

**AGENCY:** ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA)  
**TITLE:** Consumer Recycling Education and Outreach (REO) Grant Program  
**ACTION:** Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)  
**FUNDING OPPORTUNITY NUMBER:** EPA-I-OLEM-ORCR-24-12  
**Assistance Listing No:** 66.921

**KEY DATES:**

NOFO OPENS	September 13, 2024
NOFO CLOSSES – APPLICATIONS DUE BY	December 20, 2024, 11:59 PM (EST)
COALITION MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT DUE BY	March 1, 2025
ANTICIPATED NOTIFICATION OF FUNDING SELECTION	March 2025
ANTICIPATED AWARD	September 2025

**APPLICATION SUBMISSION DEADLINE:** Application packages must be submitted electronically to the EPA through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) ([www.grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov)) no later than **December 20, 2024, at 11:59 p.m. (EST)** in order to be considered for funding.

**Note** – EPA discourages applicants from naming a contractor (including consultants) in your application as a “partner” or “collaborator.” Please carefully review Section IV.d. from EPA’s [Solicitation Clauses](#) regarding named contracts and subawards that are incorporated by reference in this announcement (refer to *Section III.D: Named Contractors*). EPA expects recipients of funding to comply with competitive procurement contracting requirements as well as EPA’s rule on Participation by Disadvantaged Business Enterprises in EPA Programs in [40 CFR Part 33](#). The Agency does not accept justifications for sole source contracts for services or products available in the commercial marketplace based on a contractor’s role in preparing an application or prior relationships with the contractor that were not established in compliance with competitive procurement requirements. Note that these competitive procurement requirements apply with equal force to contractual relationships established prior to or after the award of EPA funds.

**CONTENTS BY SECTION**

**SECTION I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION ..... 4**

- A. Background ..... 4
- B. Statutory/Regulatory Authority ..... 6
- C. Key Definitions ..... 6
- D. Program Vision and Goals ..... 8
- E. Project Labor Agreements ..... 9
- F. Scope of Work ..... 9
- G. Coalitions ..... 14
- H. General Environmental Results and EPA Strategic Plan Information ..... 15
- I. National Strategies Plan Linkage ..... 16
- J. Additional Provisions for Applicants Incorporated into the Solicitation ..... 16
- K. Minority Serving Institutions..... 16
- L. Measuring and Reporting Environmental Results: Evaluation, Outputs and Outcomes..... 17

**SECTION II. AWARD INFORMATION ..... 19**

- A. Funding Structure..... 19
- B. Type of Award..... 19
- C. Will Applications be Partially Funded?..... 19
- D. What is the Project Period for Awards Resulting from this Solicitation?..... 19

**SECTION III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION ..... 20**

- A. Eligible Applicants ..... 20
- B. Cost Share ..... 20
- C. Threshold Eligibility Criteria..... 21
- D. Named Contractors ..... 23
- E. Subrecipients ..... 24
- F. Ineligible Costs or Activities and Other Considerations ..... 25

**SECTION IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION..... 25**

- A. Requirements to Submit through Grants.gov and Limited Exception Procedures..... 25
- B. Submission Instructions ..... 26
- C. Technical Issues with Submission ..... 28
- D. Application Materials..... 28
- E. Project Narrative Attachment Form ..... 29

<b>F. Pre-Application Assistance .....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>G. Confidential Business Information.....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>SECTION V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION .....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>A. Evaluation Criteria .....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>B. Review and Selection Process .....</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>SECTION VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION .....</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>A. Award Notification.....</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements .....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>C. Use of Funds .....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>D. Program Income.....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>E. Disputes .....</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>F. Quality Management Plans (QMPs) &amp; Quality Assurance Project Plans (QAPPs) ...</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>G. Reporting Requirements .....</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>SECTION VII. AGENCY CONTACT .....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>APPENDIX A. GUIDELINES FOR A MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT FOR A COALITION .....</b>	<b>50</b>

## **SECTION I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION**

### **A. Background**

Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and other environmental impacts associated with goods result from the energy, land, and water used to produce, transport, consume, and dispose of them. Approximately 55 percent of global GHG emissions stem from the extraction and processing of materials, fuels, and food.<sup>1</sup> Reducing, reusing, recycling, and composting are strategies that can lessen the environmental impact of goods. Increasing recycling reduces climate, environmental, and social impacts of materials use, and keeps valuable resources in use instead of in landfills. Municipal solid waste management has long suffered from a lack of investment. Some communities that lack waste management infrastructure do not have recycling programs, which increases the burden on limited landfill capacity and increases greenhouse gas emissions.

Recycling refers to the series of activities by which materials, including organic materials, are collected, sorted, processed, and/or converted into raw materials to be used for new products. (Recycling excludes the use of materials solely as a fuel substitute or for energy production.) Composting is one way to recycle organic materials, including food waste. Composting transforms organic materials into a valuable soil amendment - compost - through a controlled, aerobic (oxygen-required) biological decomposition of the organic materials by microorganisms. More than one-third (nearly 100 million tons) of the United States (U.S.) municipal waste stream is organic waste, and of that, sixty-six million tons is wasted food.<sup>2</sup> Recycling organic waste (such as food scraps, wood, and yard waste) through composting will drive progress toward EPA's nationwide goal of a 50% recycling rate by 2030.<sup>3</sup> Education and outreach can expand participation in composting programs and reduce contamination in the compost stream, while significantly increasing the amount of residential solid waste recycled. Education and outreach can also expand the markets for compost use, building a more circular economy.

Recycling organic waste into a value-added product like compost not only keeps those nutrients circulating within the economy, but it also prevents additional greenhouse gas emissions. Food comprises nearly a quarter of landfilled municipal solid waste.<sup>4</sup> When food and other organics decompose in a landfill, they release methane, a powerful greenhouse gas. Food waste is responsible for 58% of the landfill methane emissions released to the atmosphere,<sup>5</sup> so preventing and diverting food waste from landfills is an effective strategy to reduce climate emissions.

In 2021, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) ([Public Law 117-58](#)), also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law or "BIL," was signed into law. The BIL supports EPA's implementation of the [National Recycling Strategy](#) through the Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling (SWIFR) Grant Program authorized by Section 302(a) of the Save Our Seas 2.0 Act ([Public Law 116-22](#)). Section

---

<sup>1</sup> Data from the 2024 Global Resources Outlook Report published by UN Environment.

<https://www.resourcepanel.org/reports/global-resources-outlook-2024>

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. (2020). Advancing sustainable materials management: 2018 fact sheet. EPA 530-F-20-009. [https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2021-01/documents/2018\\_ff\\_fact\\_sheet\\_dec\\_2020\\_fnl\\_508.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2021-01/documents/2018_ff_fact_sheet_dec_2020_fnl_508.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. U.S. National Recycling Goal. <https://www.epa.gov/circulareconomy/us-national-recycling-goal>

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. (2020). Advancing sustainable materials management: 2018 fact sheet. EPA 530-F-20-009. [https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2021-01/documents/2018\\_ff\\_fact\\_sheet\\_dec\\_2020\\_fnl\\_508.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2021-01/documents/2018_ff_fact_sheet_dec_2020_fnl_508.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. (2023). Quantifying methane emissions from landfilled food waste. EPA600-R-23-064. <https://www.epa.gov/land-research/quantifying-methane-emissions-landfilled-food-waste>

70402 of the BIL also authorized the Consumer Recycling Education and Outreach (REO) Grant Program, and EPA received \$75 million in funding for the REO grant program through the BIL. In 2023, EPA selected 25 awardees to receive the first round of REO funding and began awarding the funds in 2024.

