please indicate this in the proposal and you will receive a neutral score for these factors under Section 5.

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

- v. **Environmental Results Past Performance.** Submit a list of Federally and/or non-Federally funded projects that your organization performed within the last three years (limit 5, 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 5, 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 5.

- vi. **Cooperative Partnerships.** Identify all proposed partnerships and stakeholder groups that will be involved in the project. Describe what each group's role will be in project staffing, funding, design and implementation. Please note that procurement of commercial services (e.g. consultants, audio visual equipment, meeting space) is subject to the competitive procurement provisions of 40 CFR Part 30 or Part 31, as applicable. Naming a commercial vendor as a "partner" does not relieve the applicant of responsibility for complying with competitive procurement requirements, including cost or price analysis, or justify a sole source procurement.
- c. **Budget.** Provide a detailed itemized budget proposal that clearly explains how funds will be used for each of the following categories and how it relates to the project objective. Indicate what portion of the cost EPA will pay, and what portion the applicant or other partners will pay
 - i. **Personnel.** Indicate salaries and wages, by job title of all individuals who will be supplemented with these funds.
 - ii. **Fringe Benefits.** Indicate all mandated and voluntary benefits to be supplemented with these funds.
 - iii. **Contractual Costs.** Indicate any proposed contractual items that are reasonable and necessary to carry out the work plan objectives. Examples of contractual items include training from equipment manufacturer, and other.
 - iv. **Travel.** Indicate number of individuals traveling, destination, number of trips, and reason for travel.
 - v. **Equipment.** Identify items to be purchased in support of work plan objectives. Provide an estimated cost for each item. Equipment purchases must be both integral and critical to the proposed project. EPA funds may not be used to purchase equipment that is only peripherally related to the project. The proposal should clearly indicate the importance and need for any proposed equipment purchases. Make sure you can support your cost estimate. EPA policy defines equipment as items costing \$5,000 or greater.
 - vi. **Supplies.** Indicate any items to be purchased that will be used in support of project work plan objectives.

- vii. **Other.** Indicate general (miscellaneous) expenses necessary to carry out the objectives stated in the work plan.
 - viii. **Total Direct Charges.** Summary of all costs associated with each object-class category (including EPA and Non-EPA Funds).
 - ix. **Total Indirect Costs** (must include documentation of federally approved indirect cost rate (percentage). Indicate if your organization is currently negotiating with the cognizant Federal agency to obtain a new rate.
 - x. **Total Project Cost.** (Total Direct + Indirect Costs)
3. **Attachments.** The following documents should be included as attachments to the work plan.
- a. **Key Personnel.** Submit a summary of the qualifications of key staff that will be significantly involved in the project. The summaries may be in the form of resumes.
 - b. **Auditing records.** Provide documentation of any adverse audit findings related to your organization.
 - c. **Letters of support** from any partners involved with the proposal.

Proposals must be concise and well organized, and must provide the information detailed in *Section 4(B), Content and Form of Application and Submission*, **including responses to all Section 3(C), Threshold Criteria and Section 5(A), Evaluation Criteria identified in this announcement.** Factual information about your proposed project must be provided. Do not include discussions of broad principles that are not specific to the proposed work or project covered by your proposal. **Responses to criteria must include the criteria number and title but need not restate the entire text of the criteria.** Sufficient detail must be provided to allow for an evaluation of the merits of the proposal. Vague descriptions, redundancy, and failure to address the selection criteria will result in a lower ranking.

Applicants are strongly advised to avoid submission of extraneous materials. All application materials must be completed in English. Maps, photos and attachments other than those listed in *Section 4(B)(3)* will not be considered.

C. Submitting an Application.

Applicants may choose to submit applications either in hard copy (paper) format or through <http://www.Grants.gov> with an electronic signature. Application instructions for all methods are detailed below. Please select one method. The closing date and time for applicants to submit an application under this announcement is November 27, 2006, 5:00 p.m. EST. Applications submitted through <http://www.Grants.gov> must be received by November 27, 2006, 5:00 p.m.

EST. Applications submitted in hard copy, as described below, must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or, received at EPA via hand delivery by November 27, 2006.

