

TITLE: Technical Assistance and Support for Improved Drinking Water Sources Request for Applications (RFA) Questions and Answers (Q/A)

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY NUMBER: EPA-OW-OGWDW-16-01

Q1) What specific projects are allowable under this grant? Could this grant complement current research on tribal lands to assess aquifer conditions for water sources for tribal members in rural areas?

A1) In accordance with EPA's Assistance Agreement Competition Policy (EPA Order 5700.5A1), EPA staff will not meet with individual applicants to discuss draft proposals, provide informal comments on draft proposals, or provide advice to applicants on how to respond to ranking criteria. Applicants are responsible for the contents of their applications.

All applications must meet the requirements outlined in the RFA in Section III.A (Eligible Applicants) and Section III.C (Threshold Eligibility Criteria) at the time of application submission. The types of activities that are eligible for funding are described in Section I.B, Project Description, of the announcement. This funding opportunity is intended to develop and expand the capability of state and tribal UIC and Source Water Protection programs.

In their applications, applicants should describe their proposed approach to providing technical assistance and support that will achieve these objectives. The project elements described in Section I.B. of the RFA provide detail on the types of activities EPA intends to fund and the anticipated roles and responsibilities of the successful applicant.

Specifically, the project elements include:

- Provide leadership and support to states and tribes on emerging/high priority issues
- Sponsor annual meetings for UIC and Source Water Protection programs
- Support and encourage state and tribal participation in the federal/state/tribal National UIC Database
- Disseminate and share information with states, tribes, and other non-federal stakeholders

Applicants are encouraged to identify additional project elements in their applications that may not be included in the announcement, but that may contribute to overall project success.

Only applications that meet all of the criteria in Section III.C will be evaluated against the ranking factors in Section V of the announcement. Applicants should review the RFA and Sections I, III, IV and V carefully in order to ensure their overall proposed project will meet the requirements in the RFA.

Q2) Could monitoring wells in the area of concern, personnel costs to conduct the research, Conference/Meeting Fees, and drilling drinking water source and using it to conduct research be an allowable expense?

- A2) The statutory authority for this announcement is Section 1442(c)(3)(C) of the Safe Water Drinking Act (SWDA). This section authorizes EPA to make grants for any project or activity designed to develop and expand the capability of programs of States and municipalities to carry out the purposes of the SWDA (i.e. providing safe drinking water). Because EPA is soliciting applications from eligible applicants to provide technical assistance and support to develop and expand the capability of state and tribal UIC and Source Water Protection programs, installing monitoring wells and associated research activities, and drilling drinking water sources to conduct research, are not eligible activities under this announcement. Technical assistance and support under this announcement should enhance communication and coordination between the EPA and states and tribes with primary enforcement authority to protect drinking water resources. However, conference/meeting fees for UIC and Source Water Protection program meetings are anticipated by this announcement and may be eligible costs, as further explained in Section I.B.2.
- Q3) How will the information regarding this grant be disseminated? Will you post the answers to questions on the website or will you reply to me and post it on the website?
- A3) Consistent with the provisions of the announcement, EPA will respond to written questions from individual applicants regarding threshold eligibility criteria, administrative issues related to the submission of the application, and requests for clarification about the announcement. Questions must be submitted via e-mail to (kelly.suzanne@epa.gov) by July 1, 2016. Written responses will be posted on EPA's website at <https://www.epa.gov/uic/technical-assistance-and-support-improved-protection-drinking-water-sources> (see Section VII of the announcement).