

**COVID-19 Update:** The EPA is providing flexibilities to applicants experiencing challenges related to COVID-19. Please see the **Flexibilities Available to Organizations Impacted by COVID-19** clause in Section IV of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s Solicitation Clauses ([EPA's Solicitation Clauses](#)).

**FEDERAL AGENCY:** U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

**FUNDING OPPORTUNITY TITLE:** 2021 Region 4 Sustainable Materials Management Grants

**ANNOUNCEMENT TYPE:** Request for Applications (RFA)

**ASSISTANCE LISTING NUMBER (CFDA):** 66.808

**FUNDING OPPORTUNITY NUMBER:** EPA-R4-LCRD-2021-11

### **IMPORTANT DATES**

RFA Issuance Date:	September 10, 2021
Informational Call:	September 21, 2021, 10:00 A.M. Eastern Time
Application Deadline:	October 25, 2021, 11:59 P.M. Eastern Time
Anticipated Notification of Selection:	January 31, 2022
Anticipated Award:	June 1, 2022

EPA Region 4 will host an informational call on September 21, 2021, 10:00 A.M. Eastern Time, to discuss this RFA and respond to questions. Call 202-991-0477 and enter the Conference ID 700 052 445#. To help us provide detailed information, it is asked that questions be submitted in advance to Kim Charick ([Charick.kim@epa.gov](mailto:Charick.kim@epa.gov)). The call will be recorded and made available on EPA’s Region 4 website at <https://www.epa.gov/aboutepa/about-epa-region-4-southeast> within a week of the call. Questions submitted after this date will be answered and posted regularly at that website during the competition.

The closing date and time for receipt of application submissions is **October 25, 2021, 11:59 P.M. Eastern Time** in order to be considered for funding. Application packages must be submitted electronically to the EPA through Grants.gov (<https://www.grants.gov> or [Grants.gov](#)). Applications will be electronically date and time stamped. Reference Section IV.A of this announcement for full details on the submission process.

**SUMMARY:** EPA Region 4 is announcing this grant competition and soliciting applications from eligible applicants that will improve community resilience and sustainability through sustainable materials management (SMM). Applicants must select at least one of the following technical assistance methods: research, investigation, experiments, education, training, studies and/or demonstration of innovative techniques. Applicants’ projects must take place within EPA Region 4, which includes Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee.

**FUNDING / AWARDS:** EPA Region 4 anticipates awarding approximately \$300,000 under this announcement. EPA anticipates awarding approximately 3-7 grants, ranging from approximately \$40,000 to \$100,000, subject to the availability of funds, the quality of applications received, and other applicable considerations.

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## **I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION**

### **I.A. Background**

SMM is a systemic approach to using and reusing materials more productively over their entire lifecycles. It represents a change in how our society thinks about the use of natural resources and environmental protection. By looking at a product's entire life cycle, we can find new opportunities to reduce environmental impacts, conserve resources and reduce costs. SMM grants can support research, investigation, experiments, surveys, study, demonstration, education and training. For more information about EPA’s SMM program please visit <https://www.epa.gov/smm>.

**At least one of the two following SMM priorities must be addressed as part of this RFA:**

#### **1. Addressing Municipal Recycling Markets in Region 4**

Recycling is an important driver of our country’s economy and a way to conserve our resources and protect the environment. Recycling municipal solid waste reduces the amount of materials sent to landfills and incinerators; conserves natural resources such as timber, water, and minerals; and decreases wasted energy by reducing the need to extract and process new raw materials. Recycling can apply to multiple types of recyclables, such as, plastics, glass, metal, aluminum, paper and food/organics. In 2020 EPA recognized the importance of recycling by establishing the [National Recycling Goal](#), which aims to increase the national recycling rate by 50% by the year 2030. A major impediment to achieve this goal is the fragmented nature of markets across municipalities, states, and regions, etc. Fragmented markets impede recycling and increase the cost of recycling throughout the recovered material value chain. **In order to address this challenge, EPA is soliciting projects that will encourage collaboration and coordination across Region 4 geographies, organizations, and/or businesses to enhance rural recycling systems, making them stronger and more agile to address changing materials markets. By establishing stronger networks of recyclers, organizations, and governments, existing recycling systems and markets can be advanced in Region 4.**

Project examples under this priority include, but are not limited to:

- establishing and maintaining a collaborative network or cooperative in Region 4 to foster improved approaches to the collection, marketing, and distribution of municipal recycling materials and provide feedstock to manufacturers in the U.S.;
- developing methods to improve market information, and/or connection between markets (e.g. different geographic locations, industries, consumers, and generators, etc.) for recovered municipal recyclable material; and,
- establishing programs that encourage public or private partners to utilize or invest in recycled municipal materials, and ultimately support economic development, create jobs and expand educational outreach around recycled materials markets.

