

United States Geological Survey

WATER RESOURCES RESEARCH ACT PROGRAM: PER-AND POLYFLUOROALKYL  
(PFAS) SUBSTANCES COMPETITIVE GRANTS FY2021 PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT

<https://water.usgs.gov/wri/>



Notice of Funding Opportunity - Fiscal Year 2021  
Funding Opportunity Number (FON) G21AS00521

Closing Date: 06/24/2021

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## A. Program Description

### A1. Authority

This Program Announcement is issued under the provisions of section 104 of the Water Resources Research Act of 1984 (Public Law 98-242), as amended by Public Laws 101-397, 104-147, 106-374, and 109-471. Section 104 of the Water Resources Research Act directs the Secretary of the Interior to administer program grants to Institutes and Centers established under the provisions of section 104(a) of the Act.

**Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number**  
15.805

### A2. Background, Purpose and Program Requirements

#### INTRODUCTION

Water Resources Institutes or Centers have been established in each of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Guam. The Institute in Guam also serves the Federated States of Micronesia and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The Institute in Hawaii also serves American Samoa. The addresses of the 54 Institutes are available on the Internet at <https://water.usgs.gov/wrri/index.php>. Responsibility for administration of the Water Resources Research Act Program has been delegated to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS).

The 54 Institutes are organized as the National Institutes for Water Resources (NIWR). NIWR cooperates with the USGS in the administration of the Water Resources Research Act Program.

#### PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Section 104(g) of the Water Resources Research Act of 1984 requires that this competitive grant program focus on: **“water problems and issues of a regional or interstate nature beyond those of concern only to a single State** and which relate to specific program priorities identified jointly by the Secretary (of the Interior) and the (water resources research) institutes.”

Objectives of this program announcement also include the following:

- A. Promote per-and polyflouroalkyl (PFAS) substances research as related to the nation’s water quality.
- B. Promote the dissemination and application of the results of the research funded under this

program.

C. Assist in the training of scientists in relevant water resource fields. Proposals that include a strong educational component (student support) are encouraged, as are proposals from faculty beginning their careers.

## **RESEARCH PRIORITIES**

The challenges and opportunities of understanding the impact of per-and polyflouroalkyl (PFAS) substances on water resources are poorly understood, despite the real and growing impact of this group of man-made substances on water quality. Research is needed to better understand these interactions and guide management decisions that will improve water resources at the regional scale or national scale. Proposals are sought on the following specific areas of inquiry (levels of priority are not assigned, and the order of listing does not indicate the level of priority):

- Research on the fate, persistence, transport, and impacts of per-and polyflouroalkyl (PFAS) substances on changes to water quality and/or ecosystem dynamics, in water resources, including surface water and groundwater.
- Social and/or economic assessment of the spread, detection, impacts, solutions, and management of PFAS in surface and/or groundwater.

## **PROPOSALS NOT ELIGIBLE FOR FUNDING**

- A. Proposals for research on health effects involving human subjects.
- B. Proposals for research involving oceanography (estuarine research proposals are acceptable).
- C. Proposals submitted by an Institute or Center that has not met reporting requirements on a previous award by the USGS.
- D. Proposals that do not comply with the terms of this Announcement.
- E. Proposals for research that do not meet the Research Priorities.

## **B. Federal Award Information**

### **B1. Total Funding**

#### **Estimated Total Funding**

\$ 1,000,000

### **B2. Award Amount**

#### **Maximum Award**

\$ 250,000

#### **Minimum Award**

\$ 0

Applicants shall not request total federal funds exceeding \$250,000 per project.

### **B3. Anticipated Award Funding and Dates**

#### **Anticipated Award Date**

September 01, 2021

#### **FEDERAL FUNDS**

A. Approximately one million dollars will be available in FY 2021 for awards under this RFP. The Government's obligation under this program is contingent upon the availability of funds.

B. All successful proposals will be fully funded for the entire duration of the project with FY 2021 funds, if available.

#### **DURATION OF PROJECT**

A. Applicants shall not request total federal funds exceeding \$250,000 per project.

B. Proposed projects may be of 1 to 3 years in duration, with discrete 12-month budget periods.

C. Awards will be made directly to the **Water Resources Research Institute or Center** through which the proposal was submitted. The target award date is September with a USGS-preferred project start date of September 1, 2021. The project start date must be no later than September 30, 2021.

### **B4. Number of Awards**

#### **Expected Number of Awards**

4

### **B5. Type of Award**

#### **Funding Instrument Type**

G - Grant

## **C. Eligibility Information**

### **C1. Eligible Applicants**

#### **Eligible Applicants**

25 – Others (see text field entitled “Additional Information on Eligibility” for clarification)

#### **Additional Information on Eligibility**

Awards are available only to Water Research Institutes or Centers established pursuant to the provisions of section 104 of the Water Resources Research Act and listed at

(<http://water.usgs.gov/wrri/index.php>). However, any investigator at an institution of higher learning in the United States is eligible to apply for an award through a Water Research Institute or Center. The application consisting of a full proposal along with the SF-424 and SF-424B and all required budget forms must be submitted through grants.gov (<http://www.grants.gov>) by the university at which the Institute or Center is located. Proposals requesting matching funds from an Institute or Center are authorized at the discretion of the Institute or Center Director.

## C2. Cost Sharing or Matching

### Cost Sharing / Matching Requirement

Yes

This program has a cost share requirement.

This program has a match requirement.