In June 2024, the White House, along with EPA, USDA, and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration released the [National Strategy for Reducing Food Loss and Waste and Recycling Organics](#). The goal of this strategy is to prevent the loss and waste of food and increase recycling of organic materials to support a circular economy for all, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, save households and businesses money, and build healthier, cleaner communities.

For this second round of REO funding, EPA is focusing on preventing the generation of wasted food and increasing its recycling through composting. This NOFO aims to fund one grant that includes three projects:

- Project #1: Develop and Implement a National Consumer Wasted Food Reduction Campaign;
- Project #2: Expand the Market and Sales of Compost; and
- Project #3: Increase Education and Outreach to Households on Composting.

By first focusing on preventing wasted food and then on recycling the remaining food waste, people and the environment experience the greatest benefits. Preventing food from being wasted saves households money. The average family of four spends \$1,500 each year on food that ends up uneaten.<sup>6</sup> Of the approximately 66 million tons of wasted food that were generated in the food retail, food service, and residential sectors in 2019, about 40% was from households - almost all of which (96%) was landfilled, incinerated, or sent down the drain to the sewer system.<sup>7</sup> A recent study by MITRE-Gallup found that 89% of Americans believe that throwing away food is a waste of money and 53% of Americans feel that there are actions they can take to reduce food waste.<sup>8</sup>

Food waste prevention initiatives grounded in education and outreach can also improve the effectiveness of residential and community recycling programs, which include composting programs. When households reduce the amount of food that is going uneaten and being thrown away, they can also reduce the amount of contamination in source separated recyclables and increase recycling. For example, households practicing food waste prevention are more likely to recycle clean, empty food containers, rather than throwing away to landfills or improperly recycling containers heavily contaminated with food. Food waste prevention is particularly important in municipalities that currently do not have the ability to develop municipal composting infrastructure, but aim to divert waste from local landfills, increase uptake of separated recycling, and decrease contamination in the recycling stream.

This grant program is part of the Biden Administration's [Justice40 Initiative](#), which aims to deliver 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain federal climate, clean energy, affordable and sustainable

---

<sup>6</sup> Buzby, J. C., H. F. Wells, and J. Hyman. (2014). The estimated amount, value, and calories of postharvest food losses at the retail and consumer levels in the United States. U.S. Department of Agriculture. EIB 121. [https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/43833/43680\\_eib121.pdf](https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/43833/43680_eib121.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. (2023). 2019 wasted food report. EPA 530-R-23-005.

[https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2023-03/2019%20Wasted%20Food%20Report\\_508\\_opt\\_ec.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2023-03/2019%20Wasted%20Food%20Report_508_opt_ec.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> MITRE | Gallup. (2023). *The State of Food Waste in America*. <https://sites.mitre.org/household-food-waste/wp-content/uploads/sites/41/2023/11/The-State-of-Food-Waste-in-America-11-14-23.pdf>

housing, clean water, and other investments to disadvantaged communities. For more information on the Justice40 Initiative at the EPA, visit: [Justice40 at EPA](#).

## B. Statutory/Regulatory Authority

Section 70402 of the BIL established the “Consumer Recycling Education and Outreach Grant Program” (REO grants). The BIL provides EPA with \$75,000,000 for REO grants for Federal Fiscal Years 2022 through 2026 at \$15,000,000 per year. Pursuant to Section 70402(b) of the BIL, the purpose of the competitive REO grant program is to improve the effectiveness of residential and community recycling programs through public education and outreach. REO grants must:

- inform the public about residential or community recycling programs;
- provide information about the recycled materials that are accepted as part of a residential or community recycling program that provides for the separate collection of residential solid waste from recycled material; and
- increase collection rates and decrease contamination in residential and community recycling programs.

As provided in Section 70402(d)(2) of the BIL, EPA must allocate at least 20% of the funding Congress appropriated each fiscal year for:

- low-income communities;
- rural communities; and
- communities identified as Native American pursuant to section 2(9) of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (25 U.S.C. 3001(9)).

## C. Key Definitions

**Coalitions, Coalition Members, and Coalition Member Subrecipients:** A coalition is a special type of partnership, subject to subaward requirements, including the [EPA’s Subaward Policy for Assistance Agreement Recipients](#). For purposes of this grant program, a coalition is a group of two or more eligible applicants that share a strong and substantial commitment to the projects (e.g., financially, materially, or operationally) such that withdrawal by any single member from the coalition would fundamentally alter the design or expected outputs and outcomes of the projects. One entity must be responsible for the grant (i.e., the grant recipient/lead applicant) and the other entities would be brought on via subawards. For purposes of this NOFO, the entities brought on by subawards to be part of the coalition will be referred to as “coalition members” or “coalition member subrecipients.” All applications for this funding opportunity are required to be coalition applications. Please see *Section I.G: Coalitions, Section III.A: Eligible Applicants, Section III.C: Threshold Eligibility Criteria, and Section III.E: Subrecipients* for more information.

**Competitive Campaign Implementation Subrecipients:** subrecipients who receive subawards to implement campaigns locally. Please refer to *Section III.E: Subrecipients* for more information.

**Composting:** Composting is the managed, aerobic (oxygen-required), biological decomposition of organic (carbon-based) materials by microorganisms.

**Disadvantaged Community:** A disadvantaged community is a census tract identified by the [Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool](#) that is at or above the threshold for one or more environmental,

climate, or other burdens, and is at or above the threshold for an associated socioeconomic burden; or is a Federally Recognized Tribe.

**Environmental Justice (EJ):**

“Environmental justice” means the just treatment and meaningful involvement of all people, regardless of income, race, color, national origin, Tribal affiliation, or disability, in agency decision-making and other Federal activities that affect human health and the environment so that people:

- are fully protected from disproportionate and adverse human health and environmental effects (including risks) and hazards, including those related to climate change, the cumulative impacts of environmental and other burdens, and the legacy of racism or other structural or systemic barriers; and
- have equitable access to a healthy, sustainable, and resilient environment in which to live, play, work, learn, grow, worship, and engage in cultural and subsistence practices.

Disproportionate and adverse environmental, human health, climate-related and other cumulative impacts, as well the accompanying economic challenges of such impacts, may result when greater pollution burdens and/or consequences, and the impact of them, are more likely to affect or have affected communities described. The impacts may result from various factors including but not limited to being a function of historical trends and policy decisions.

