

Viral Pathogen and Surrogate Approaches for Assessing Treatment Performance In Water Reuse Request for Applications (RFA) Informational Webinar

**Questions and Answers
November 17, 2020**

1. **Question:** Is the \$1.24 M budget limit for total, direct and indirect costs?
 - a. **Answer:** Yes, the \$1.24 M covers the research, direct and indirect costs. It is the maximum funding you may request from the federal government.
2. **Question:** What is the term for this project and is the budget limit of \$1.24M per year or for the total program?
 - a. **Answer:** The project term is three years, and the limit of \$1.24 million maximum federal assistance is the total for the three years, not the total per year.
3. **Question:** Can we have a period of performance shorter than three years? If so, by how much?
 - a. **Answer:** We do not have a minimum performance period. You will have to justify in your application how you can get the proposed research accomplished within the time period as well as the budget you propose, whether this is three years or a shorter amount of time. This is also addressed in the peer review criteria (Section V.A. of the RFA).
4. **Question:** Can you clarify what SAM.gov is and is it needed for the grant application?
 - a. **Answer:** SAM.gov is the “System for Award Management”, managed by the General Services Administration. Anyone who applies for this grant must have an active account in the SAM.gov system. The applicant must first obtain a unique entity identifier (“DUNS Number”) and then register it at SAM.gov. If the applicant does not have active status with SAM.gov, Grants.gov will not accept the application. This process may take at least a month, so start early if you do not have an active registration. Section IV.F.1 of the RFA covers this information in greater detail.
5. **Question:** We use Cayuse in our university. Can we submit through Cayuse?
 - a. **Answer:** All applications should be submitted via the grants.gov system.
6. **Question:** May we request a 10 percent De Minimis if we do not have an indirect rate? Are applicants required to use a Federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate? If not, may they present their own rate? It can be common to require a 10 percent rate i.e. de minima.
 - a. **Answer:** There is not a maximum indirect cost (IDC) rate limit or requirement. EPA accepts IDC rates that are negotiated for each recipient on behalf of all federal agencies by a cognizant federal agency, which is the agency that typically provides the most direct funding to the recipient. For more information, please see the [EPA Indirect Cost Policy](#). Section 6.3 of that policy states eligible applicants that do not have negotiated indirect cost rates, can use the de

minimis rate of 10%. Additionally, here is the IDC guidance for recipients:
<https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2018-08/documents/indirect-cost-policy-guidance-for-recipients-of-epa-assistance-agreements.pdf>.

7. **Question:** Does this RFA allow cooperative agreements with EPA personnel/laboratories?
 - a. **Answer:** Please refer to Section II. Award Information in the RFA. Collaboration with EPA personnel/laboratories should not be included in the application. Additionally, EPA personnel are not allowed to give letters of support or be involved with the application prior to the award. There can be occasions where cooperative agreements may be developed with EPA personnel or laboratories after the awards are given.
8. **Question:** Can an international subawardee be a consultant (not a university)?
 - a. **Answer:** If the international organization is analogous to a domestic university or non-profit, it may be a subawardee. If it is an individual or private company, it should be treated as a consultant in accordance with Section IV.C.7.b.(6) of the RFA.
9. **Question:** Can I include foreign collaborator as a co-principal investigator?
 - a. **Answer:** Yes, if the collaborator is affiliated with an eligible organization.
10. **Question:** Does this RFA seek the answer for enteric viruses' treatment or can it be used for SARS-CoV-2?
 - a. **Answer:** EPA is issuing this Request for Applications (RFA) to support research into the development of standardized approaches to identify, characterize, and validate suitable viral surrogates and enumeration methods for quantifying the potential human health risks posed by the levels of human enteric viral pathogens found in reclaimed wastewater. Enteric viruses are those that can be transmitted via a fecal-oral route (e.g., through ingestion of contaminated water) and infect cells in the gastrointestinal tract. Coronaviruses are transmitted via the respiratory route and by close contact with infected individuals. While SARS-CoV-2 has been found to be shed in feces of infected individuals, and thus, has been also found in wastewater, they are not within the scope of this RFA.
11. **Question:** Is a sole-source drinking water aquifer being recharged by wastewater treatment systems considered water reuse?
 - a. **Answer:** Yes.
12. **Question:** Does research area #2 need to include cell culture for LRV validation?
 - a. **Answer:** No, cell culture is not required to be included for assessing infectivity.
13. **Question:** How many surrogates should be adequate to test for this RFA?
 - a. **Answer:** EPA does not have a recommended number. Applications should clearly state which research areas the application proposes to address and how the research will relate to the expected outputs and outcomes of the RFA.

14. **Question:** Is stormwater out of scope for this RFA?

- a. **Answer:** Stormwater that is impacted by human fecal matter is within the scope of this RFA.