### MATCHING FUNDS

A. Each applicant must match each Federal dollar provided to support each proposed project with not less than one dollar from non-federal sources. States may have different guidelines as to the sources of matching funds - please check with your Institute or Center Director for details.

*Note: Guam, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, and the U.S. Virgin Islands are exempt from the matching requirement.*

B. Matching funds shall be obligated during the period of performance.

C. The matching requirement should be met during each 12-month budget period.

D. Matching funds obligated shall be reflected on line 10.i of each Financial Status Report, Standard Form 425.

E. Matching funds may contain indirect costs and non-federal salaries and benefits. The applicant's negotiated indirect cost rate (NICR) may be applied to **both** qualifying federal and non-federal direct costs, and the result used to satisfy part of the matching requirement under the non-federal share. The NICR shall not be applied to tuition and equipment costs. **As per the Water Resources Research Act federal funds shall not be used to pay indirect costs.**

## C3. Other

**Excluded Parties:** USGS conducts a review of the SAM.gov Exclusions database for all applicant entities and their key project personnel prior to award. USGS cannot award funds to entities or their key project personnel identified in the SAM.gov Exclusions database as ineligible, prohibited/restricted or otherwise excluded from receiving Federal contracts, certain subcontracts, and certain Federal assistance and benefits, as their ineligibility condition applies to this Federal program.

## D. Application and Submission Information

### Grants.gov Application Submission and Receipt Procedures

#### Grants.gov Application Submission and Receipt Procedures

*This section provides the application submission and receipt instructions for U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) program applications. Please read the following instructions carefully and completely.*

#### 1. Electronic Delivery

USGS is participating in the Grants.gov initiative to provide the grant community with a single site to find and apply for grant funding opportunities. USGS encourages applicants to submit their applications online through Grants.gov.

#### 2. How to Register to Apply through Grants.gov

a. *Instructions:* Read the instructions below about registering to apply for USGS funds. Applicants should read the registration instructions carefully and prepare the information requested before beginning the registration process. Reviewing and assembling the required information before beginning the registration process will alleviate last-minute searches for required information.

Organizations must have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number, active System for Award Management (SAM) registration, and Grants.gov account to apply for grants. If individual applicants are eligible to apply for this funding opportunity, then you may begin with step 3, Create a Grants.gov Account, listed below.

Creating a Grants.gov account can be completed online in minutes, but DUNS and SAM registrations may take several weeks. Therefore, an organization's registration should be done in sufficient time to ensure it does not impact the entity's ability to meet required application submission deadlines.

Complete organization instructions can be found on Grants.gov here:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html>

1) *Obtain a DUNS Number:* All entities applying for funding, including renewal funding, must have a DUNS Number from Dun & Bradstreet (D&B). Applicants must enter the DUNS Number in the data entry field labeled "Organizational DUNS" on the SF-424 form. For more detailed instructions for obtaining a DUNS Number, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-1-obtain-duns-number.html>

2) *Register with SAM:* All organizations applying online through Grants.gov must register with the System for Award Management (SAM). Failure to register with SAM will prevent your organization from applying through Grants.gov. SAM registration must be renewed annually. For more detailed instructions for registering with SAM, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-2-register-with-sam.html>

3) *Create a Grants.gov Account*: The next step is to register an account with Grants.gov. Follow the on-screen instructions or refer to the detailed instructions here: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration.html>

4) *Add a Profile to a Grants.gov Account*: A profile in Grants.gov corresponds to a single applicant organization the user represents (i.e., an applicant) or an individual applicant. If you work for or consult with multiple organizations and have a profile for each, you may log in to one Grants.gov account to access all of your grant applications. To add an organizational profile to your Grants.gov account, enter the DUNS Number for the organization in the UEI (Unique Entity Identifier) field while adding a profile. For more detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/add-profile.html>

5) *EBiz POC Authorized Profile Roles*: After you register with Grants.gov and create an Organization Applicant Profile, the organization applicant's request for Grants.gov roles and access is sent to the EBiz POC. The EBiz POC will then log in to Grants.gov and authorize the appropriate roles, which may include the AOR role, thereby giving you permission to complete and submit applications on behalf of the organization. You will be able to submit your application online any time after you have been assigned the AOR role. For more detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/authorize-roles.html>

6) *Track Role Status*: To track your role request, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/track-role-status.html>

b. *Electronic Signature*: When applications are submitted through Grants.gov, the name of the organization applicant with the AOR role that submitted the application is inserted into the signature line of the application, serving as the electronic signature. The EBiz POC **must** authorize people who are able to make legally binding commitments on behalf of the organization as a user with the AOR role; **this step is often missed and it is crucial for valid and timely submissions.**

### **3. How to Submit an Application to USGS via Grants.gov**

Grants.gov applicants can apply online using Workspace. Workspace is a shared, online environment where members of a grant team may simultaneously access and edit different webforms within an application. For each funding opportunity announcement (FOA), you can create individual instances of a workspace.

Below is an overview of applying on Grants.gov. For access to complete instructions on how to apply for opportunities, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/workspace-overview.html>

1) *Create a Workspace*: Creating a workspace allows you to complete it online and route it through your organization for review before submitting.

2) *Complete a Workspace*: Add participants to the workspace to work on the application together, complete all the required forms online or by downloading PDF versions, and check for errors before submission. The Workspace progress bar will display the state of your



application process as you apply. As you apply using Workspace, you may click the blue question mark icon near the upper-right corner of each page to access context-sensitive help.

a. *Adobe Reader*: If you decide not to apply by filling out webforms you can download individual PDF forms in Workspace. The individual PDF forms can be downloaded and saved to your local device storage, network drive(s), or external drives, then accessed through Adobe Reader.