Factors that may indicate disproportionate and adverse impacts as referenced above include: differential proximity and exposure to adverse environmental hazards; greater susceptibility to adverse effects from environmental hazards (due to causes such as age, chronic medical conditions, lack of health care access, or limited access to quality nutrition); unique environmental exposures because of practices linked to cultural background or socioeconomic status (for example, subsistence fishing or farming); cumulative effects from multiple stressors; reduced ability to effectively participate in decision-making processes (due to causes such as lack of or ineffective language access programs, lack of programs to make processes accessible to persons with disabilities, inability to access traditional communication channels, or limited capacity to access technical and legal resources); and degraded physical infrastructure, such as poor housing, poorly maintained public buildings (e.g., schools), or lack of access to transportation.

**Food Waste Composting:** In this NOFO, this term refers to composting of food waste along with other organic materials (e.g., yard and tree trimmings and other organic (carbon-based) materials in the waste stream).

**Low-Income Community:** A low-income community is defined as a community in which the median household income is at or below 200% of the Federal poverty level.

**Native American Community:** Communities identified as Native American pursuant to section 2(9) of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act will mean communities of, or relating to, a Tribe, people, or culture that is indigenous to the United States.

**Nonprofit Organization:** Consistent with the definition of nonprofit organization at 2 CFR 200.1, the term nonprofit organization means any corporation, trust, association, cooperative, or other organization that is operated mainly for scientific, educational, service, charitable, or similar purpose in the public

interest and is not organized primarily for profit; and uses net proceeds to maintain, improve, or expand the operation of the organization. The term includes tax-exempt nonprofit neighborhood and labor organizations. Eligible nonprofit organizations may, but are not required, to be exempt from taxation under section 501 of the Internal Revenue Code. Workforce Investment Boards and organized Labor Unions that meet these criteria may be eligible nonprofit organizations. Nonprofit colleges, universities and other institutions of higher education including minority serving institutions are also eligible to apply for funding under this NOFO as are public institutions of higher education that are agencies or instrumentalities of state, Tribal or local governments.

For-profit colleges, universities, trade schools, and hospitals are ineligible.

Nonprofit organizations that are not exempt from taxation under section 501 of the Internal Revenue Code must submit other forms of documentation of nonprofit status, such as certificates of incorporation as nonprofit under state or Tribal law. Nonprofit organizations exempt from taxation under section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that lobby are not eligible for EPA funding as provided in the Lobbying Disclosure Act, 2 U.S.C. 1611.

**Public-Private Partnership:** A public-private partnership (P3) is a formal relationship between a unit of government and a non-governmental organization (for-profit or nonprofit) that is memorialized in a legally binding document. The public-private partnership must have the authority to enter into binding legal agreements with the Federal government, an organizational structure that ensures accountability for the proper expenditure of Federal funds, and written agreements that specify which party or parties is liable for claims for recovery of unallowable costs incurred under Federal grants. Public-Private Partnership agreements must be in place at the time of application submission to be eligible for funding under this grant.

**Rural Communities:** One of the following:

- a) Local areas with populations of 50,000 or less that have limited access to public or private resources commonly found in metropolitan areas; or
- b) Community Network areas selected by the Rural Partners Network (See [rural.gov](http://rural.gov) for a complete list of communities).

**Statutory Set-Aside:** The amount per fiscal year that must be allocated to (A) low-income communities; (B) rural communities; and (C) communities identified as Native American pursuant to section 2(9) of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (25 U.S.C. 3001(9)), as specified in Section 70402(d)(2) of the BIL.

**Subrecipients:** Subrecipients receive subawards from the grant recipient. For purposes of this NOFO, the subrecipients brought on by subawards to be part of the coalition will be referred to as “coalition member subrecipients” or “coalition members” to distinguish them from the subrecipients who receive subawards to implement campaigns locally, who will be referred to as “competitive campaign implementation subrecipients.” The grant recipient may also choose to bring on other types of subrecipients via subaward. Please refer to *Section III. E: Subrecipients* for more information.

## **D. Program Vision and Goals**



This funding opportunity under the Recycling Education and Outreach grant program aims to fund projects that will meet the following objectives and reduce GHGs:

- Decrease wasted food from households (project #1);
- Expand markets for and sales of compost (project #2); and
- Inform the public about new or existing residential food waste composting programs; provide information about the materials that are accepted as part of a residential food waste composting program; and increase collection rates and decrease physical contamination in residential food waste composting programs (project #3).

**E. Project Labor Agreements**

EPA encourages project labor agreements (i.e., pre-hire collective bargaining agreements between unions and contractors that govern terms and conditions of employment for all workers on a construction project); the use of an appropriately trained workforce (i.e., through registered apprenticeships and other joint labor-management training programs that serve all workers, particularly those historically excluded); the use of an appropriately credentialed workforce (i.e., requirements for appropriate and relevant professional training, certification, and licensure); and neutrality with respect to union organizing (i.e., BIL funds should not support or oppose union organizing).

**F. Scope of Work**

Applications must include all three projects:

- Project #1: Develop and Implement a National Consumer Wasted Food Reduction Campaign;
- Project #2: Expand the Market and Sales of Compost; and
- Project #3: Increase Education and Outreach to Households on Composting.

These projects should demonstrate how they will meet the objectives listed in *Section I.D: Program Vision and Goals*.

The total amount of funding available under this funding opportunity is \$39,094,000. The budget for project #1 must be no less than \$30,000,000 and no more than \$34,094,000, and the budgets for projects #2 and #3 combined must be no less than \$5,000,000 and no more than \$9,094,000 in total.

<b>Project Number</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Funding Range</b>
1	Develop and Implement a National Consumer Wasted Food Reduction Campaign	Decrease wasted food from households	\$30,000,000 to \$34,094,000
2	Expand the Market and Sales of Compost	Expand markets for and sales of compost	\$5,000,000 to \$9,094,000 (combined)
3	Increase Education and Outreach to Households on Composting	Inform the public about new or existing residential food waste composting programs; provide information about the	

Project Number	Description	Objectives	Funding Range
		materials that are accepted as part of a residential food waste composting program; and increase collection rates and decrease physical contamination in residential food waste composting programs	

Applicants must demonstrate that they will subaward a portion of the total award funding to competitive campaign implementation subrecipients (see *Section I.C: Key Definitions*) to implement education and outreach locally for project #1 and #3, and they must plan to use a competitive process to select those subrecipients. Those competitive campaign implementation subrecipients could use the funds for staffing and local campaign implementation, including media planning and buying. Entities do not have to request a subaward from the grant recipient to implement campaigns locally, but some may wish to do so. For purposes of this NOFO, the subrecipients brought on by subawards to be part of the coalition that will administer the grant are referred to as “coalition member subrecipients” or “coalition members” to distinguish them from the subrecipients who receive subawards to implement education and outreach locally, who are referred to as “competitive campaign implementation subrecipients.” Coalition members would not be brought on via a competitive process.

In addition, under this announcement, the grant recipient must allocate 20% of the funding they are requesting to low income, rural, and Native American communities, in compliance with section 70402(d)(2) of the BIL. EPA is requiring that applicants meet this 20% allocation through subawards to entities that target authorized education and outreach activities to members of those communities. See *Section I.C: Key Definitions* for definitions for these communities and subrecipients.