1. **Hard copy (paper) submission.** Submit a complete application including all of the documents identified in *Section 4(B)* of this announcement. **The complete application must be sent through regular mail, express mail, or courier to the EPA contact listed in Section 7,(Agency Contacts).** Paper submission must include one original signature document and five copies of the completed “Federal Grant Application package” and “Narrative Proposal.”

Because of the unique situation involving U.S. mail screening, EPA highly recommends that applicants use an express mail option to transmit their application to the physical address of the EPA contact listed in *Section 7, Agency Contacts*.

2. **Grants.gov submission.** Using <http://www.Grants.gov>, applicants may submit the complete application package on-line with no hard copy or computer disks. Please be sure to view the additional instructions that are available for download on <http://www.Grants.gov> for this announcement. If you have any technical difficulties while applying electronically, please call the toll free Contact Center at 1-800-518-4726.

If you wish to apply electronically via <http://www.Grants.gov>, the electronic submission of your proposal package must be made by an official representative of your institution who is registered with <http://www.Grants.gov> and authorized to sign applications for Federal assistance. For more information, go to <http://www.Grants.gov> and click on “Get Registered,” on the left side of the page. Note that the registration process may take a week or longer to complete. If your organization is not currently registered with <http://www.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, go to <http://www.Grants.gov> and click on “Apply for Grants.” Then click on “Apply Step 1; Download a Grant Application Package and Instructions” to download the PureEdge viewer and obtain the application package https://apply.Grants.gov/forms_apps_idx.html. You may retrieve the application package by entering the Funding Opportunity Number, EPA-OSWER-OSRTI-07-02, or the CFDA number 66.813, 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 “How To Apply” 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 top of the page and then to go EPA.

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 November 27, 2006, 5:00 p.m. EST.

Be sure to download and read the instructions and the application package at the <http://www.Grants.gov> web site.

Application Materials. The following forms and documents are required to be submitted by applicants using <http://www.Grants.gov> under this announcement.

- A. **Standard Form (SF-424), Application for Federal Assistance.** Complete the form. There are no attachments. Please be sure to include organization fax number and email address in Block 5 of the Standard Form SF 424. Please note that the organizational Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number must be included on the SF-424. Organizations may obtain a DUNS number at no cost by calling the toll-free DUNS number request line at 1-866-705-5711.
- B. **SF-424A, Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs.** Complete the form. There are no attachments. The total amount of Federal funding requested for the two-year 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. If indirect costs are requested, a copy of the Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement must be submitted as part of the application package. (See instructions for “Document H” below.)
- C. **SF-424B, Assurances for Non-Construction Programs.** Complete the form. There are no attachments.
- D. **Grants.gov Lobbying Form - Certification Regarding Lobbying.** Complete the form. There are no attachments.
- E. **EPA Form 4700-4, Pre-Award Compliance Review Report.** Complete the form. There are no attachments
- F. **EPA Form 5700-54, Key Contacts Form.** Complete the form. There are no attachments.
- G. **SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (i.e., required if your organization is involved in lobbying).** Complete the form if your organization is involved in lobbying activities..
- H. **Other Attachments Form - 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.

- I. **Narrative Proposal** (also referenced as “Project Narrative Attachment Form” on <http://www.Grants.gov>). Prepare your “Narrative Proposal” in accordance with the instructions detailed in *Section 4(B), Content and Form of Application* of this announcement (EPA-OSWER-OSRTI-07-02). The “**Narrative Proposal**” must substantially conform to the outline and content detailed in *Section 4(B)(2)* of this announcement.

Application Preparation and Submission Instructions.

Documents A through F, listed under Application Materials above, should appear in the “Mandatory Documents” box on the <http://www.Grants.gov> “Grant Application Package” page.

For Documents A through F, 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.”

Documents G and H, 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 G “SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities,” if your organization is involved in lobbying activities. You are required to submit Document H “Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement,” if you have included any indirect costs in your proposed budget. To attach Document H, 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.”

For Document I, you will need to attach electronic files. Prepare your “Narrative Proposal” in accordance with the instructions detailed in *Section 4(B), Content and Form of Application* of this announcement (EPA-OSWER-OSRTI-07-02). Save the document to your computer as an MS Word, PDF or WordPerfect file. When you are ready to attach your “Narrative Proposal” to the application package, click on “Project Narrative Attachment Form,” and open the form. Click “Add Mandatory Project Narrative File,” and attach your “Narrative 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 are 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 <http://www.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 John Edward Quander at 703-603-7198 or email quander.john@epa.gov.