NOTE: Visit the Adobe Software Compatibility page on Grants.gov to download the appropriate version of the software

at: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html>

b. *Mandatory Fields in Forms*: In the forms, you will note fields marked with an asterisk and a different background color. These fields are mandatory fields that must be completed to successfully submit your application.

c. *Complete SF-424 Fields First*: The forms are designed to fill in common required fields across other forms, such as the applicant name, address, and DUNS Number. Once it is completed, the information will transfer to the other forms.

3) *Submit a Workspace*: An application may be submitted through workspace by clicking the Sign and Submit button on the Manage Workspace page, under the Forms tab. Grants.gov recommends submitting your application package at least 24-48 hours prior to the close date to provide you with time to correct any potential technical issues that may disrupt the application submission.

4) *Track a Workspace Submission*: After successfully submitting a workspace application, a Grants.gov Tracking Number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) is automatically assigned to the application. The number will be listed on the Confirmation page that is generated after submission. Using the tracking number, access the Track My Application page under the Applicants tab or the Details tab in the submitted workspace.

For additional training resources, including video tutorials, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-training.html>

*Applicant Support*: Grants.gov provides applicants 24/7 support via the toll-free number 1-800-518-4726 and email at [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov). For questions related to the specific grant opportunity, contact the number listed in the application package of the grant you are applying for.

If you are experiencing difficulties with your submission, it is best to call the Grants.gov Support Center and get a ticket number. The Support Center ticket number will assist the USGS with tracking your issue and understanding background information on the issue.

#### **4. Timely Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission**

a. *Online Submission*. All applications must be received by the due date established for each program. Proof of timely submission is automatically recorded by Grants.gov. An electronic date/time stamp is generated within the system when the application is successfully received by Grants.gov. The applicant with the AOR role who submitted the application will receive an acknowledgement of receipt and a tracking number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) from Grants.gov with the successful transmission of their application. This applicant with the AOR role will also

receive the official date/time stamp and Grants.gov Tracking number in an email serving as proof of their timely submission.

When USGS successfully retrieves the application from Grants.gov, and acknowledges the download of submissions, Grants.gov will provide an electronic acknowledgment of receipt of the application to the email address of the applicant with the AOR role who submitted the application. Again, proof of timely submission shall be the official date and time that Grants.gov receives your application. Applications received by Grants.gov after the established due date for the program will be considered late and will not be considered for funding by USGS.

Applicants using slow internet, such as dial-up connections, should be aware that transmission can take some time before Grants.gov receives your application. Again, Grants.gov will provide either an error or a successfully received transmission in the form of an email sent to the applicant with the AOR role attempting to submit the application. The Grants.gov Support Center reports that some applicants end the transmission because they think that nothing is occurring during the transmission process. Please be patient and give the system time to process the application.

### **D1. Address to Request Application Package**

Applications including the full proposal must be submitted to grants.gov by the State Water Resources Research Institute or Center prior to the 5:00 PM Eastern Time, June 24, 2021 closing date. Only proposals that are filed by that time will be transmitted to the National Grants Competition Proposal Peer Review Panel. Proposals must be submitted as a complete application package (SF-424 and SF-424B, full proposal, budget breakdown, budget justification and budget summary, data management plan and university matching commitment letter) to grants.gov by the university that houses the State Water Institutes or Centers. **PI's must coordinate with their respective State Water Institutes prior to submission to allow time for the Institute to meet the deadlines of this RFP.**

#### **Program Website Link**

<https://water.usgs.gov/wrri/>

### **D2. Content and Form of Application Submission**

#### **1. SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance**

Applicants must submit the appropriate Standard Form (SF)-424, Application for Federal Assistance. The required application forms are available with this announcement on Grants.gov. The SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance must be complete, signed, and dated. Do not include any proprietary or personally identifiable information. Please note: Enter only the amount requested from this Federal program in the "Federal" funding box on the SF-424 Application form. Include any other Federal sources of funding in the "Other" box and provide details on those Federal source(s) and funding amount(s) in the required Budget Narrative (see the "Budget Narrative" section below).

Any applicant organization that has not completed the financial assistance certifications and representations within their SAM.gov registration must submit the appropriate signed and dated Assurances form. All of the required application forms are available with this announcement on Grants.gov.

## **Project Narrative**

### **PROPOSAL PREPARATION**

All proposal documents (items 1-18) must be submitted as one file in PDF format, and items 1-11 shall not exceed 12 single-spaced pages, with 12 point font and at least 1 inch margins, including tables, pictures, graphs, figures, and appendices. Proposals exceeding the 12-page limit for items 1-11 will not be considered in the competition. Investigator's Qualifications (item 12), Budget Breakdown (item 13), Budget Justification (item 14), Budget Summary (item 15), Data Management Plan (item 16), Matching Commitment Letter (item 17), and Letters of Support (item 18) do not count towards the 12-page limit.