EPA will evaluate applications based on the extent to which they describe a clear plan for how they will conduct a competitive subaward process for competitive campaign implementation subrecipients, taking into account the 20% statutory set aside requirements; how they will ensure the subaward process is accessible to low income, rural and Native American communities and the entities that serve them; and how they will ensure competitive campaign implementation subawards will be distributed geographically across the U.S. and ensure that the total amount allocated to competitive campaign implementation subawards will go beyond the 20% statutory set aside requirements. Applications that allocate more than 20% of the total amount requested are more likely to receive a higher evaluation score (see evaluation criterion #6 in *Section V.A: Evaluation Criteria*).

Additionally, because the Justice40 Initiative sets a goal that 40% of the overall benefits of certain federal climate, clean energy, and other investments flow to disadvantaged communities, which is defined in *Section I.C. Key Definitions* for the purposes of this NOFO, applicants must demonstrate in their proposals that 40% of the overall benefits created by the projects funded in this assistance agreement will flow to disadvantaged communities. This could be achieved via:

- subawards from the grant recipient to subrecipients whose work benefits disadvantaged communities;

- targeted outreach and use of media channels as part of campaigns that ensure members of disadvantaged communities receive campaign messages and information about saving money by wasting less food while also benefitting communities at large by diverting waste from local landfills;
- targeted outreach to disadvantaged communities aimed at increasing their participation in composting programs and reducing contamination in the compost stream, which can result in cleaner, more valuable compost available to disadvantaged communities; or
- promoting the development and sale of compost to realize economic, environmental and community benefits in disadvantaged communities (such as green jobs or building soil health).

These activities, in communities located in a U.S. Territory (Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands), will also count towards the Justice40 goal.

Funding requirements for this NOFO are summarized in the following table:

<b>Project #</b>	<b>What are the requirements for the overall budget per project?</b>	<b>Are subawards required to implement outreach and education locally?*</b>	<b>How is the 20% set aside required to be met?</b>
Project #1	Not less than \$30,000,000 and not more than \$34,094,000.	Yes, and they must be competitive.	At least 20% of the total funding requested will be allocated to low income, rural, and Native American communities through subawards to entities that target authorized education and outreach activities to members of those communities.
Project #2	Not less than \$5,000,000 and not more than \$9,094,000 (in total for both Project #2 and Project #3).	Allowed but not required.	
Project #3		Yes, and they must be competitive.	
Total budget	Not less than \$35,000,000 and not more than \$39,094,000	-	-

\* Applications that allocate more than 20% of the total amount requested to competitive campaign implementation subawards are more likely to receive a higher evaluation score (see evaluation criterion #6 in *Section V.A. Evaluation Criteria*).

### **Project #1: Develop and Implement a National Consumer Wasted Food Reduction Campaign**

The objective of this project is to decrease wasted food from households, by developing and implementing a national consumer campaign aimed at helping consumers reduce wasted food in their households. EPA will evaluate the extent to which applicants root the design and implementation of

such a national campaign in social marketing principles in accordance with *Section V.A. Evaluation Criteria*. The campaign should be a cohesive and coordinated effort where consistent messages are delivered to consumers through a variety of channels, implementers, and collaborators. While consistent messaging is important, EPA strongly encourages applicants to develop the campaign in a way that allows for local implementers to customize materials and messaging to fit their needs. A coordinated effort will help all involved entities be more effective and efficient with the resources they invest.

### **Campaign Design**

EPA will evaluate applicants on the extent that they address the following elements in the design of the national campaign, in accordance with *Section V.A. Evaluation Criteria*. Applicants may also propose other elements as necessary.

- The campaign purpose, goals, and objectives describe why the campaign is being developed, what the campaign is trying to achieve, and what needs to occur to achieve the goals.
- Priority audiences refers to the audiences that the campaign is working to reach. For REO grant applicants, the priority audiences include those groups of people who are more likely to practice behaviors that waste more food (or whose type of food waste has the greatest environmental impact) and are likely to be more open to adopting new behaviors. Grant applicants should describe how they would build on existing audience segmentation research to identify priority audiences for the campaign, being mindful to take equity considerations into account in priority audience selection. Grant applicants should describe how they would include an emphasis in campaign development on lower income families who stand to receive the most economic benefit from preventing wasted food.
- Grant applicants should also outline a plan to *transcreate* materials, which involves going beyond literal translation and considering the cultural context, making sure materials are culturally specific and relevant. Transcreation is especially important when drafting materials for Spanish-speakers and other limited English proficient (LEP) populations.
- EPA is committed to providing equitable access to Information and Communication Technology for all. Applicants should outline plans to provide equitable access to outreach campaign materials. As the campaign evolves, equity considerations may continue to shift and expand. EPA strongly encourages grant applicants to encourage entities that will be implementing the campaign locally to consider equity and LEP in their planning and priority audience decision-making.
- Desired behavior changes are those that can be promoted through interventions. EPA strongly encourages applicants to describe how they would categorize behavior changes based on their impact and on the probability of change (i.e., the likelihood of adoption).
- Barriers, benefits, and motivators. Barriers reduce the probability of the priority audience engaging in the desired behavior. Barriers can include a lack of awareness of the problem of wasted food and/or lack of awareness that people waste food themselves. Other barriers include lack of time/busy lifestyles and lack of knowledge around cooking skills, proper storage, date labels, etc. Benefits are what will be delivered to the audience if they practice the behavior. Motivators are what will move the audience to act to change their behaviors.
- Collaborator recruitment. A successful campaign will include a significant focus and effort on getting a wide range of national and local collaborators from both the private and public sector engaged with the campaign who can amplify each other's efforts to create greater change. Consumers should see the cohesive campaign at multiple touchpoints from brands they trust, lending gravity and credibility to the messaging. Collaborators can include funders,

implementers, allies, and messengers. Applicants should describe what strategies they would use to recruit collaborators in campaign development. While collaborators support successful campaign implementation, they should not be confused with coalition member subrecipients; in addition, some collaborators may wish to seek funding as competitive campaign implementation subrecipients, but the term “collaborator” encompasses many more entities than only those who seek subawards for implementation.

- Messages and materials. In social marketing campaigns, consistent campaign messages should help drive the desired behavior changes by presenting compelling calls to action and overcoming audience barriers by emphasizing the benefits of taking that action. Materials and collateral (e.g., advertisements, factsheets, guides, and social media posts) should deliver those messages.

### **Campaign Development and Implementation**

Applicants should plan to conduct the campaign at the national level and act as a resource for collaborators helping to implement the campaign. EPA will evaluate applications on the extent to which they address the following development and implementation activities, in accordance with *Section V.A: Evaluation Criteria*. Applicants may also propose other elements as necessary.

- Campaign development: strategic planning, initial collaborator development, creating an advisory board of key people with a deep level of expertise in wasted food prevention, campaign creative and materials development, website development, and creating a toolkit for collaborators.
- Campaign research: addressing audience segmentation; consumer awareness, attitudes and self-reported behaviors related to wasted food prevention; and other research necessary to help inform the creation and iterations of the campaign. Applicants should take into account relevant existing research and stay abreast of relevant research underway.
- Campaign implementation: media planning and buying, media relations, national promotions, social media, and local community and collaborator implementation support.
- Campaign maintenance: creative campaign and material updates, collaborator coordination and recruitment, website maintenance and project management.