## **2. Strategies for Preventing Food Loss and Waste in Region 4**

Currently 30-40% of all available food in the U.S. goes uneaten. When edible food ends up in a landfill, embedded natural resources along with money, time, and labor spent to get them from farm to plate are wasted; this impacts the environment, our communities, and the economy. Led by EPA and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the federal government is working with communities, organizations, and businesses along with our partners in state, tribal, and local government to reduce food loss and waste by 50% over the next 9 years as identified in [EPA's 2030 Food Loss and Waste Reduction Goal](#). [EPA's Food Waste Hierarchy](#) identifies effective strategies for addressing food loss and waste. **EPA is requesting applications for projects that develop systems-based solutions to prevent food loss and waste. Projects submitted under this RFA will work with a network of stakeholders to achieve this goal and demonstrate progress to reduce food loss and waste within Region 4.**

Project examples under this priority include, but are not limited to:

- encouraging the development of policies and practices which effectively divert excess food to new markets and/or expands food rescue capacity;
- establishing and maintaining a collaborative network in Region 4 to foster improved approaches to address food system challenges;
- increasing public awareness of the environmental, social, and economic benefits of reducing wasted food via source reduction and distribution to people, particularly in underserved and under-resourced communities;
- improving data quality, including establishing baseline food waste metrics, assessing progress on current food waste intervention activities, or measuring the potential for increased food rescue efforts.

### **I.B. Scope of Work**

As noted above in Section I.A, this RFA solicits applications that support the priorities of addressing municipal and/or industrial recycling markets, or strategies for preventing food loss and waste through source reduction and/or food rescue in Region 4. Applications addressing other topic areas will not be reviewed.

### **I.C. EPA Strategic Plan Linkage**

The activities to be funded under this solicitation support EPA's FY 2018-22 Strategic Plan. Awards made under this solicitation will support the following goals and objectives of the [EPA Strategic Plan](#):

- Goal 1: A Cleaner, Healthier Environment; Objective 1.3 Revitalize Land and Prevent Contamination, and Objective 1.4 Ensure Safety of Chemical in the Marketplace;
- Goal 2: More Effective Partnerships, Objective 2.1 Enhance Shared Accountability, Objective 2.2 Increase Transparency and Public Participation; and
- Goal 3: Greater Certainty, Compliance and Effectiveness, Objective 3.1 Compliance with the Law, Objective 3.2 Create Consistency and Certainty, 3.3 Prioritize Robust Science, 3.4 Streamline and Modernize, and 3.5 Improve Efficiency and Effectiveness.

**All projects must support one or more of the goals and objectives identified above.**

#### **I.D. Measuring Environmental Results: Anticipated Outputs and Outcomes and Performance Measures**

Pursuant to [EPA Order 5700.7](#) "*Environmental Results under EPA Assistance Agreements*," EPA requires that all grant applicants and 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 the Narrative as described in Section IV.B.**

1. **Outputs:** The term "output" means an environmental activity, effort, and/or associated work product related to an environmental goal and objective that will be produced or provided over a specified period of time or by a specified date. Outputs may be quantitative or qualitative but must be measurable during an assistance agreement funding period.

Outputs include but are not limited to:

- Number of individuals, state, and local governments, and/or businesses served by education, outreach, training, technical assistance, and/or tools related to recycling;
- Number of recommendations made to local governments and others;
- Number of new methods put in practice;
- Actions or recommendations implemented or adopted by local governments or businesses/facilities;
- Pounds or total volume of food recovered or redirected to those in need;
- Types of skills and abilities achieved by training participants.

Progress reports and a final report will be a required output, as specified in Section VI.D. of this solicitation.

2. **Outcomes:** The term "outcome" means the result, effect, or consequence that will occur from carrying out an environmental program or activity that is related to an environmental or programmatic goal or objective. Outcomes may be qualitative or quantitative, and can be environmental, behavioral, health-related, or programmatic in nature. Applications must include a description of anticipated project outcomes resulting from the project outputs, even if the outcome to be achieved is beyond the assistance agreement funding period. Include the quantitative target associated with the outcome, as appropriate.

Anticipated outcomes include, but are not limited to:

- reduction in solid waste going to the landfill,
- conservation of natural resources, energy, improved air and/or water quality,
- preserved land quality,
- dollars saved through recycling or reuse efforts,
- jobs created or retained.

**3. Performance Measures: The applicant should also develop performance measures they expect to achieve through the proposed activities and describe them in their application.**

These performance measures will help gather insights and will be the mechanism to track progress concerning successful processes and output and outcome strategies and will provide the basis for developing lessons to inform future recipients. It is expected that the description of performance measures will directly relate to the project outcomes and outputs. The following are questions to consider when developing output and outcome measures of quantitative and qualitative results:

- What are the measurable short term and longer term results the project will achieve?
- How does the plan measure progress in achieving the expected results (including outputs and outcomes) and how will the approach use resources effectively and efficiently?

#### **I.E. EPA Statutory Authorities**

The statutory authority for this action is the Solid Waste Disposal Act (SWDA), Section 8001(a)(5), 42 U.S.C. Section 6981 (a)(5) which authorizes grants and cooperative agreements for research, investigation, experiments, training, demonstrations, surveys, public education programs and studies relating to the reduction of the amount of solid waste and unsalvageable waste materials. This is done under the Assistance Listing Number 66.808.

Applications selected for funding under this solicitation must be consistent with the authorized activities above.