Application/proposal materials submitted through <http://www.Grants.gov> will be time/date stamped electronically. If you have not received a confirmation of receipt from EPA (not from support@grant.gov) within 30 days of the application deadline, please contact John Edward Quander at quander.john@epa.gov. Failure to do so may result in your application not being reviewed.

D. Confidential Business Information.

In accordance with 40 CFR 2.203, applicants may claim all or a portion of their application as confidential business information. EPA will evaluate confidentiality claims in accordance with 40 CFR Part 2. Applicants must clearly mark applications or portions of applications 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.

Under Public Law No. 105-277, data produced under awards resulting from this announcement is subject to the Freedom of Information Act.

E. Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS).

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>.

F. Pre-proposal Communications and Assistance.

In accordance with EPA's 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.

EPA will respond to questions in writing from individual applicants regarding threshold eligibility criteria, administrative issues related to the submission of the proposal, and requests for clarification about the announcement. All questions and answers will be posted at the OSWER Grants/Funding website <http://www.epa.gov/oswer/grants-funding.htm>, bi-weekly, until the closing date for this announcement.

Section 5 - Application Review Information.

A. Evaluation Criteria.

Each application will be evaluated according to the criteria set forth below. Applicants should directly and explicitly address these criteria as part of their "Narrative Proposals." Each application will be rated under a points system, with a total of 100 points possible.

Criterion	Maximum Points per Criterion
<p>Project Description.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which the work plan effectively details how the applicant will implement and conduct its operation. The work plan included in the “Narrative Proposal” must present a clear and concise description of the proposed project. • Extent to which the work plan discusses how the proposal addresses each of the selection criteria in Section 5 of this announcement. • Extent to which the work plan effectively addresses the requirements described in <i>Section 4(B)(2)(b), Detailed Project Description</i> of this announcement.. • Extent to which the work plan includes a discussion of demonstrative examples of all technical knowledge and experience requirements as described in Section 3(D) of this announcement. • Extent to which the work plan presents clear, concise and realistic goals, tasks, and project milestones. 	40
<p>Programmatic Capability. Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on their ability to successfully complete and manage the proposed project taking into account the following factors: (i) its past performance in successfully completing and managing federally and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project performed within the last 3 years, (ii) its history of meeting reporting requirements under federally funded assistance agreements similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project performed within the last 3 years and submitting acceptable final technical reports under those agreements, (iii) its organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project, and (iv) its staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project.</p> <p><i>Note: In evaluating applicants under this criterion, the Agency will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources including agency files and prior/current grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information supplied by the applicant). Applicants with no relevant or available past performance or reporting history (items i and ii above), will receive a neutral score for those elements of this criterion.</i></p>	20

<p>Performance Measurement: Anticipated Outcomes and Outputs. Extent to which the “Narrative Proposal” realistically describes how the project will lead to measurable environmental results. The proposal should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly specify anticipated environmental outcomes and outputs as described in <i>Section 1(D), Measuring Environmental Results: Anticipated Outcomes/Outputs</i>. • Clearly describe the measures of success for the project. Measure of success should be either measures of environmental improvement or should be directly linked to such measures. EPA will look for quantitative and qualitative measurability. • Describe how success in achieving project results (including the outcomes and outputs identified) will be evaluated and measured. 	15
<p>Resources.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the budget clearly stated, detailed, and appropriate to achieve the project’s objectives? • Does applicant propose other sources of funding for the project (including use of in-kind goods and services)? • Have resources been committed by other project stakeholders? • The proposal demonstrates (i) how the applicant will coordinate the use of EPA funding with other Federal and/or non Federal sources of funds to leverage additional resources to carry out the proposed project(s) and/or (ii) that EPA funding will complement activities relevant to the proposed project(s) carried out by the applicant with other sources of funds or resources. Applicants may use their own funds or other resources for a voluntary match or cost share if the standards at 40 CFR 30.23 or 40 CFR 31.24, as applicable, are met. Only eligible and allowable costs may be used for matches or cost shares. Other Federal grants may not be used as matches or cost shares without specific statutory authority (e.g. HUD's Community Development Block Grants). 	15

<p>Environmental Results Past Performance. Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated 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 federally and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements performed within the last three years, and if such progress was not being made whether the applicant adequately documented and/or reported why not.</p> <p><i>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.</i></p>	10
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B. Other Factors.