Applicants must provide funding for local campaign implementation via subawards and must describe their approach to making subawards via a competitive process (as referenced in this section).

### **Project #2: Expand the Market and Sales of Compost**

The objective of this project is to expand the market and sales of compost by expanding the demand for and use of compost in applications outside of agriculture. The effectiveness and environmental benefits of compost in agriculture are well-understood; however, there is less awareness about the effectiveness and environmental benefits in other settings. These settings represent substantial potential for growth in the market for compost. Examples of non-agricultural uses include but are not limited to green infrastructure to limit erosion and protect water quality, restoration of disturbed soils, and remediation of contaminated sites. EPA will evaluate applications, in accordance with *Section V.A: Evaluation Criteria*, on the extent to which they provide a clear plan for how to conduct outreach and education promoting the use of compost in non-agricultural applications to decision-makers who could effectively achieve their objectives by using compost. Decision-makers may include businesses (e.g., construction or remediation companies); state, local, or Tribal agencies; and community organizations. By expanding

demand for and use of compost, EPA expects to increase organics recycling and harness the climate change benefits of composting and compost application.

### **Project #3: Increase Education and Outreach to Households on Composting**

The objectives of this project are to inform the public about new or existing residential food waste composting programs; provide information about the materials that are accepted as part of a residential food waste composting program; and increase collection rates and decrease contamination in residential food waste composting programs. These objectives will be attained by increasing education and outreach to households on composting.

For this project, EPA will evaluate, in accordance with *Section V.A: Evaluation Criteria*, the extent to which the applicants provide a clear plan for how to provide technical assistance and financial support for implementation to entities to implement education and outreach campaigns that will help them increase collection rates and decrease contamination. Assistance could include providing expertise in behavioral science, social marketing, and measurement/evaluation. EPA strongly encourages applicants to rely on existing toolkits and customizable campaigns such as [EPA's Composting Food Scraps in Your Community: A Social Marketing Toolkit](#) rather than creating new campaign materials. Applicants must subaward a portion of the total award funding to competitive campaign implementation subrecipients to implement education and outreach locally and must describe their approach for a competitive process to select those subrecipients (see *Section V.A: Evaluation Criteria*).

#### **Activities**

Activities funded under this grant **may include (but are not limited to)**:

- public service announcements;
- door-to-door education and outreach campaigns;
- social media and digital outreach;
- an advertising campaign on food waste reduction or composting;
- translation and transcreation of outreach materials;
- the development and dissemination of
  - (i) a toolkit for implementation of outreach and education programs;
  - (ii) information on the importance of quality in the composting stream;
  - (iii) information on the economic and environmental benefits of food waste reduction and composting; and
  - (iv) information on what happens to materials after the materials are placed into a residential composting program;
- businesses composting outreach; and
- bin, cart, and other receptacle labeling and signs.

#### **G. Coalitions**

A range of expertise is needed to develop and implement a national wasted food reduction campaign, including social marketing, behavioral science, media relations, creative development, website development, materials/collateral creation, collaborator recruitment and development, local campaign implementation support, and campaign evaluation. Specialized expertise in wasted food prevention is

also needed, including an understanding of drivers of behaviors that result in wasting food, and of barriers to adopting behaviors to prevent wasted food. Additional expertise is needed to develop and expand compost markets and to assist entities in doing outreach and education on composting to households. Therefore, EPA will accept applications only from coalitions, not individual applicants. EPA will evaluate the extent to which coalition members have the necessary experience and expertise to successfully carry out all three projects.

One entity must be the primary applicant (“lead applicant”) and recipient of the grant (“grant recipient”), responsible for any grant awarded under this program. Coalition applications must identify which applicant will be the grant recipient and which eligible applicant(s) will be subrecipient(s) of the award (“coalition members”). All coalition members must be listed as subrecipients, except the eligible applicant that will be the lead applicant. Subawards must be consistent with the definition of that term in 2 CFR 200.1 and comply with [EPA’s Subaward Policy for EPA Assistance Agreement Recipients](#). The grant recipient that administers the grant and subawards will be accountable to EPA for proper expenditure of the funds and reporting and will be the point of contact for the coalition. As provided in 2 CFR 200.332, all subrecipients are accountable to the grant recipient for proper use of EPA funding and the grant recipient is required to report on their subaward monitoring activities under 2 CFR 200.332(d). Please note that if an identified coalition member withdraws from an application after the submission deadline, it may impact the evaluation and/or selection of the application.

Any contracts for services or products funded with EPA financial assistance must be awarded under the competitive procurement procedures of 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 1500, as applicable. The regulations at 2 CFR 1500.10 contain limitations on the extent to which EPA funds may be used to compensate individual consultants. Applicants should not name a procurement contractor (including a consultant) as a “partner” or “collaborator” in the application unless the contractor has been selected in compliance with competitive procurement requirements. In accordance with 2 CFR 200.320 (2) and (4), EPA does not accept justifications for sole source contracts for services or products available in the commercial marketplace based on a contractor’s role in preparing an application or existing relationships that an applicant may have established without complying with competitive procurement requirements. Refer to the [Best Practice Guide for Procuring Services, Supplies, and Equipment Under EPA Assistance Agreements](#) for guidance on competitive procurement requirements and consultant compensation. Successful applicants that do not name procurement contractors in their applications must also comply with these requirements, regardless of if the contractor was procured before or after the EPA grant agreement is awarded. For example, firms or individual consultants that develop or draft specifications, requirements, statements of work, or invitations for bids or requests for proposals must be excluded from competing for such procurements as provided in 2 CFR 200.319(b).

Please see *Section I.C: Key Definitions* and *Section III.A: Eligible Applicants* for more information.

## **H. General Environmental Results and EPA Strategic Plan Information**

Pursuant to Section 6.a. of EPA Order 5700.7A1, “Environmental Results under EPA Assistance Agreements,” EPA must link proposed assistance agreements with the Agency’s Strategic Plan. EPA also requires that grant applicants and recipients adequately describe environmental outputs and outcomes to be achieved under assistance agreements (see [EPA Order 5700.7A1, Environmental Results under Assistance Agreements](#)).

The activities to be funded under this solicitation support the EPA's [FY 2022-2026 Strategic Plan](#). Awards made under this solicitation will directly support Goal 6: Safeguard and Revitalize Communities, Objective 6.2: Reduce Waste and Prevent Environmental Contamination of the [Strategic Plan](#). All applications must be for projects that support this goal and objectives.

## **I. National Strategies Plan Linkage**

### **National Recycling Strategy**

The activities to be funded under this solicitation support the [National Recycling Strategy](#). Awards made under this solicitation will support one or more of the following objectives of this strategy:

- Objective A: Improve Markets for Recycled Commodities,
- Objective B: Increase Collection and Improve Materials Management Infrastructure,
- Objective C: Reduce Contamination in the Recycled Materials Stream,
- Objective D: Enhance Policies and Programs to Support Circularity, and
- Objective E: Standardize Measurement and Increase Data Collection.