1. Title. Title, Lead PI name and contact information (email and telephone number), and, federal funds requested, matching fund contribution, and abstract.
2. Identify and describe which priority the proposals addresses.
3. Statement of regional, interstate, or multi-state water problem. Include an explanation of the need for the project, who wants it, and why.
4. Statement of results or benefits. Specify the type of information that is to be gained and how it will be used.
5. Nature, scope, and objectives of the project, including a timeline of activities.
6. Methods, procedures, and facilities. Provide enough information to permit evaluation of the technical adequacy of the approach to satisfy the objectives.
7. Related research. Demonstrate by literature and communication citations the similarities and dissimilarities of the proposed project to completed or on-going work on the same topic.
8. Training potential. Estimate the number of graduate and undergraduate students, by degree level, who are expected to receive training in the project.
9. Statement of Government Involvement. If a Federal employee will collaborate on the project, provide a detailed description of the role and responsibilities of the Federal collaborator in the proposed research project. A brief narrative description is sufficient. As part of the narrative the USGS employees are encouraged to include a budget (not more than \$40,000 per proposal). The USGS budget is not to be included as part of the budget information in items 13, 14, and 15.
10. Information Transfer Plan. Describe the plan for disseminating information on the results of the research and promoting their application. Each plan should define the subject matter and the problems to be addressed, identify the target audience, indicate the strategies to be employed (e.g., workshops, publications), and identify the cooperators (e.g., Cooperative Extension Service).
11. Literature Citations/References.

12. Investigator's qualifications. Include a resume(s) of the principal investigator(s). No resume shall exceed two pages or list more than 15 pertinent publications. Does not count towards 12-page limit.

13. Budget Breakdown, an EXCEL fillable form that may be downloaded at <https://water.usgs.gov/wrri/WRRI-104g-Budget-2021.zip>. Does not count towards 12-page limit.

14. Budget Justification, fillable PDF form that may be downloaded at <https://water.usgs.gov/wrri/WRRI-104g-Budget-2021.zip>. Does not count towards 12-page limit.

15. Budget Summary, an EXCEL fillable form that is automatically calculated using the Budget Breakdown form (item 13). Does not count towards 12-page limit.

16. Data Management Plan. See below for requirements and format. Does not count towards 12-page limit.

17. Matching Commitment Letter. The proposal shall contain an institutional costsharing agreement (letter) signed by an official authorized to commit the applicant to all or part of the matching share or a third party, in-kind contribution signed by an official authorized to commit the third party. Scanned legible PDF documents are acceptable. The USGS does not need the originals. Does not count towards 12-page limit.

18. Letters of Support (optional). If letters of support provided, they should be scanned and uploaded as part of the proposal. Letters of support do not count against the 12-page limit.

## **COLLABORATION BY FEDERAL EMPLOYEES**

A. Federal employees may, and are encouraged to, collaborate with college or university investigators in this program.

B. Federal employees may not serve as a principal investigator, but may serve as a coprincipal investigator.

C. Federal employees and agencies may not receive federal funds for any purpose under these awards.

D. Federal employees and agencies may not serve as a source of matching funds under these awards.

Applicants must submit the appropriate SF-424 Budget Information form and Budget Narrative. For non-construction programs or projects, applicants must complete and submit the SF-424A, "Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs" form. All of the required application forms are available with this announcement on Grants.gov. Federal award recipients and subrecipients are subject to Federal award cost principles in 2 CFR 200.

### **Detailed Budget Narrative**

The project budget shall include detailed information on all cost categories and must clearly identify all estimated project costs. Unit costs shall be provided for all budget items including the cost of work to be provided by contractors or sub-recipients. In addition, applicants shall include a narrative description of the items included in the project budget, including the value of in-kind contributions of goods and services provided to complete the project when cost share is identified to be included (reference section C of this announcement). Cost categories can include, but are not limited to, those costs items included on the SF424A or SF424C.

### **Data Management Plan Requirements**

Proposals submitted to USGS must include a supplementary document of no more than four pages labeled "Data Management Plan" (DMP). This supplementary document should describe how the proposal will conform to USGS policy on the dissemination and sharing of research results and associated data. A valid DMP may include only the statement that no detailed plan is needed (e.g. "No data are expected to be produced from this project"), as long as the statement is accompanied by a clear justification. This supplementary document may include:

- the types of data, samples, physical collections, software, curriculum materials, and other materials to be produced in the course of the project;
- the standards to be used for data and metadata format and content (where existing standards are absent or deemed inadequate, this should be documented along with any proposed solutions or remedies);
- policies for access and sharing including provisions for appropriate protection of privacy, confidentiality, security, intellectual property, or other rights or requirements;
- provisions for re-use, re-distribution, and the production of derivatives; and
- plans for archiving data, samples, and other research products, and for preservation of free public access to them.

Additional guidance on data management plans is available from the USGS Data Management web site here: <https://www.usgs.gov/products/data-and-tools/data-management/data-management-plans> Simultaneously submitted collaborative proposals and proposals that include subawards are a single unified project and should include only one supplemental combined DMP by the lead PI that also addresses all subaward data management needs, regardless of the number of non-lead collaborative proposals or subawards included.

### **Conflict of Interest Disclosure**

Per the Financial Assistance Interior Regulation (FAIR), [2 CFR §1402.112](#), applicants must state in their application if any actual or potential conflict of interest exists at the time of submission.

#### *(a) Applicability.*

(1) This section intends to ensure that non-Federal entities and their employees take appropriate steps to avoid conflicts of interest in their responsibilities under or with respect to Federal financial assistance agreements.

(2) In the procurement of supplies, equipment, construction, and services by recipients and by subrecipients, the conflict of interest provisions in 2 CFR 200.318 apply.