Demonstrations must involve new or experimental technologies, methods, or approaches, where the results of the project will be disseminated so that others can benefit from the knowledge gained in the demonstration project. A project that is accomplished through the performance of routine, traditional, or established practices, or a project that is simply intended to carry out a task rather than transfer information or advance the state of knowledge, however worthwhile the project might be, is not considered a demonstration project.

#### **I.F. Sub-awardees and Contractors**

If you name sub-awardees or subgrantees and/or contractor(s), including individual consultants, in your application as partners to assist you with the proposed project, pay careful attention to the information in Section III regarding "Coalitions" and to the "Contracts and Subawards" provisions at: [EPA Solicitation Clauses](#) (incorporated by reference in Section IV).

## **I.G. Collaboration and Partnership**

Collaboration and cooperative partnerships are strongly encouraged in the planning and implementation of applicants' projects. Applications should describe how: a) applicants will work in partnership with appropriate partners (states, tribes, academia, industry groups, non-profit organizations, associations, and local community organizations) to effectively design and implement the proposed project; and/or b) to the extent possible, coordinate with and/or complement other projects or activities being performed by others that will result in a greater positive impact or enhance the project's effectiveness and/or efficiency. **Applicants should describe how the proposed project will include these partnerships in their Narrative as described in Section IV.B.2.** Letters demonstrating evidence of collaboration and active roles should be included as well.

Applicants that do not plan on collaborating with other groups in project performance should include a description in their application describing how they will be able to effectively perform and complete the project without such collaboration.

## **I.H. Definition of Environmental Justice**

EPA defines "environmental justice" as the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. Fair treatment means that no one group of people, including racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic groups, should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, municipal, and commercial operations or the execution of federal, state, local, and tribal environmental programs and policies.

**Applicants should discuss and provide specific examples of how the proposed project will address environmental justice challenges in their Narrative as described in Section IV.B.**

## **I.I. Minority Serving Institutions**

EPA recognizes that it is important to engage all available minds to address the environmental challenges the nation faces. At the same time, EPA seeks to expand the environmental conversation by including members of communities which may have not previously participated in such dialogues to participate in EPA programs. For this reason, EPA strongly encourages all eligible applicants identified in Section III, including minority serving institutions (MSIs), to apply under this opportunity.

For purposes of this solicitation, the following are considered MSIs:

1. Historically Black Colleges and Universities, as defined by the Higher Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 1061(2)). A list of these schools can be found at [Historically Black Colleges and Universities](#)
2. Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), as defined by the Higher Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 1059c(b)(3) and (d)(1)). A list of these schools can be found at [American Indian Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities](#)
3. Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), as defined by the Higher Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 1101a(a)(5)). A list of these schools can be found at [Hispanic-Serving Institutions](#)

4. Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions; (AANAPISIs), as defined by the Higher Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 1059g(b)(2)). A list of these schools can be found at [Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions](#); and
5. Predominately Black Institutions (PBIs), as defined by the Higher Education Act of 2008, 20 U.S.C. 1059e(b)(6). A list of these schools can be found at [Predominately Black Institutions](#).

## **II. AWARD INFORMATION**

### **II.A. Number of Expected Awards and Federal Funding Amounts**

EPA Region 4 anticipates awarding approximately \$300,000 under this solicitation. EPA anticipates awarding approximately 3-7 grants, ranging from approximately \$40,000 to \$100,000, subject to the availability of funds, the quality of applications received, distribution between priorities and other applicable considerations. The anticipated award amounts are approximations that are subject to change based upon a number of considerations including, but not limited to, funding availability, Agency priorities, and other applicable considerations.

Awards will be issued by EPA Region 4 and managed by the LCRD.

EPA reserves the right to make additional awards under this solicitation, consistent with Agency policy and guidance, if additional funding becomes available after the original selections are made. Any additional selections for awards will be made no later than 6 months after the original selection decisions.

### **II.B. Partial Funding**

In appropriate circumstances, EPA reserves the right to partially fund applications by funding discrete portions or phases of projects. If EPA decides to partially fund an application, it will do so in a manner that does not prejudice any applicants or affect the basis upon which the application or portion thereof, was evaluated and selected for award, and therefore maintains the integrity of the competition and selection process.

### **II.C. Cooperative Agreement**

EPA intends to award cooperative agreements under this solicitation. Cooperative agreements provide for substantial involvement between the EPA Project Officer and the selected applicant(s) 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 these projects may include:

- close monitoring of the successful applicant's performance to verify the results proposed by the applicant;
- collaboration during performance of the scope of work;

- review of proposed procurement, in accordance with 2 CFR 200.317 and 2 CFR 200.318;
- approving qualifications of key personnel (EPA will not select employees or contractors employed by the award recipient); and,
- review and comment on reports prepared under the cooperative agreement (the final decision on the content of reports rests with the recipient).

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

## **II.D. Project Period**

The estimated start date for projects resulting from this solicitation is June 1, 2022. All project activities must be completed within the negotiated project performance period of no longer than two years.

## **III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

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

Eligible applicants include States, local, Tribal, interstate, and intrastate government agencies and instrumentalities, and non-profit organizations formed under Section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (not 501(c)(4) organizations that lobby). This includes the MSIs described in Section I.I. All projects must take place within Region 4.