### **National Strategy for Reducing Food Loss and Waste and Recycling Organics**

The activities to be funded under this solicitation support the [National Strategy for Reducing Food Loss and Waste and Recycling Organics](#). Awards made under this solicitation will support the following objectives of this strategy:

- Objective 2.A: Develop, launch, and run a national consumer education and behavior change campaign.
- Objective 2.C: Partner with the private sector to find upstream solutions to consumer food waste.
- Objective 3.A: Support the development of additional organics recycling infrastructure through grants and other assistance for all communities, especially those that are underserved.
- Objective 3.B: Expand the market for products made from recycled organic waste.
- Objective 3. E: Address contamination in the organic waste recycling stream.

## **J. Additional Provisions for Applicants Incorporated into the Solicitation**

Additional provisions that apply to *Section III: Eligibility Information*, *Section IV: Application and Submission Information*, *Section V: Application Review Information*, and *Section VI: Award Administration Information* of this solicitation and/or awards made under this solicitation, can be found at the [EPA Solicitation Clauses](#). These provisions are important for applying to this solicitation and applicants must review them when preparing applications for this solicitation. If you are unable to access these provisions electronically at the website above, please contact the EPA point of contact listed in this solicitation (in *Section VII: Agency Contact*) to obtain the provisions.

## **K. Minority Serving Institutions**

State colleges and universities, including those that are state Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs), are eligible for funding as part of a coalition and must include in their applications proof of eligibility as an entity that is a nonprofit or an agency or instrumentality of a state depending on state law. Eligibility to apply for funding under this solicitation is discussed in more detail in *Section III.A: Eligible Applicants*.



EPA seeks to expand the environmental conversation by including members of communities which may have not previously participated in such dialogues to participate in EPA programs. For this reason, the EPA strongly encourages all eligible applicants identified in *Section III: Eligibility Information*, including state nonprofit Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) that meet the definition of a nonprofit or an “agency or instrumentality” of a state, to apply under this opportunity.

For purposes of this solicitation, the following are considered MSIs:

1. Historically Black Colleges and Universities, as defined by the Higher Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 1061(2)). A list of these schools can be found at [Historically Black Colleges and Universities](#);
2. Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), as defined by the Higher Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 1059c(b)(3) and (d)(1)). A list of these schools can be found at [American Indian Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities](#);
3. Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), as defined by the Higher Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 1101a(a)(5)). A list of these schools can be found at [Hispanic-Serving Institutions](#).
4. Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions; (AANAPISIs), as defined by the Higher Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 1059g(b)(2)). A list of these schools can be found at [Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions](#); and
5. Predominately Black Institutions (PBIs), as defined by the Higher Education Act of 2008, 20 § U.S.C. 1059e(b)(6). A list of these schools can be found at [Predominately Black Institutions](#).

#### **L. Measuring and Reporting Environmental Results: Evaluation, Outputs and Outcomes**

Pursuant to EPA Order 5700.7 “*Environmental Results under EPA Assistance Agreements*,” EPA requires that all grant applicants and recipients adequately address environmental outputs and outcomes. Outputs and outcomes differ both in their nature and in how they are measured. EPA requires that all grant applicants and recipients adequately address environmental outputs and outcomes in the Project Narrative Attachment Form (see *Section IV.E: Project Narrative Attachment Form*). To assist with reporting, EPA has created “[EPA Recycling Education and Outreach Grant \(Round 2\): A Quick Reference Guide for Evaluating Progress and Reporting Achievements Over Time](#).” The guide provides an overview of how to measure progress in carrying out actions and activities and achieve results during the grant performance period.

All semi-annual reports and the final technical report will be submitted through the Grantee Portal of EPA’s Grant Management System. This system will help EPA monitor the recipient’s progress with implementing their project and directly supports the continuation of the REO program by highlighting measurable accomplishments and progress to the public and Congress.

#### **Evaluation Activities**

EPA will assess an applicant’s approach to measuring environmental results in accordance with *Section V.A. Evaluation Criteria*. The evaluation component of this grant is essential. Applicants should incorporate program evaluation activities from the outset of their program design and implementation to meaningfully document and measure their progress towards meeting project goals. Applications may include funding in the budget for personnel with expertise in planning, designing, developing, implementing, and evaluating programs.

A note about surveys: if the applicant intends to use EPA funds to develop and administer surveys or other information collections subject to 5 CFR 1320 for feedback, compliance with the OMB regulations implementing Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) by EPA will be necessary. Compliance with the OMB PRA regulations will require a considerable amount of time. Therefore, EPA strongly encourages applicants to obtain other sources of funding to develop and administer robust and replicable evaluation activities (e.g., surveys, focus groups, etc.). EPA funds can be used to evaluate survey results and do other types of evaluation and measurement.

**Outputs.** The term “output” means an environmental activity, effort, and/or associated work product related to an environmental goal and objective that will be produced or provided over a specified period of time or by a specified date. Outputs may be quantitative or qualitative but must be measurable during an assistance agreement funding period.

**Outcomes.** The term “outcome” means the result, effect, or consequence that will occur from carrying out an environmental program or activity that is related to an environmental or programmatic goal or objective. Outcomes may be qualitative and environmental, behavioral, health-related, or programmatic in nature. Applications must include a description of anticipated project outcomes resulting from the project outputs, even if the outcome to be achieved is beyond the assistance agreement funding period. Include the quantitative target associated with the outcome, as appropriate.

**Grant recipients must report the following outputs and outcomes as a result of activities funded with the grant in semi-annual performance reports required under 2 CFR 200.329:**

- Extent of outreach and engagement (for example, number of communities in which outreach campaigns are implemented, including disadvantaged communities (as defined in *Section I.C: Key Definitions*) and/or U.S. Territories; number of people reached by ads during campaigns; number of educational materials distributed; number of social media engagements; number of collaborators involved in campaigns; number of people or groups reached who make decisions as to whether to purchase compost for non-ag uses).
- Change in the amount of household food waste being discarded nationally and in communities who implement consumer wasted food campaigns locally and GHG emissions reduced (in MTCO<sub>2e</sub>).
- Change in the percent of compost and compost products sold for non-agricultural uses in an area where outreach and education is conducted on use of compost in applications outside of agriculture.
- Change in the amount of food waste recycled through composting in communities where campaigns are implemented.
- Change in the participation rate of the food waste composting program in communities where campaigns are implemented.
- Reduction of physical contamination in the food waste composting stream in communities where campaigns are implemented.
- Number of temporary or permanent jobs created.

Grant recipients may also report on additional outputs and outcomes as a result of activities funded with the grant. In their Performance Measurement Plan, applicants should describe how they plan to track and measure their project implementation and progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes, including those identified above, throughout the performance period.

Generally, higher quality performance measurement plans include specific target metrics for both outputs and outcomes. The applicant's performance measurement plan should help gather insights, will be a mechanism to track progress toward output and outcome objectives, and may provide the basis for developing lessons learned to inform future funding recipients.

## **SECTION II. AWARD INFORMATION**

### **A. Funding Structure**

The total funding for this competitive opportunity is approximately \$39,094,000. EPA anticipates awarding only one award that includes all three projects. The EPA also reserves the right to reject all applications and make no awards.