#### *(b) Notification.*

- (1) Non-Federal entities, including applicants for financial assistance awards, must disclose in writing any conflict of interest to the DOI awarding agency or pass-through entity in accordance with 2 CFR 200.112.
- (2) Recipients must establish internal controls that include, at a minimum, procedures to identify, disclose, and mitigate or eliminate identified conflicts of interest. The recipient is responsible for notifying the Financial Assistance Officer in writing of any conflicts of interest that may arise during the life of the award, including those that have been reported by subrecipients.
- (c) *Restrictions on lobbying.* Non-Federal entities are strictly prohibited from using funds under a grant or cooperative agreement for lobbying activities and must provide the required certifications and disclosures pursuant to 43 CFR part 18 and 31 U.S.C. 1352.
- (d) *Review procedures.* The Financial Assistance Officer will examine each conflict of interest disclosure on the basis of its particular facts and the nature of the proposed grant or cooperative agreement, and will determine whether a significant potential conflict exists and, if it does, develop an appropriate means for resolving it.
- (e) *Enforcement.* Failure to resolve conflicts of interest in a manner that satisfies the government may be cause for termination of the award. Failure to make required disclosures may result in any of the remedies described in 2 CFR 200.338, Remedies for noncompliance, including suspension or debarment (see also 2 CFR part 180).

### **Single Audit Reporting Statement**

All U.S. states, local governments, federally recognized Indian tribal governments, and non-profit organizations expending \$750,000 USD or more in Federal award funds in the applicant's fiscal year must submit a Single Audit report for that year through the [Federal Audit Clearinghouse's Internet Data Entry System](#). U.S. state, local government, federally recognized Indian tribal government, and non-profit applicants must state if your organization was or was not required to submit a Single Audit report for the most recently closed fiscal year. If your organization was required to submit a Single Audit report for the most recently closed fiscal year, provide the EIN associated with that report and state if it is available through the [Federal Audit Clearinghouse](#) website.

### **Certification Regarding Lobbying**

Applicants requesting more than \$100,000 in Federal funding must certify to the statements in [43 CFR Part 18, Appendix A-Certification Regarding Lobbying](#). If this application requests more than \$100,000 in Federal funds, the Authorized Official's signature on the appropriate SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance form also represents the entity's certification of the statements in 43 CFR Part 18, Appendix A.

### **Disclosure of Lobbying Activities**

Applicants and recipients must not use any federally appropriated funds (annually appropriated or continuing appropriations) or matching funds under a Federal award to pay any person for lobbying in connection with the award. Lobbying is influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any U.S. agency, a Member of the U.S. Congress, an officer or employee of the U.S. Congress, or an employee of a Member of the U.S. Congress connection with the award. Applicants and recipients must complete and submit the [SF-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities"](#) form if the Federal share of the proposal or award is more than \$100,000 and the applicant or recipient has made or has agreed to make any payment using non-

appropriated funds for lobbying in connection with the application or award. The SF-LLL form is available with this Funding Opportunity on Grants.gov. See 43 CFR, Subpart 18.100 and 31 USC 1352 for more information on when additional submission of this form is required.

### **Overlap or Duplication of Effort Statement**

Applicants must provide a statement indicating if there is any overlap between this Federal application and any other Federal application, or funded project, in regards to activities, costs, or time commitment of key personnel. If no such overlap or duplication exists, state, “There are no overlaps or duplication between this application and any of our other Federal applications or funded projects, including in regards to activities, costs, or time commitment of key personnel”. If any such overlap exists, provide a complete description of overlaps or duplications between this proposal and any other federally funded project or application in regards to activities, costs, and time commitment of key personnel, as applicable. Provide a copy of any overlapping or duplicative proposal submitted to any other potential funding entity and identify when that proposal was submitted, to whom (entity name and program), and when you anticipate being notified of their funding decision. The statement and the description of overlap or duplication, when applicable, may be provided within the proposal or as a separate attachment to the application. If at any time a proposal is awarded funds that would be overlapping or duplicative of the funding requested from USGS, the applicant must immediately notify the USGS point of contact. Any overlap or duplication of funding between the proposed project and other active or anticipated projects may impact selection and/or funding amount.

### **D3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)**

**Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM.gov) Registration:** This requirement does not apply to individuals applying for funds as individual (i.e., unrelated to any business or nonprofit organization you may own or operate) or any entity with an exception approved by the funding bureau or office in accordance with bureau or office policy. All other applicants are required to obtain a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number from Dun & Bradstreet and then register in SAM.gov prior to submitting a Federal award application. Federal award recipients must continue to maintain an active SAM.gov registration with current information through the life of their Federal award(s). See the “Submission Requirements” section of this document below for more information on SAM.gov registration. We may not make a Federal award to an applicant that has not completed the SAM.gov registration. If an applicant selected for funding has not completed their SAM.gov registration by the time the program is ready to make an award, the program may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award. The program can use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant. **There is no cost to register with Dun & Bradstreet or SAM.gov.** There are third-party vendors who will charge a fee in exchange for registering entities with Dun & Bradstreet and SAM.gov; **please be aware you can register and request help for free.**

#### **Obtain a DUNS Number**

Request a DUNS Number through the Dun & Bradstreet website. For technical difficulties, send an email to the D&B SAM Help Desk. Please ensure that you are able to receive emails from [SAMHelp@dnb.com](mailto:SAMHelp@dnb.com). The Grants.gov “Obtain a DUNS Number” webpage also provides detailed instructions. Once assigned a DUNS number, your organization must maintain up-to-



date information with Dun & Bradstreet. Applicants must enter their DUNS number in the “Organizational DUNS” field on the SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance form.