### **III.B. Cost Share/Matching Requirement**

This competition does not require cost sharing or matching funds.

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

Applications must meet the following threshold eligibility criteria at the time of submission.

**Applications that fail to meet any one of the threshold criteria will not be considered further.**

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. Applications that successfully meet the threshold criteria will then be evaluated using the criteria described in Section V.A. The threshold eligibility criteria are:

1. Applications must address one of the SMM priorities described in Section I.A.
2. Applications must be for eligible activities under the statutory authority described in Section I.E.
3. Applicants must be an eligible entity - Provide information that demonstrates how you are an eligible entity described in Section III.A.
4. Eligible projects must take place within EPA Region 4, which includes Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee

5. Ineligible activities: If an application is submitted that includes any ineligible tasks or activities, that portion of the application will be ineligible for funding and may, depending on the extent to which it affects the application, render the entire application ineligible for funding
6. Applications must substantially comply with the application submission instructions and requirements described in Section IV of this solicitation or else they will be rejected. Pages in excess of the page limitation (ten pages) for the Narrative will not be reviewed.
7. Applications must be submitted through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) as specified in Section IV.A of this announcement (except in the limited circumstances where another mode of submission is specifically allowed for as explained in Section IV.A) on or before the application submission deadline. Applicants are responsible for following the submission instructions in Section IV.A of this announcement to ensure that their application is submitted properly.

Applications submitted after the submission deadline will be considered late and deemed ineligible without further consideration unless the applicant can clearly demonstrate that it was late due to EPA mishandling or because of technical problems associated with [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) or relevant [SAM.gov](https://www.sam.gov) system issues. An applicant's failure to submit their application through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) because they did not timely or properly register in [SAM.gov](https://www.sam.gov) or [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) will not be considered an acceptable reason to consider a late submission.

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

### **IV.A. Requirements to Submit Through Grants.gov and Limited Exception Procedures**

Applicants must apply electronically through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) under this funding opportunity based on the grants.gov instructions in this announcement. If your organization has no access to the internet or access is very limited, you may request an exception for the remainder of this calendar year by following the procedures outlined [here](#). Please note that your request must be received at least 15 calendar days before the application due date to allow enough time to negotiate alternative submission methods. Issues with submissions with respect to this opportunity only are addressed in *Technical Issues with Submission* below.

#### **Submission Instructions**

The electronic submission of your application must be made by an official representative of your institution who is registered with [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and is authorized to sign applications for Federal assistance. For more information on the registration requirements that must be completed in order to submit an application through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov), go to [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and click on "Applicants" on the top of the page and then go to the "Get Registered" link on the page. If your organization is not currently registered with [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov), encourage your office to designate an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) and ask that representative to begin the registration process as soon as possible. Please note that the registration process also requires that your organization have a DUNS number and a current registration with the System for Award Management (SAM) and the process of obtaining both could take a month or more. Applicants must ensure that all registration requirements are met in order to apply for this opportunity through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and should ensure that all such requirements

have been met well in advance of the submission deadline. Registration on [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov), [SAM.gov](https://www.sam.gov), and DUNS number assignment is FREE. Please see [RAIN-2021-G01](#) for information about EPA's implementation of the upcoming Government-wide transition from DUNS to Unique Entity Identifier (UEI).

Applicants need to ensure that the AOR who submits the application through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and whose DUNS number is listed on the application is an AOR for the applicant listed on the application. Additionally, the DUNS number listed on the application must be registered to the applicant organization's SAM account. If not, the application may be deemed ineligible.

To begin the application process under this grant announcement, go to [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and click on "Applicants" on the top of the page and then "Apply for Grants" from the dropdown menu and then follow the instructions accordingly. Please note: To apply through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov), you must use Adobe Reader software and download the compatible Adobe Reader version. For more information about Adobe Reader, to verify compatibility, or to download the free software, please visit [Adobe Reader Compatibility Information on Grants.gov](#)

You may also be able to access the application package for this announcement by searching for the opportunity on [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). Go to [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and then click on "Search Grants" at the top of the page and enter the Funding Opportunity Number, **EPA-R4-LCRD-2021- 11**, or the Assistance Listing (CFDA) number that applies to the announcement (CFDA 66.808 EPA), in the appropriate field and click the Search button.

Please Note: **All applications must now be submitted through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) using the "Workspace" feature. Information on the Workspace feature can be found at the [Grants.gov Workspace Overview Page](#).**

**Application Submission Deadline:** Your organization's AOR must submit your complete application package electronically to EPA through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) no later than October 25, 2021, 11:59 PM ET. Please allow for enough time to successfully submit your application and allow for unexpected errors that may require you to resubmit.

Please submit *all* of the application materials described below using the [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) application package accessed using the instructions above.

## **Application Materials**

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

### **Mandatory Documents:**

1. Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
2. Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)
3. EPA Key Contacts Form 5700-54
4. EPA Form 4700-4 Preaward Compliance Review Report
5. Narrative - Project Narrative Attachment Form. This must include the Cover Page and Narrative Response, which cannot exceed ten pages in total, as described in Section IV.B.

## Optional Documents:

6. Other Attachments- Letters of partnership, as described in Section IV.B.2.

Applications submitted through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) will be time and date stamped electronically.

