

Questions and Answers about FY 21 Trash-Free Waters RFA – 1/29/2021

Topic	Question	Response	Date posted
Budget	It appears from the RFA that there is no allotment for a 10% de minimis indirect cost rate for an applicant without a pre-existing NICRA. Is that correct, or is there a way to charge indirect costs to the funding opportunity at a de minimis rate?	In accordance with 2 CFR Part 200.414 (f) Any non-Federal entity that does not have a current negotiated (including provisional) rate, except for those non-Federal entities described in appendix VII to this part, paragraph D.1.b, may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC) which may be used indefinitely. No documentation is required to justify the 10% de minimis indirect cost rate. As described in § 200.403, costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both. If chosen, this methodology once elected must be used consistently for all Federal awards until such time as a non-Federal entity chooses to negotiate for a rate, which the non-Federal entity may apply to do at any time.	1/29/21
Administrative	Can one organization receive multiple awards?	Section VI Paragraph B of the RFA: If an applicant submits applications for multiple tasks/activities under this competition, and is selected for multiple tasks/activities, EPA may award a single assistance agreement that combines separate applications for different tasks/activities.	1/29/21
General	How would EPA handle confidential business information?	EPA recommends that you do not include confidential business information (CBI) in your application. However, if CBI is included, it will be treated in accordance with 40 CFR 2.203 . Applicants must clearly indicate which portion(s) of their application they are claiming as CBI. EPA will evaluate such claims in accordance with 40 CFR Part 2. If no claim of confidentiality is made, EPA is not required to make the inquiry to the applicant otherwise	1/29/21

		required by 40 CFR 2.204(c)(2) prior to disclosure. The agency protects competitive applications from disclosure under applicable provisions of the Freedom of Information Act prior to the completion of the competitive selection process.	
Eligibility	Our organization is not currently in the position to own and operate large scale trash and garbage capturing devices such as trash wheels, trash skimmer boats, river interceptors and litter traps/nets. However, our use of volunteers and staff in to remove trash along the shoreline and nearshore areas has proven very effective in removing a large bulk of refuse from the River.	EPA cannot provide feedback on specific project proposals and likelihood of success Funding for volunteer or other person-based cleanups are not eligible for funding. See page 12 of the RFA. Please see Section III.” ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION.” This section also provides more information about the eligibility of volunteers.	1/29/21
Eligibility	I am a startup based outside of the Great Lakes. Am I eligible to apply?	You might be eligible if you are an eligible entity/organization and your work is occurring in an eligible location. From Page 1 of the RFA: Governmental entities, including state agencies, interstate agencies, Indian tribes, local governments, institutions of higher learning (i.e., colleges and universities), and non-profit organizations (as defined at 2 CFR Part 200) are eligible to apply for funding under this RFA. From Page 11 of the RFA: The installation/use of trash capturing devices must be along Great Lakes shorelines, and/or in the waterways connecting the Great Lakes (including the U.S. portions of the St. Mary’s River, St. Clair River, Lake St. Clair, Detroit River, and the Niagara River and St. Lawrence River);	1/29/21

		and/or within the aquatic portion of riparian corridors (natural or engineered stretches of rivers or streams) having a direct connection to a Great Lake but extending no more than 6.0 river miles away from the lake.	
Eligibility	Is this open to Canadian agencies?	No. From Page 1 of the RFA: Individuals, foreign organizations and governments, nonprofit organizations exempt from taxation under Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engage in lobbying, and “for-profit” organizations are not eligible.	1/29/21
General	How far inland/upstream in a tributary can trash devices be placed?	From Section I. Applicant Information, p.6: The installation/use of trash capturing devices must be along Great Lakes shorelines, and/or in the waterways connecting the Great Lakes (including the U.S. portions of the St. Mary’s River, St. Clair River, Lake St. Clair, Detroit River, and the Niagara River and St. Lawrence River); and/or within the aquatic portion of riparian corridors (natural or engineered stretches of rivers or streams) having a direct connection to a Great Lake but extending no more than 6.0 river miles away from the lake.	1/29/21
Administrative	Will it be possible to obtain a list of interested bidders for this RFA?	EPA does not post a list of interested applicants. Applicants chosen for awards will be posted once they are selected here: https://www.epa.gov/great-lakes-funding/glri-trash-free-waters-fy2021-request-applications-rfa .	1/29/21
General	Is there any formula that prioritizes the miles of shoreline or pounds of trash relative to the overall project cost? That is, is there a	There is not a specific calculation. An applicant’s weight of evidence explaining their cost effectiveness will be considered, see Section IV. Application and Submission Information, Paragraph on	1/29/21