### **Register with the System for Award Management (SAM)**

Register on the SAM.gov website. “Help” tab on the website contains User Guides and other information to assist you with registration. The Grants.gov Register with SAM page also provides detailed instructions. You can also contact the supporting Federal Service Desk for help registering in SAM. Once registered in SAM, entities must renew and revalidate their SAM registration at least once every 12 months from the date previously registered. Entities are strongly encouraged to revalidate their registration as often as needed to ensure their information is up to date and reflects changes that may have been to the entity’s DUNS or IRS information.

## **D4. Submission Dates and Times**

### **Due Date for Applications**

June 24, 2021

### **Application Due Date Explanation**

Applications including the full proposal must be submitted to grants.gov by the State Water Resources Research Institute or Center prior to the 5:00 PM Eastern Time June 24, 2021 closing date. Proposals must be submitted as a complete application package (Full Proposal, SF-424 and SF-424B, Matching commitment letter, budget breakdown, budget justification and budget summary) to grants.gov by the university that houses the State Water Institutes or Centers. **PI’s must coordinate with their respective State Water Institutes prior to submission to allow time for the Institute to meet the deadlines of this RFP.**

## **D5. Intergovernmental Review**

Prior to application submission, U.S. state and local government applicants should visit the [OMB Office of Federal Financial Management website](#) and view the “State Point of Contact (SPOC) List” to determine whether their application is subject to the state intergovernmental review process under Executive Order (E.O.) 12372 “Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs.” States not on the list do not participate in the intergovernmental review process, and therefore do not have a SPOC. If you are located within a State that does not have a SPOC, you may send application materials directly to a Federal awarding agency. If your state is on the list, contact the designated entity for more information on the state’s prior review requirements for Federal assistance applications.

## **D6. Funding Restrictions**

The Federal awarding agency that provides the largest amount of direct funding to your organization is your cognizant agency for indirect costs, unless otherwise assigned by the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB). If the Department of the Interior is your organization’s cognizant agency, the Interior Business Center will negotiate your indirect cost rate. Contact the Interior Business Center by phone 916-930-3803 or using the [IBC Email](#)



[Submission Form](#). See the [IBC Website](#) for more information.

Organizations must have an active Federal award before they can submit an indirect cost rate proposal to their cognizant agency. Failure to establish an approved rate during the award period renders all costs otherwise allocable as indirect costs unallowable under the award. Recipients must have prior written approval from USGS to use amounts budgeted for direct costs to satisfy cost-share or match requirements or to cover unallowable indirect costs. Recipients shall not shift unallowable indirect costs to another Federal award unless specifically authorized to do so by legislation.

### **Required Indirect Cost Statement to be submitted with Application**

All organizations must include the applicable statement from the following list in their application, and attach to their application any documentation identified in the applicable statement:

We are:

- A U.S. state or local government entity receiving more than \$35 million in direct Federal funding each year with an indirect cost rate of [insert rate]. We submit our indirect cost rate proposals to our cognizant agency. Attached is a copy of our most recently approved rate agreement/certification.
- A U.S. state or local government entity receiving less than \$35 million in direct Federal funding with an indirect cost rate of [insert rate]. We have prepared and will retain for audit an indirect cost rate proposal and related documentation.
- A [insert your organization type; U.S. states and local governments, do not use this statement] that has previously negotiated or currently has an approved indirect cost rate with our cognizant agency. Our indirect cost rate is [insert rate]. [Insert either: “Attached is a copy of our most recently approved but expired rate agreement. In the event an award is made, we will submit an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency within 90 calendar days after the award is made.” or “Attached is a copy of our current negotiated indirect cost rate agreement.”]
- A [insert your organization type] that has never submitted an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency. Our indirect cost rate is [insert rate]. If we receive an award, we will submit an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency within 90 calendar days after the award date.
- A [insert your organization type] that has never submitted an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency and has an indirect cost rate that is lower than 10%. Our indirect cost rate is [insert rate; must be lower than 10%]. However, if we receive an award we will not be able to meet the requirement to submit an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency within 90 calendar days after award. We request as a condition of award to charge a flat indirect cost rate of [insert rate; must be lower than 10%] against [insert a clear description of the direct cost base against which your rate is charged (e.g., salaries; salaries and fringe benefits; or modified total direct costs). However, please note that your organization cannot charge indirect costs in excess of the indirect costs that would be recovered if applied against modified total direct costs as defined in [§2 CFR 200.68](#)]. We understand that we must notify USGS in writing if we establish an approved rate with our cognizant agency at any point during the award period.

- A [insert your organization type] that has never submitted an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency and has an indirect cost rate that is 10% or higher. Our indirect cost rate is [insert your organization’s indirect rate; must be 10% or higher]. However, if we receive an award we will not be able to meet the requirement to submit an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency within 90 calendar days after award. We request as a condition of award to charge a flat *de minimis* indirect cost rate of 10% to be charged against modified total direct project costs as defined in [2 CFR §200.68](#). We understand that we must notify USGS in writing if we establish a negotiated rate with our cognizant agency at any point during the award period. We understand that additional Federal funds may not be available to support an unexpected increase in indirect costs during the project period and that such changes are subject to review, negotiation, and prior approval by USGS.
- A [insert your organization type] that is submitting this proposal for consideration under the “Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit Network”, which has a Department of the Interior-approved indirect cost rate cap of 17.5%. If we have an approved indirect cost rate with our cognizant agency, we understand that we must apply this reduced rate against the same direct cost base as identified in our approved indirect cost rate agreement per [2 CFR §1402.414](#). If we do not have an approved indirect cost rate with our cognizant agency, we understand that we must charge indirect costs against the modified total direct cost base defined in 2 CFR §200.68 “Modified Total Direct Cost (MTDC)”. We understand that we must request prior approval from USGS to use the 2 CFR 200 MTDC base instead of the base identified in our approved indirect cost rate agreement. We understand that USGS approval of such a request will be based on: 1) a determination that our approved base is only a subset of the MTDC (such as salaries and wages); and 2) that use of the MTDC base will still result in a reduction of the total indirect costs to be charged to the award. In accordance with 2 CFR §200.405, we understand that indirect costs not recovered due to a voluntary reduction to our federally negotiated rate are not allowable for recovery via any other means.
- A [insert your organization type] that will charge all costs directly.