If you have not received a confirmation of receipt from EPA (not from [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov)) within 30 days of the application deadline, please contact Kim Charick, at 404-562-8477. Failure to do so may result in your application not being reviewed.

## Technical Issues with Submission

1. Once the application package has been completed, the "Submit" button should be enabled. If the "Submit" button is not active, please call Grants.gov for assistance at 1-800-518-4726. Applicants who are outside the U.S. at the time of submittal and are not able to access the toll-free number may reach a Grants.gov representative by calling 606-545-5035. Applicants should save the completed application package with two different file names before providing it to the AOR to avoid having to re-create the package should submission problems be experienced or a revised application needs to be submitted.

2. Submitting the application. The application package must be transferred to [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) by an AOR. The AOR should close all other software before attempting to submit the application package. Click the "submit" button of the application package. Your Internet browser will launch and a sign-in page will appear. **Note: Minor problems are not uncommon with transfers to [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). It is essential to allow sufficient time to ensure that your application is submitted to [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) BEFORE the due date identified in Section IV of the solicitation.** The [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) support desk operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, except Federal holidays.

A successful transfer will end with an on-screen acknowledgement. For documentation purposes, print or screen capture this acknowledgement. If a submission problem occurs, reboot the computer (turning the power off may be necessary) and re-attempt the submission.

Note:[Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) issues a "case number" upon a request for assistance.

3. Transmission Difficulties. If transmission difficulties that result in a late transmission, no transmission, or rejection of the transmitted application are experienced, and following the above instructions do not resolve the problem so that the application is submitted to [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) by the deadline date and time, follow the guidance below. The Agency will make a decision concerning acceptance of each late submission on a case-by-case basis. All emails, as described below, are to be sent to Kim Charick at [Charick.kim@epa.gov](mailto:Charick.kim@epa.gov) with the FON in the subject line. If you are unable to email, contact Kim Charick at 404-562-8477. Be aware that EPA will only consider accepting applications that were unable to transmit due to [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) or relevant [SAM.gov](https://www.sam.gov) issues or for unforeseen exigent circumstances, such as extreme weather interfering with internet access. Failure of an applicant to submit timely because they did not properly or timely register in [SAM.gov](https://www.sam.gov) or [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) is not an acceptable reason to justify acceptance of a late submittal.

If you are experiencing problems resulting in an inability to upload the application to [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov), it is essential to call [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) for assistance at 1-800-518-4726 before the application deadline.

Applicants who are outside the U.S. at the time of submittal and are not able to access the toll-free number may reach a [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) representative by calling 606-545-5035. Be sure to obtain a case number from [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). If the problems stem from unforeseen exigent circumstances unrelated to

[Grants.gov](#), such as extreme weather interfering with internet access, contact Kim Charick at 404-562-8477.

4. Unsuccessful transfer of the application package: If a successful transfer of the application cannot be accomplished even with assistance from [Grants.gov](#) due to electronic submission system issues or unforeseen exigent circumstances, and you have already attempted to resolve the issue by contacting [Grants.gov](#), send an email message to Kim Charick at [Charick.kim@epa.gov](mailto:Charick.kim@epa.gov) prior to the application deadline. The email message must document the problem and include the [Grants.gov](#) case number as well as the entire application in PDF format as an attachment.

5. Rejection by [Grants.gov](#) of the application package: If a notification is received from [Grants.gov](#) stating that the application has been rejected for reasons other than late submittal and it is too late to reapply, promptly send an email to Kim Charick at [Charick.kim@epa.gov](mailto:Charick.kim@epa.gov) with the FON in the subject line within one business day of the closing date of this solicitation. The email should include any materials provided by [Grants.gov](#) and attach the entire application in PDF format.

**Please note that successful submission through [Grants.gov](#) or via email does not necessarily mean your application is eligible for award.**

#### **IV.B. Content of Application Package**

**The following documents (Cover Page and Narrative Work Plan) are required for all application packages.** All documents must be in English and submitted in [Grants.gov](#) described in Section IV.A. The Narrative must explicitly describe the applicant's project and specifically address each of the elements below and the evaluation criteria described in Section V.A. The Narrative Work Plan should use standard Times New Roman, Arial, or Calibri fonts with a 12-point font size. **The Narrative must not exceed 10 single-spaced standard letter-sized (8.5 x 11-inch) pages. Any pages submitted in excess of the page limit will not be reviewed. While these guidelines establish the minimum type size requirements, applicants are advised that readability is of paramount importance and should take precedence in selection of an appropriate font for use in the application.**

Cover Page - Should not exceed one page and include:

- Project Title.
- Applicant Name. Identify the name of the organization submitting the application.
- DUNS Number. List the organization's DUNS number.
- Project Summary. Briefly describe the project in one to four sentences and identify the jurisdiction of your project or community you plan to serve and where the project will be performed.
- Project Leader. Include contact name, title, address, email address, phone number. Applicant can also list an administrative contact.
- Total Project Cost. Specify total cost of the project. Identify funding from other sources and in-kind contributions.
- Funding Requested. Specify the amount of federal funding requested from EPA.
- Demonstration of how the Applicant is an eligible entity per Section III.C.