### **B. Type of Award**

The EPA intends to award one cooperative agreement under this solicitation. Cooperative agreements provide for substantial involvement between the EPA and the selected applicant(s) in the performance of the work supported. Although the EPA will negotiate precise terms and conditions relating to substantial involvement as part of the award process, the anticipated substantial federal involvement for this award may include:

- close monitoring of the successful applicant's performance to verify the results proposed by the applicant;
- collaboration during performance of the scope of work;
- in accordance with 2 CFR 200.317 and 2 CFR 200.318, review of proposed procurement solicitations;
- approving qualifications of key personnel (EPA will not select employees or contractors employed by the award recipient); and
- reviewing and commenting on reports prepared under the cooperative agreement (the final decision on the content of reports rests with the recipient).

### **C. Will Applications be Partially Funded?**

In appropriate circumstances, the EPA reserves the right to partially fund applications by funding discrete portions or phases of proposed projects. If the EPA decides to partially fund an application, it will do so in a manner that does not prejudice any applicants or affect the basis upon which the application, or portion thereof, was evaluated and selected for award, and therefore maintains the integrity of the competition and selection process.

### **D. What is the Project Period for Awards Resulting from this Solicitation?**

The estimated start date for projects resulting from this solicitation is **September 2025**. All project activities must be completed within the negotiated project performance period of five years.

## **SECTION III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

Note: Additional provisions that apply to this section can be found at [EPA Solicitation Clauses](#).

### **A. Eligible Applicants**

#### **Coalitions:**

EPA requires all applications for this funding opportunity be coalition applications. The lead applicant for any coalition application selected for award will be required to submit a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) signed by all coalition members prior to receiving the award. The MOA does not need to be submitted at the time of application, but the lead applicant shall submit the MOA signed by all coalition members by March 1, 2025, to [RecyclingED@epa.gov](mailto:RecyclingED@epa.gov). To demonstrate the other members' commitment to the coalition, the lead applicant must include in their application a signed letter of intent from each coalition member stating the member's intent to sign the MOA if the coalition application is selected. Please note that if an identified coalition member withdraws from an application after the submission deadline, it may impact the evaluation and/or selection of the application.

See *Appendix A: Guidelines for a Memorandum of Agreement for a Coalition* for guidance on recommended elements of an MOA. Failure of the lead applicant to submit the coalition's signed MOA in a timely manner may impact EPA's ability to award the grant if the coalition application is selected. See *Section I.G: Coalitions* for more information about coalition coverage. Reference *Section I.C: Key Definitions* for more information on coalitions.

The lead applicants and members of the coalition eligible to receive a grant under the grant program must be—

- a U.S. State, including the District of Columbia;
- Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and any agency or instrumentality thereof;
- a unit of local government as defined in the *Local government* provision of 2 CFR 200.1;
- an Indian Tribe (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304));
- a Native Hawaiian organization (as defined in section 6207 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7517));
- the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands;
- the Office of Hawaiian Affairs;
- a nonprofit organization; or
- a public-private partnership.

### **B. Cost Share**

Applicants may not propose a voluntary committed cost share under this NOFO. Applicants are to only include activities that EPA will fund in the workplan and costs for those activities in budgets. Voluntary committed cost share described in work plans or budgets will not be accepted by EPA or evaluated. EPA may contact the applicant to identify the cost share component that will be disregarded during evaluation. If an application is submitted that includes voluntary committed cost share, that portion of

the application will not be evaluated. If the voluntary cost share portion of the application is so integrated into the workplan it cannot feasibly be disregarded during evaluation, it may not be possible to evaluate the application for funding.

Only Federal funds should be included in the SF-424, SF-424A, and Budget Table and Description.

### **C. Threshold Eligibility Criteria**

These are requirements that if not met by the time of application submission will result in elimination of the application from consideration for funding. Only applications from eligible applicants (refer to *Section III.A: Eligible Applicants*) that meet all of these criteria will be evaluated against the ranking criteria in *Section V.A. Evaluation Criteria*. If necessary, the EPA may contact applicants to clarify threshold eligibility questions prior to making an eligibility determination. An applicant will be deemed ineligible if any one of the coalition members is ineligible. Applicants deemed ineligible for funding consideration due to the threshold eligibility review will be notified within 15 calendar days of the ineligibility determination.

The threshold eligibility criteria are:

1. Applications must address all the mandatory objectives described in *Section I.D: Program Vision and Goals* and *Section I.F: Scope of Work* of this NOFO:
  - Decrease wasted food from households (project #1);
  - Expand markets for and sales of compost (project #2); and
  - Inform the public about new or existing residential food waste composting programs; provide information about the materials that are accepted as part of a residential food waste composting program; and increase collection rates and decrease physical contamination in residential food waste composting programs (project #3).
2. Applications must include all three projects described in *Section I.F: Scope of Work* of this NOFO:
  - Project #1: Develop and Implement a National Consumer Wasted Food Reduction Campaign;
  - Project #2: Expand the Market and Sales of Compost; and
  - Project #3: Increase Education and Outreach to Households on Composting.
3. All applications for this funding opportunity are required to be coalition applications.
4. Named Contractors. The EPA advises against naming contractors (including consultants and brand-name equipment) in applications for REO grant funding. However, if an applicant chooses to identify a procurement contractor(s) to conduct work proposed in this application, the applicant must demonstrate compliance with the requirements in *Section III.D: Named Contractors*, even if the entity is referred to as a “partner” or “collaborator” in the application.
5. Federal funds requested must be no less than \$35,000,000 and no more than \$39,094,000. Applications requesting federal assistance funding in excess of \$39,094,000 will not be considered.

6. Applicants must clearly demonstrate that the budget for project #1 is no less than \$30,000,000, and no more than \$34,094,000, and the budgets for projects #2 and #3 combined are no less than \$5,000,000 and no more than \$9,094,000 in total.
7. Applicants must demonstrate that a portion of the total award funding will be administered as subawards to competitive campaign implementation subrecipients (see *Section I.C: Key Definitions, Section I.F: Scope of Work, and Section III. E: Subrecipients*) to implement education and outreach locally for projects #1 and #3. Applicants must describe their approach for a competitive process to select competitive campaign implementation subrecipients to implement education and outreach locally. (For purposes of this NOFO, the subrecipients brought on by subawards to be part of the coalition will be referred to as “coalition member subrecipients” or “coalition members” to distinguish them from the “competitive campaign implementation subrecipients” who receive subawards to implement education and outreach locally.)
8. **Statutory Requirement.** Applicants must demonstrate how they will ensure that 20% of the funding they are requesting will be allocated for subawards to entities (i.e., competitive campaign implementation subrecipients) that target authorized education and outreach activities to members of for low income, rural, and Native American communities. See *Section I.C: Key Definitions* for definitions for these communities and subrecipients and *Section I.F: Scope of Work*.
9. **Justice40.** Applications must demonstrate that they commit to ensuring that 40% of overall benefits created by the projects funded in this assistance agreement would flow to disadvantaged communities and/or U.S Territories. Applications must include a statement in the application describing their approach to meeting this goal. See *Section I.C: Key Definitions* and *Section I.F: Scope of Work*.
10. Applications must demonstrate that the lead applicant and any named coalition member subrecipients are eligible entities under this NOFO. See *Section III.A. Eligible Entities*.
11. Applications must substantially comply with the application submission instructions and requirements set forth in *Section IV: Application and Submission Information* of this solicitation or else they will be rejected. However, where a page limit is expressed in *Section IV: Application and Submission Information* with respect to the application, or parts thereof, pages in excess of the page limitation will not be reviewed. Applicants are advised that readability is of paramount importance and should take precedence in application format, including selecting a legible font type and size for use in the application. **Please note, the Budget Table and Description are different than the SF-424A form. Both are required to be completed as part of the application.**
12. In addition, initial applications must be submitted through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) as stated in *Section IV: Application and Submission Information* of this solicitation (except in the limited circumstances where another mode of submission is specifically allowed for as explained in *Section IV: Application and Submission Information* ) on or before the application submission deadline published in *Section IV: Application and Submission Information* of this solicitation. Applicants are responsible for following the submission instructions in *Section IV: Application and*