Matching funds may contain indirect costs and non-federal salaries and benefits. The applicant’s negotiated indirect cost rate (NICR) may be applied to **both** qualifying federal and non-federal direct costs, and the result used to satisfy part of the matching requirement under the non-federal share. The NICR shall not be applied to tuition and equipment costs. **As per the Water Resources Research Act federal funds shall not be used to pay indirect costs.**

## D7. Other Submission Requirements

## E. Application Review Information

### E1. Criteria

Relevance and Importance

Maximum Points: 20

The statement of relevance and importance is a critical component of the proposal review process. Describe the water problem or issue of a regional or interstate nature of concern to more than one State and directly addresses a research priority. Document the magnitude of the situation and relevance of the issue/problem to state, regional and national issues. Why is this project/topic innovative and important? Does the proposal include collaboration with the USGS if appropriate?

**Scientific Merit**

**Maximum Points: 20**

The extent to which the proposal (1) has potential to expand fundamental knowledge through the stated goals and objectives; (2) is scientifically sound through the description of the research objectives; and (3) demonstrates cognizance of past work.

**Expected Results and Benefits**

**Maximum Points: 20**

The extent to which the proposal describes the how the potential outcomes and the potential realistic impacts of the proposed work.

**Information Transfer**

**Maximum Points: 10**

The extent the proposal actively addresses the eventual transfer of results to user groups how it will deliver the potential impacts of the research proposed.

**Training**

**Maximum Points: 10**

The extent to which the proposal has a strong educational component, provides for student support, and engages a principal investigator near the beginning of his or her career?

**Qualifications of the Investigators**

**Maximum Points: 10**

The extent to which the qualifications of the investigators are commensurate with the proposed research, and the adequacy of the facilities and equipment.

**Budget**

**Maximum Points: 10**

The extent to which the budget is reasonable and adequate for the work proposed. Note: the principal investigator's salary is an acceptable budget item, but the federal share of the salary should not exceed one or two months per year.

**E2. Review and Selection Process**

Proposals submitted by the Institutes are evaluated for completeness after the closing date by OAG in consultation with the USGS WRRRA Program staff. The WRRRA Program staff notifies institutes submitting unacceptable proposals that their proposals will not be further reviewed.

Only proposals submitted to grants.gov that meet the requirements of this announcement are considered and evaluated by a peer review panel composed of Institute directors, university scientists, and USGS employees experienced in water resources research. After conflicts of interest have been considered, each proposal is reviewed by at least three assigned reviewers. Each proposal is discussed by the panel and scored according to the criteria below. The proposal is assigned a panel member who is responsible for writing up the panel summary of the proposal evaluation. Panel summaries are sent to each Institute who submitted a proposal.

### **E3. CFR – Regulatory Information**

Refer to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Award Terms and Conditions for the general administrative and national policy requirements applicable to USGS awards. USGS will communicate any other program- or project-specific special terms and conditions to recipients in their Notice of Award.

### **E4. Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates**

## **F. Federal Award Administration Information**

### **F1. Federal Award Notices**

### **F2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

See the “[DOI Standard Terms and Conditions](#)” for the administrative and national policy requirements applicable to DOI awards.

Refer to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Award Terms and Conditions for the general administrative and national policy requirements applicable to USGS awards. The USGS will communicate any other program- or project-specific special terms and conditions to recipients in their Notice of Award.

#### **Data Availability**

Per the Financial Assistance Interior Regulation (FAIR), [2 CFR §1402.315](#):

(a) All data, methodology, factual inputs, models, analyses, technical information, reports, conclusions, valuation products or other scientific assessments in any medium or form, including textual, numerical, graphic, cartographic, narrative, or audiovisual, resulting from a financial assistance agreement is available for use by the Department of the Interior, including being available in a manner that is sufficient for independent verification.

(b) The Federal Government has the right to:

(1) Obtain, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the data, methodology, factual inputs, models, analyses, technical information, reports, conclusions, or other scientific assessments, produced under a Federal award; and

(2) Authorize others to receive, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use such data, methodology, factual inputs, models, analyses, technical information, reports, conclusions, or other scientific assessments, for Federal purposes, including to allow for meaningful third-party evaluation.

### **F3. Reporting**

#### **Financial Reports**

All recipients must use the [SF-425, Federal Financial Report](#) form for financial reporting. At a minimum, all recipients must submit a **final** financial report. Final reports are due no later than 90 calendar days after the award period of performance end date or termination date. For awards with periods of performance longer than 12 months, recipients are required to submit **interim** financial reports on the frequency established in the Notice of Award. The only exception to the interim financial reporting requirement is if the recipient is required to use the SF 270/271 to request payment and requests payment at least once annually through the entire award period of performance. We will describe all financial reporting requirements in the Notice of Award.