The EPA Headquarters Selection Official, as described below, may consider the following other factor, in addition to the evaluation results based on the criteria above, in making final funding recommendations: (1) duplication of effort and, (2) program priorities.

C. Review and Selection Process.

All applications received by the closing date and time for submissions will first be reviewed to determine eligibility for funding consideration based upon compliance with all *Section 3-Eligibility Information and Threshold Criteria*. Only applications determined eligible will be evaluated for technical merit.

Each eligible application will be evaluated by a review panel of EPA staff, for technical merit, based on the evaluation factors detailed in *Section 5(A), Evaluation Criteria* of this solicitation. Upon completion, each application will be given an evaluated numerical score, with a total of 100 points possible. The evaluated numerical scores will be rank ordered. The review panel will recommend the application with the highest evaluated numerical score, to the EPA Headquarters Selection official, for award.

The EPA Headquarters Selection Official will make the final funding decision. The decision will be based upon the recommendation of the review panel and consideration of “Other Factors” detailed in *Section 5(B)* of this announcement.

Section 6 - Award Administration Information.

A. Award Notices.

EPA anticipates notification to both successful and unsuccessful applicants will be made, via telephone, electronic, or postal mail by November 28, 2006.

The notification to successful applicant(s) that their application has been selected for award is not an authorization to begin performance. EPA reserves the right to negotiate appropriate changes in work plans after the selection and before the final award consistent with the Agency's Competition Policy ([EPA Order 5700.5A1, Section 11](#)). 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.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements.

1. A listing and description of general EPA Regulations applicable to the award of assistance agreements may be viewed at:
http://www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/applicable_epa_regulations_and_description.htm.
2. Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs, may be applicable to awards resulting from this announcement. Applicants *selected* for funding may be required to provide a copy of their application to their [State Point of Contact](#) (SPOC) for review, pursuant to Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs. This review is not required with the initial application and not all states require such a review.

C. Reporting Requirement.

Quarterly progress reports and a detailed final report will be required. The quarterly progress reports will be submitted to the EPA Project Officer within thirty days after each reporting period. These reports shall cover work status, work progress, difficulties encountered, preliminary data results and a statement of activity anticipated during the subsequent reporting period. A discussion of expenditures along with a comparison of the percentage of the project completed to the project schedule and an explanation of significant discrepancies shall be included in the report. The report shall also include any changes of key personnel concerned with the project.

The final report will address goals and objectives, performance measurements, lessons learned, any other resources leveraged during the project and how they were used, and any plans to continue the project after the expiration of the grant/cooperative agreement and associated sources of funding. The final report will be submitted to the EPA Project Officer at the close of the grant.

D. Disputes.

Assistance agreement competition-related disputes will be resolved in accordance with the [dispute resolution procedures](#) published in 70 FR (Federal Register) 3629, 3630 (January 26, 2005) located on the web 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 the cognizant Agency contact identified in Section 7 of this announcement.

E. Pre-Award Administrative Capability Review.

Non-profit applicants that are recommended for funding will be subject to pre-award administrative capability reviews consistent with Sections 8.b, 8.c, and 9.d of [EPA Order 5700.8](#), EPA Policy on Assessing Capabilities of Non-Profit Applicants for Managing Assistance Awards.

Section 7 - Agency Contact.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

John Edward Quander, U.S. EPA, OSWER/OSRTI/Technology Innovation and Field Services Division (5102P), 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20460; Phone: 703-603-7198; or email: quander.john@epa.gov.

FOR EXPRESS MAIL DELIVERY (FedEx, UPS, DHL):

John Edward Quander, U.S. EPA, OSWER/OSRTI/Technology Innovation and Field Services Division (5102P), 2777 Crystal Drive (One Potomac Yard), 4th Floor, Room 4235, Arlington, Virginia 22202