

## **General Questions about Wetland Program Development Grant Solicitations:**

Question 1:

***I am a State or a Tribe and I am working on developing my WPP now, what Track do I apply to?***

Answer:

Track 1. If you are a State or Tribe and your grant proposal includes development of a WPP, you can apply under Track 1. Development of a WPP doesn't have to be a stand-alone project. It can be included as a related task or activity within a program development project proposal that addresses any one of the wetland program Core Elements, and be considered eligible for Track 1 funding consideration.

Question 2:

***Which Track? If my government agency has an EPA-approved Wetland Program Plan, would we apply under Track One or Track Two?***

Answer:

If your State or Tribe or Territory has an EPA-approved Wetland Program Plan (WPP) and you are proposing a project that is listed in your WPP, you can apply under Track One. Track One is for States and Tribes and Territories who have an EPA-approved Wetland Program Plan or would like to develop one, using Wetland Program Development Grant funds.

States and Tribes and Territories can also submit a proposal under Track Two.

If a State or Tribe or Territory wishes to submit proposals under both Track One and Track Two, they may do so, but they would need to submit two separate proposals.

Applicants who are local governments, inter-tribal consortia, inter-state consortia, or universities chartered as a part of State government; must apply under Track Two.

Question 3:

***Can one proposal be submitted for both Track One and Two?***

Answer:

No. While applicants may submit more than one proposal under this RFP, each proposal must be submitted separately and be evaluated under either Track One or Track Two. Applicants cannot submit one proposal covering both tracks.

Question 4:

***What do I do if I have problems with grants.gov?***

Answer:

Many applicants do experience challenges with grants.gov. The best way to address grants.gov problems is to NOT wait until the last day to fill out your grants.gov forms and submit your application. Some have submitted a grants.gov application, which they thought was error free, only to receive an error message 24 hours later, after the deadline has passed.

If you do run into problems, please contact grants.gov, as soon as possible. You can contact grants.gov at 1-800-518-4726 and/or at the email address provided in the RFP (<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support.html>).

They are open 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. Discuss your problem with grants.gov and document your discussion, for your records.

So that the EPA office can track problems with grants.gov, please notify the Wetland Grants Lead, as listed in the RFP, and let them know what grants.gov problem you are having. Also let them know what you are doing to try to resolve it (e.g., contacting grants.gov). The Wetland Grants Lead for your RFP is indicated in the RFP.

Please note that the EPA Wetland Grant Lead does not have technical expertise in grants.gov. It is important that you also contact grants.gov directly with any problems. You do not need to wait for a reply from the EPA Wetland Grants Lead before you contact grants.gov.

And, again, submitting your application well ahead of the deadline, will increase your chance of having grants.gov problems resolved prior to the deadline.

Question 5:

***Would a bibliography be put in the attachments?***

Answer:

The optional attachments include pictures and maps, staff resumes, and support letters, etc. (Section IV.C.3.F., entitled, "Optional"). Bibliographies or literature citations are not required in proposals. If an applicant chooses to provide literature citations, this information should be outside the 20-page limit and in the attachments.

Question 6:

***Do you have general advice on submitting grant applications?***

Answer:

In general, for any grant application you submit for any program, it is a good idea to:

- Read the request for proposals carefully.
- Understand the key focus of the particular grant-funding program.
- Comply with application requirements.
- Pay attention to deadline dates and times.
- Note the threshold eligibility criteria. If your application does not meet these criteria it cannot be reviewed in the competition.
- Note the ineligible activities and do not apply to fund those.
- Note the match requirement and make sure your proposal meets it.
- Note the format for applications and have your application follow it.
- Read the selection criteria carefully, as this is what reviewers will use to score your proposal.
- Make key information easy to find for application reviewers.
- Have someone else go over your application before you send it in.
- Ask for feedback, if your proposal is not successful.

Question 7:

***For Tribes, can Bureau of Indian Affairs Section 638 funds be used for match?***

Answer:

Yes, Section 638 funds from the Bureau of Indian Affairs can be used for match. The matching funds must be for costs that are allowable for the grant project; the same as with other grant matching contributions.