Narrative Work Plan

The Narrative Work Plan must include clear, concise, and factual responses to all elements below. The Narrative must provide sufficient detail to allow for an evaluation of the merits of the application. If a criterion does not apply, include a response which explains why it does not apply. Any criterion left unanswered may result in zero points given for that criterion. Responses to the criteria should include the criteria number and title but need not restate the entire text of the criteria.

## 1. **Project Summary and Priority Support**

- a. Project Description  
Provide a clear and detailed description of the project, including a description of how the project will support and improve community health, resilience and/or sustainability.
- b. SMM Priorities  
Describe how your project will address one of the priorities described in Section I.A.
- b. Objectives  
Describe the project objectives and your strategy for achieving those objectives.
- d. Scope of Work and Strategic Plan Linkage  
Provide a clear and detailed explanation of how the project addresses the requirements in Section I.C. (Strategic Plan Linkage).

## 2. **Project Partners, Outreach and Transferability**

- a. Partnerships  
Describe your plan to use and leverage the resources and expertise of partners and stakeholders in the project, including a description of their role and how each partner will contribute to the success of the project. If you do not intend to have any partners, explain how it is beneficial to implement your project without partners.
- b. Outreach  
Explain how the results of the project will be effectively communicated to interested stakeholders.
- c. Transferability  
Describe how the project might be replicated and transferable to other communities.
- d. Letters  
Include letter(s) from any partners and/or stakeholders that include a description of their role in the project.

## 3. **Project Sustainability**

- a. Project Alignment with Community Priorities  
Provide a clear and detailed description of the extent to which the project supports and/or aligns with a state and/or local mandate, policy, and/or community priority to improve community health, resilience and/or sustainability.

- b. Innovative Approaches  
Describe how the SMM project encompasses innovative approaches (e.g., not usual, routine, or established practices) that have the capacity to institute real change.
- c. Disproportionately Impacted Communities:  
Describe how this grant will address or facilitate the identification and reduction of threats to communities that have environmental justice challenges and/or disproportionately share the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, governmental and/or commercial operations or policies.

#### 4. Project Tasks, Budget and Measuring Progress

- a. Budget Description  
Describe the project tasks and subtasks, and personnel responsible for each project task and subtask.
- b. Cost Estimates  
Provide and describe how cost estimates for each task were developed and, where appropriate, provide costs per unit. Identify in the Narrative, but not the budget table, any costs that the applicant or other partners will fund for each task.
- c. Budget Table  
Provide a detailed budget for your project and provide the itemized, eligible costs for personnel, fringe benefits, contractual costs, travel, equipment, supplies, other direct costs, indirect costs, and total costs. Budget development guidance can be found at <https://www.epa.gov/grants/rain-2019-g02>. A sample budget can be found in Appendix A of this announcement. **Only include costs to be covered by EPA grant funds in the Budget Table.**
- d. Outputs and Outcomes  
Identify for each task what outputs and outcomes will be produced for your project as described in Section 1.D. Include quantitative targets. Describe your plan and approach for measuring progress towards achieving those expected project outcomes and outputs.
- e. Anticipated Project Schedule  
Provide a timeline for the tasks and subtasks described above and an estimate of how long it will take to complete each of these. Provide a schedule indicating completion dates of milestones that demonstrate that you can complete the project and project goals within the two-year project period of performance.
- f. Expenditure of Awarded Grant Funds  
Provide your approach, procedures, and controls for ensuring that awarded grant funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner.

#### 5. Programmatic Capability and Past Performance

List up to 5 funding assistance agreements (assistance agreements include grants and cooperative agreements but not contracts) that your organization managed within the last three years. EPA agreements are preferred. Describe:

- a. Past Performance – Project Management  
Provide a clear and detailed description of your past performance and outcomes in successfully completing and managing those agreements.
- b. Past Performance – Reporting  
Provide a clear and detailed description of your history of meeting the reporting requirements under those agreements, including whether you adequately and timely reported on your progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes, (and if not, explain why not) and whether you submitted acceptable final technical reports under the agreements.
- c. Organizational Capability  
Provide a clear and detailed description of the organizational experience and capacity to plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project. Include staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project.

**IV.C. Additional Provisions for Applicants Incorporated into the Solicitation**

Additional provisions that apply to this solicitation and/or awards made under this solicitation, including but not limited to those related to confidential business information, contracts and subawards under grants, and application assistance and communications, can be found at [EPA Solicitation Clauses](#). These, and the other provisions that can be found at the website link, are important, and applicants must review them when preparing applications for this solicitation. If you are unable to access these provisions electronically at the website above, please communicate with the EPA contact listed in this solicitation to obtain the provisions.