	bonus to more trash picked-up or miles covered per dollar spent?	Budget, p. 21 for more details. Please also see Section V.	
General	Is there a list of harbors, rivermouths, etc. that the EPA is looking to clean up?	There are not any specific locations that are preferred by EPA; however, work must occur within the general geographic areas mentioned in the RFA. Section III, Paragraph on Threshold Eligibility Criteria, p.11 goes into more detail.	1/29/21
Administrative	Can a copy of the PowerPoint from the webinar be obtained?	If you would like a copy, please email GLRI-RFA@epa.gov listed in Section VII. Agency Contacts.	1/29/21
General	Our waterbody has two branches that converge at the intersection of three communities. Each community is part of a larger partnership working together toward the restoration of this waterbody. We would like to submit only one application for a trash collector at multiple locations. Who should be the applicant? Should we submit under one municipality or multiple applications?	There are a couple of options which could be used. Each community could submit separately, so they would be competing against one another. Also, a single community could apply, and the two other organizations could be Subawardees. See Section III regarding "Coalitions" and to the "Contracts and Subawards" provisions at www.epa.gov/grants/epa-solicitation-clauses (incorporated by reference in Section IV).	1/29/21
General	Does the grant require the purchase of an existing off-the-shelf type unit? The RFA mentions experimentation is not allowed, but how does this apply to designing/engineering the system specific to each site?	This RFA does not require purchase of commercially available "off the shelf" units. Applicants may seek funding for a device created by an engineering or design firm which is customized for a specific trash collection area. However, the applicant should describe how this customized device is substantially similar to other proven technology. From Section II. Award Information, p.12: The purchase of any	1/29/21

		unproven/experimental trash capturing devices and/or research activities, meaning any systematic investigation principally for the purpose of expanding general knowledge or developing a new solution to a problem, are not eligible for funding.	
Budget	Can the grant pay for equipment and the salary to run the equipment?	Potentially, there should be reasoning in the budget narrative as to why equipment and salary are reasonable, allocable, and necessary. Long-term planning will also be considered, especially how trash devices will be operated when the grantee assumes ownership of equipment and the grant funding has ended. See Section V. Application Review and Selection Process, Paragraph on Budget, p.24 and Section IV. Application and Submission Information, Paragraph on Logistics for Long-Term Operation of Trash Capture Device, p. 20 for further detail.	1/29/21
Eligibility	Can the grant be applied to Areas of Concern (AOCs) further than 6 miles up from the Great Lake intersection?	No, the grant cannot be applied further than 6 river miles for any areas of the Great Lakes, see Section I. Applicant Information p.6 for more detail.	1/29/21
General	For how many years or hours annually does the partner need to commit to operating the equipment after funding concludes?	There is no strict requirement for the number of years or hours that the device must be operated. Reviews will consider the plan for long-term uses as part of the competitive scoring of the application. See Section IV. Application and Submission Information, Paragraph Logistics for Long-term Operation of Trash Capture Device, p. 20 for more details.	1/29/21
Administrative	Are case studies available?	Several documents that describe trash collection activities throughout the nation are available through the Trash-Free Waters Projects page:	1/29/21

		https://www.epa.gov/trash-free-waters/trash-free-waters-projects.	
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