### **Performance Reports**

Performance reports must contain a comparison of actual accomplishments with the established goals and objectives of the award; a description of reasons why established goals were not met, if appropriate; and any other pertinent information relevant to the project results. Final reports are due no later than 90 calendar days after the award period of performance end date or termination date. For awards with periods of performance longer than 12 months, recipients are required to submit **interim** financial reports on the frequency established in the Notice of Award.

### **Significant Development Reports**

Events may occur between the scheduled performance reporting dates which have significant impact upon the supported activity. In such cases, recipients are required to notify the Bureau in writing as soon as the recipient becomes aware of any problems, delays, or adverse conditions that will materially impair the ability to meet the objective of the Federal award. This disclosure must include a statement of any corrective action(s) taken or contemplated, and any assistance needed to resolve the situation. The recipient should also notify USGS in writing of any favorable developments that enable meeting time schedules and objectives sooner or at less cost than anticipated or producing more or different beneficial results than originally planned.

### **Conflict of Interest Disclosures**

Recipients must notify the program immediately in writing of any conflict of interest that arise during the life of their Federal award, including those reported to them by any subrecipient under the award. Recipients must notify the program in writing if any employees, including subrecipient and contractor personnel, are related to, married to, or have a close personal relationship with any Federal employee in the Federal funding program or who otherwise may have been involved in the review and selection of the award. The term employee means any individual engaged in the performance of work pursuant to the Federal award. Recipients may not have a former Federal employee as a key project official, or in any other substantial role related to their award, whose participation put them out of compliance with the legal authorities addressing post-Government employment restrictions. See the [U.S. Office of Government Ethics website](#) for more information on these restrictions. USGS will examine each conflict of interest disclosure based on its particular facts and the nature of the project and will determine if a significant potential conflict exists. If it does, USGS will work with the recipient to determine an appropriate resolution. Failure to disclose and resolve conflicts of interest in a manner that satisfies USGS may result in any of the remedies described in 2 CFR 200.338 Remedies for Noncompliance, including termination of the award.

### **Other Mandatory Disclosures**

The Non-Federal entity or applicant for a Federal award must disclose, in a timely manner, in writing to the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity all violations of Federal criminal

law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting the Federal award. Non-Federal entities that receive a Federal award including the terms and conditions outlined in 2 CFR 200, Appendix XII—Award Term and Condition for Recipient Integrity and Performance Matters are required to report certain civil, criminal, or administrative proceedings to SAM. Failure to make required disclosures can result in any of the remedies described in 2 CFR 200.338 Remedies for Noncompliance, including suspension or debarment.

### **Reporting Matters Related to Recipient Integrity and Performance**

If the total value of your currently active grants, cooperative agreements, and procurement contracts from all Federal awarding agencies exceeds \$10,000,000 for any period of time during the period of performance of this Federal award, then you as the recipient during that period of time must maintain the currency of information reported to the System for Award Management (SAM) that is made available in the designated integrity and performance system (currently the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)) about civil, criminal, or administrative proceedings in accordance with Appendix XII to 2 CFR 200.

## **G. Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s)**

### **G1. Program Technical Contact**

For **programmatic technical assistance**, contact:

First Name:

Earl

Last Name:

Greene, Director, Water Resources Research Act Program

Address:

5522 Research Park Drive, Baltimore, MD 21228

Telephone:

571-332-4184

Email:

[eagreene@usgs.gov](mailto:eagreene@usgs.gov)

### **G2. Program Administration Contact**

For **program administration assistance**, contact:

First Name:

Sherri

Last Name:

Bredesen, Office of Acquisition and Grants

Address:

U.S. Geological Survey, 12201 Sunrise Valley Drive (MS 205), Reston, VA 20122

Telephone:  
703-648-7485  
Email:  
sbredesen@usgs.gov

### **G3. Application System Technical Support**

For **Grants.gov technical registration and submission, downloading forms and application packages**, contact:

Name:  
Grants.gov Customer Support  
Telephone:  
1-800-518-4726  
Email:  
Support@grants.gov

### **H. Other Information**

#### **Payments**

Domestic recipients are required to register in and receive payment through the U.S. Treasury's Automated Standard Application for Payments (ASAP), unless approved for a waiver by the USGS program. Foreign recipients receiving funds to a final destination bank outside the U.S. are required to receive payment through the U.S. Treasury's International Treasury Services (ITS) System. Foreign recipients receiving funds to a final destination bank in the U.S. are required to enter and maintain current banking details in their SAM.gov entity profile and receive payment through the Automated Clearing House network by electronic funds transfer (EFT). The Bureau will include recipient-specific instructions on how to request payment, including identification of any additional information required and where to submit payment requests, as applicable, in all Notices of Award.

#### **PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT STATEMENT:**

**OMB Control Number: 1028-0097, Expiration Date: 1/31/2023**

We are collecting this information in accordance with the program identified above. Your response is required to obtain or retain a benefit. We will use the information you provide to conduct a competitive review and select projects for funding and, if awarded, to evaluate performance. We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number. Public report burden for this collection is estimated to average 45 hours per grant application and 12 hours to prepare a final technical report. Actual time for these activities will vary depending on program- specific requirements. You may send comments on the burden estimate or any other aspect of this information collection to the Bureau Clearance Officer, U.S. Geological Survey, 12201 Sunrise Valley Drive, MS807, Reston VA 20192.