**V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION**

**V.A. Evaluation Criteria**

Eligible entities whose applications meet the threshold criteria in Section III of this announcement will be reviewed according to the evaluation criterion set forth below. Applicants must directly and explicitly address these criteria as described in Section IV.B. **Each application will be rated under the point system provided in the table below, with a total of 105 points possible.**

Criterion	Maximum Points per Criterion
<b>1. Project Summary and Priority Support.</b> Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on the quality and extent to which the narrative clearly and thoroughly describes:	<b>20</b>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. the project, including the extent to which the project will support and improve community health, resilience, and/or sustainability. <b>(7 points)</b></li> <li>b. how the project addresses one of the priorities described in Section I.A. <b>(5 points)</b></li> <li>c. the project objectives and your strategy for achieving those objectives. <b>(5 points)</b></li> <li>d. how the project addresses the requirements in Section I.C (Strategic Plan Linkage). <b>(3 points)</b></li> </ul>	
<p><b>2. Project Partners, Outreach and Transferability:</b> Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on the quality and extent to which the narrative clearly and thoroughly describes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. a plan to use and leverage the resources and expertise of partners and stakeholders in the project, including how each partner will play a role and contribute to the success of the project. Alternatively, to what extent is it explained how the project will successfully meet the project objectives without partners? <b>(7 points)</b></li> <li>b. how the results of the project will be effectively communicated to interested stakeholders. <b>(5 points)</b></li> <li>c. how the project might be replicated and transferable to other communities. <b>(4 points)</b></li> <li>d. The extent to which any letters from partners and/or stakeholders explain their role and contribution to the project. <b>(4 points)</b> <b>Applicants will receive zero points if letters are not included.</b></li> </ul>	<b>20</b>
<p><b>3. Project Sustainability.</b> Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on the quality and extent to which the narrative realistically describes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. how the project supports and/or aligns with a state and/or local mandate, policy, and/or community priority to improve community health, resilience and/or sustainability. <b>(5 points)</b></li> <li>b. how the SMM project encompasses innovative approaches (e.g., not usual, routine, or established practices) that have the capacity to institute real change. <b>(15 points)</b></li> <li>c. how the project will address or facilitate the identification and reduction of threats to communities that have environmental justice challenges and/or disproportionately share the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, governmental and/or commercial operations or policies or explain why it does not. <b>(5 points)</b></li> </ul>	<b>25</b>
<p><b>4. Project Tasks, Budget and Measuring Progress.</b> Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on the quality and extent to which the narrative clearly and thoroughly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. describes the project tasks and subtasks, including the personnel responsible for each task and subtask and the cost estimate for each task. <b>(5 points)</b></li> </ul>	<b>30</b>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. describes how the cost estimates for each task were developed and, where appropriate, the costs per unit and any costs and that will be funded by the applicant or other partners for each task. <b>(3 points)</b></li> <li>c. provides an itemized budget containing eligible costs for personnel, fringe benefits, contractual, travel, equipment, supplies, other direct costs, indirect costs, and total costs that are reasonable and realistic to complete the project. The extent to which the costs correlate with the project tasks. <b>(7 points)</b></li> <li>d. identifies outputs and outcomes for each project task. <b>Quantitative targets are necessary to receive full points.</b> The extent to which your plan and approach for measuring progress towards achieving those expected project outcomes and outputs is described. <b>(5 points)</b></li> <li>e. provides a reasonable and realistic schedule with completion dates of milestones and significant tasks that demonstrate that the project goals and objectives will be completed within the two-year project period of performance. <b>(5 points)</b></li> <li>f. includes approach, procedures, and controls for ensuring that awarded grant funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner. <b>(5 points)</b></li> </ul>	
<p><b>5. Programmatic Capability and Past Performance.</b> Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on the quality and extent to which they demonstrate their ability to successfully complete and manage the project, including the degree to which the narrative clearly and thoroughly describes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. successful past performance and outcomes in completing and managing projects. <b>(4 points)</b></li> <li>b. a history of meeting the reporting requirements under previous assistance agreements, including whether you adequately and timely reported on your progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes, whether acceptable final reports were submitted and if such progress was not being made, whether you adequately reported why not. <b>(3 points)</b></li> <li>c. the organizational experience and capacity to plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the project. The extent to which the staff expertise, qualifications, and knowledge, and other resources demonstrates the project goals will be achieved. Alternatively, the extent to which it is described how these staff or resources will be obtained. <b>(3 points)</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> 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).</p>	<p><b>10</b></p>

**V.B. Review and Selection Process**

All applications received by the closing date and time for submission will first be screened using the threshold eligibility criteria listed in Section III.C. **Applications that do not pass the threshold**

**eligibility review will not be evaluated further or considered for funding.**

A panel of EPA staff will review eligible applications using the evaluation criteria listed in Section V and assign numerical scores to each application with a total of **105 points** possible. The review panel will develop a list of the highest scored applications to submit to the EPA Region 4 Selection Official for final funding decisions. The Selection Official will make the final funding decisions based on the scoring by the review panel and the availability of funds, and also possibly the geographic distribution of projects and addressing a variety of program priorities.

### **V.C. Additional Provisions for Applicants Incorporated into the Solicitation**

Additional provisions that apply to this solicitation and/or awards made under this solicitation including the clause on Reporting and Use of Information Concerning Recipient Integrity and Performance can be found at [EPA's Solicitation Clauses](#). **These, and the other provisions that can be found at the website link, are important, and applicants must review them when preparing applications for this solicitation.** If you are unable to access these provisions electronically at the website above, please communicate with the EPA contact listed in this solicitation to obtain the provisions.