Question 8:

***Would grant funds be provided to the grantee on an advance basis or on a reimbursement basis?***

Answer:

Funds for wetland program development grants are typically provided on an advance basis, unless the EPA requires a specific grantee to use reimbursement only. Recipient organizations should request only those funds required to meet **immediate** disbursement requirements and must disburse funds as soon as possible to minimize federal cash on-hand in accordance with Title 2: Grants and Agreements, Part 200-Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, Section 200.305 which reads:

§200.305 Payment.

(1) The non-Federal entity must be paid in advance, provided it maintains or demonstrates the willingness to maintain both written procedures that minimize the time elapsing between the transfer of funds and disbursement by the non-Federal entity, and financial management systems that meet the standards for fund control and accountability as established in this part. Advance payments to a non-Federal entity must be limited to the minimum amounts needed and be timed to be in accordance with the actual, immediate cash requirements of the non-Federal entity in carrying out the purpose of the approved program or project. The timing and amount of advance payments must be as close as is administratively feasible to the actual disbursements by the non-Federal entity for direct program or project costs and the proportionate share of any allowable indirect costs. The non-Federal entity must make timely payment to contractors in accordance with the contract provisions.

Question 9:

***Can foreign universities apply for a grant for a project outside the U.S.?***

Answer:

No, only U.S. states, territories, tribes, and universities may apply for projects with the U.S.

Question 10:

***Is an Interim Financial Conflict of Interest (COI) statement required, even if it is not applicable?***

Answer:

No, if it is not applicable you do not need to submit it. If EPA determines it is applicable in the future, we will ask you to submit it.

Question 11:

***If an applicant is not able to accept federal funds, can they have another entity serve as their fiscal agent?***

Answer:

Applicants must be able to accept federal funds and must be eligible under the Wetland Grant RFP. In the scenario above, the fiscal agent would need to be the applicant. An applicant that can accept federal funds and is eligible under the RFP may appoint a fiscal agent if necessary.

Question 12:

***If we get awarded can we put our funds in a PPG? Can we have a multi-year PPG?***

Answer:

Yes. If awarded, eligible applicants can put funds into their PPG if they choose. The PPG will be amended to accommodate the two year funding. Each applicant will be assessed as to the validity of using their PPG as the funding vehicle. If the applicant is experiencing an administrative burden using the PPG vehicle, the Wetland grant will be a standalone grant. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Question 13:

***Will a proposal rank/score higher if they have an EPA approved Wetland Program Plan in place?***

Answer:

There are no additional points for having an EPA approved Wetland Program Plan; however, the focus of the WPDG RFP is the development of Wetland Program Plans and there are more funds available under Track One to accommodate the RFP focus. The Region has discretion to move funds between the two tracks, if necessary.

Question 14:

***Will we accept proposal for 1 year funding only?***

Answer:

Yes. We will accept proposals for 1 year funding. However, the next Request for Proposals will not be announced until FY19. Applicants need to be aware there will be no grant announcement in FY18.

Question 15:

***How do I link to the HUC in which the project takes place?***

Answer:

Use the USGS website ([http://water.usgs.gov/wsc/map\\_index.html](http://water.usgs.gov/wsc/map_index.html)) to navigate to the 8-12 digit HUC in which the project will take place and copy that link into the proposal.

Question 16:

***What is my first step if you are awarded a grant/cooperative agreement with EPA for wetland mapping?***

Answer:

Please visit the Federal Geospatial Data Committee (FGDC) at [http://www.fgdc.gov/standards/projects/FGDC-standards-projects/wetlands-mapping/2009-08%20FGDC%20Wetlands%20Mapping%20Standard\\_final.pdf](http://www.fgdc.gov/standards/projects/FGDC-standards-projects/wetlands-mapping/2009-08%20FGDC%20Wetlands%20Mapping%20Standard_final.pdf) and then to facilitate accurate data production and inclusion into the National Wetlands Database it is recommended that you visit the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's, National Wetlands Inventory, Contributed Data page at: <http://www.fws.gov/wetlands/Data/Contributed-Data.html> or contact them at [Wetlands\\_Team@fws.gov](mailto:Wetlands_Team@fws.gov), before work has started. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's, National Wetlands Inventory can help you with QA/QC requirements for mapping wetland projects.