## **VI. AWARD INFORMATION**

### **VI.A. Award Notification**

EPA anticipates notifying all applicants, via electronic mail (email) to the applicant's Project Lead listed on the Cover Page described in Section IV.B., whether they were or were not selected for funding no later than December 31, 2021. The notification to the successful applicants will inform the applicant about the selection, request any other necessary documentation and identify the EPA Project Officer, but it will not provide any authorization to begin work. Applicants selected for award will work with the EPA Project Officer to finalize the application package to EPA as described in Section VI.B.

### **VI.B. Administrative Requirements**

Applicants selected for award will work with the EPA Project Officer to finalize the application package to EPA. This package may include any required certification forms. The successful applicant may need to amend or submit additional documents and forms which must be approved by EPA before the grant can officially be awarded. EPA will review and the selected applicant may need to revise documents.

### **VI.C. Awards**

The official notification of an award will be in the form of a cooperative agreement as described in Section II.C. and will be made by the EPA Region 4 grants office. Only an EPA grants officer is authorized to bind the Federal Government to the expenditure of funds. Application selection does not guarantee an award will be made. For example, statutory authorization questions, funding issues or other

discoveries found during the award process may affect the ability of EPA to make an award to an applicant.

The award notice, signed by the EPA Award Official, will be provided via an email to the applicant. The time between notification of selection and award of a grant can take up to 90 days or longer. Awards will include terms and conditions that will be binding on the grant recipient. Terms and conditions specify what grantees must do to ensure that grant-related and program-related requirements are met. Terms and conditions may be viewed at: [Grant Terms and Conditions](#). A listing and description of general EPA Regulations applicable to the award of assistance agreements may be viewed at: [Introduction to Regulations, Policies and Guidance for EPA Grants](#).

#### **VI.D. Reporting Requirement**

Progress reports and a Final Technical Report will be required of the grant recipients. The progress reports will be submitted to the EPA Project Officer within thirty days after each reporting period, as defined by the EPA Project Officer. 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 reports shall include a report out on the progress towards meeting the outputs, outcomes and measures as described in Section I.D. (Measuring Environmental Results: Anticipated Outputs and Outcomes and Performance Measures). The grant recipient must submit the Final Technical Report within 90 calendar days of the close of the grant project period.

#### **VI.E. Disputes**

Assistance agreement competition-related disputes will be resolved in accordance with the Grant Competition Dispute Resolution Procedures published in 70 FR (Federal Register) 3629, 3630 (January 26, 2005) which can be found at <https://www.epa.gov/grants/grant-competition-dispute-resolution-procedures>. Copies of these procedures may also be requested by contacting the person listed in Section VII below. Note, the FR notice references regulations at 40 CFR Parts 30 and 31 that have been superseded by regulations in 2 CFR parts 200 and 1500. Notwithstanding the regulatory changes, the procedures for competition-related disputes remains unchanged from the procedures described at 70 FR 3629, 3630, as indicated in 2 CFR Part 1500, Subpart E.

#### **VI.F. Additional Provisions For Applicants Incorporated Into The Solicitation**

Additional provisions that apply to this solicitation and/or awards made under this solicitation, including but not limited to those related to DUNS, SAM, copyrights, disputes, and administrative capability, can be found at [EPA Solicitation Clauses](#). These, and the other provisions that can be found at the website link, are important, and applicants must review them when preparing applications for this solicitation. If you are unable to access these provisions electronically at the website above, please communicate with the EPA contact listed in this solicitation to obtain the provisions.

## **VII. AGENCY CONTACT**

Kim Charick, U.S. EPA, Region 4, Land, Chemicals & Redevelopment Division, 61 Forsyth St SW, Atlanta, GA 30303; Phone: 404-562-8477 or e-mail: [Charick.kim@epa.gov](mailto:Charick.kim@epa.gov).

## Appendix A: Budget Table

The following budget table is provided to assist you in completing your budget as an example to follow, though this format is not required. Other formats are also acceptable if total costs per category are included. See Appendix A for category descriptions and ensure that the category totals match those in your Standard Form 424A.

**a. PERSONNEL**

POSITION	NUMBER	SALARY	% TIME or # WORK HOURS	AMOUNT
<b>a. PERSONNEL TOTAL</b>				

**b. FRINGE BENEFITS**

BASE	
RATE	X %
<b>b. FRINGE BENEFITS TOTAL</b>	

**c. TRAVEL**

<b>c. TRAVEL TOTAL:</b>

**d. EQUIPMENT**

ITEM	NUMBER	COST PER UNIT	TOTAL
<b>d. EQUIPMENT TOTAL:</b>			

**e. SUPPLIES**

<b>e. SUPPLIES TOTAL</b>	

**f. CONTRACTUAL**

<b>f. CONTRACTUAL TOTAL</b>	

**g. CONSTRUCTION (N/A)**

**h. OTHER**

<b>h. OTHER TOTAL</b>	

<b>i. TOTAL DIRECT COSTS: (Sum of categories a. through h.)</b>	
<b>j. INDIRECT COSTS: (RATE: )</b>	
<b>k. TOTAL PROPOSED COSTS: (Sum of categories i. and j.)</b>	
<b>FEDERAL FUNDS REQUESTED:</b>	