*Submission Information* of this solicitation to ensure that their application is timely submitted. **Please note that applicants experiencing technical issues with submitting through Grants.gov should follow the instructions provided in *Section IV: Application and Submission Information*, which include both the requirement to contact Grants.gov and email a full application to EPA prior to the deadline.**

13. Applications submitted outside of Grants.gov will be deemed ineligible without further consideration unless the applicant can clearly demonstrate that it was due to EPA mishandling or technical problems associated with [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) or [SAM.gov](https://www.sam.gov). An applicant's failure to timely submit their application through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) because they did not timely or properly register in [SAM.gov](https://www.sam.gov) or [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) will not be considered an acceptable reason to consider a submission outside of Grants.gov. Proof of EPA mishandling or technical problems with Grants.gov or SAM.gov must be submitted to [RecyclingEd@epa.gov](mailto:RecyclingEd@epa.gov) before the application deadline along with all required application materials.
14. Ineligible activities: If an application is submitted that includes the use of EPA funds for any ineligible tasks or activities as referenced in *Section III.F. Ineligible Costs or Activities and Other Considerations*, that portion of the application will be ineligible for funding and may, depending on the extent to which it affects the application, render the entire application ineligible for funding.

The EPA may clarify threshold eligibility issues with applicants prior to making an eligibility determination.

#### **D. Named Contractors**

The EPA does not require and advises against applicants naming procurement contractors (including individual consultants) in applications for grant funding. However, if an applicant chooses to identify a procurement contractor(s) to conduct work proposed in this application, the applicant must comply with the following requirements even if the entity is referred to as a “partner” or “collaborator” in the application.

**Note** – Successful applicants that do not name procurement contractors in their applications must also comply with the requirements described below, regardless of if the contractor was procured before or after the EPA cooperative agreement is awarded. For example, firms or individual consultants that develop or draft specifications, requirements, statements of work, or invitations for bids or requests for proposals must be excluded from competing for such procurements as provided in [2 CFR 200.319\(b\)](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/chapter-I/subchapter-B/part-200/subpart-3/part-200.319).

Applicants that identify a procurement contractor(s) in their application where the amount of the contract will be more than the micro-purchase threshold in [2 CFR 200.320\(a\)\(1\)](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/chapter-I/subchapter-B/part-200/subpart-3/part-200.320(a)(1)) (\$10,000 for most applicants) must demonstrate, in their application, how the contractor (including consultants) was selected in compliance with the fair and open competition requirements in 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 1500. The EPA provides guidance on complying with the competition requirements in the [Best Practice Guide for Procuring Services, Supplies, and Equipment Under EPA Assistance Agreements](#). For example, the EPA will not accept sole source justifications for proposed procurement contracts for services such as environmental consulting and engineering that are available in the commercial marketplace.

Applicants must describe the procurement procedures that were followed to hire the contractor(s) that is named in this application and include information in where and when the Request for Proposals/Request for Qualifications was posted. Alternatively, state “n/a” or “not applicable” if a contractor is not named in this application.

**Failure to demonstrate compliance with these requirements in the application will result in rejection of the application under Threshold Eligibility Criterion 4.** EPA staff may contact the applicant to clarify issues or obtain additional information before making a final determination of compliance and rejection of the application.

## **E. Subrecipients**

Subrecipients receive subawards from the grant recipient. For purposes of this NOFO, the subrecipients brought on by subawards to be part of the coalition are referred to as “coalition member subrecipients” or “coalition members” to distinguish them from the subrecipients who receive subawards to implement campaigns locally, who are referred to as “competitive campaign implementation subrecipients.” The grant recipient may also choose to bring on other types of subrecipients via subaward. Please refer to *Section I.G: Coalitions* for more information.

Eligible subrecipients are as follows:

- Nonprofit organizations;
- Tribal governments (both federally recognized and state-recognized) and intertribal consortia as defined by 40 CFR 35.504;
- Local governments (as defined by 2 CFR 200.1 – includes cities, towns, municipalities, and counties, public housing authorities and councils of government);
- Institutions of higher education (e.g., private and public universities and colleges, including community colleges);
- U.S. Territories and States;
- a Native Hawaiian organization (as defined in section 6207 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7517));
- the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands; and
- the Office of Hawaiian Affairs.

Ineligible Subrecipients include:

- Individuals
- For profit businesses, unless EPA’s Award Official makes an exception based on factors such as those described in Appendix A of EPA’s Subaward Policy.

Coalition members will be brought on via subawards by the lead applicant. Competitive campaign implementation subrecipients who receive subawards to implement campaigns locally will be brought on by the grant recipient through a competitive process. Please see *Section I.F: Scope of Work* for more information.

All applicants must demonstrate that the named coalition member subrecipient(s) is eligible for a subaward in compliance with [Appendix A of EPA’s Subaward Policy](#). This policy provides, among



other things, that transactions between recipients and for-profit firms and individual consultants are procurement contracts rather than subawards when the transaction involves the acquisition of services from the firm or individual.

## **F. Ineligible Costs or Activities and Other Considerations**

### **Prohibition on Use of Funds**

Construction is not an eligible activity under this grant program.

EPA funds (directly paid by the EPA) cannot be used to develop and administer surveys or other information collections subject to 5 CFR 1320 for feedback unless done in compliance with the OMB regulations implementing Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA). Reasonable costs for analyzing and publishing information collected with non-federal funds are allowable to the extent authorized in the EPA approved budget for this agreement.

As provided in section 70402(b)(6) of the BIL:

PROHIBITION ON USE OF FUNDS. — No funds may be awarded under the grant program for a residential recycling program that—

- (A) does not provide for the separate collection of residential solid waste (as defined in section 246.101 of title 40, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on the date of enactment of this Act)) from recycled material (as defined in that section), unless the funds are used to promote a transition to a system that separately collects recycled materials; or
- (B) promotes the establishment of, or conversion to, a residential collection system that does not provide for the separate collection of residential solid waste from recycled material (as those terms are defined under subparagraph (A)).

## **SECTION IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

**Note: Additional provisions that apply to this section can be found in the [EPA Solicitation Clauses](#).**

### **A. Requirements to Submit through Grants.gov and Limited Exception Procedures**

Applicants must apply electronically through [Grants.gov](#) under this funding opportunity based on the [Grants.gov](#) instructions in this announcement. If your organization has no access to the internet or access is very limited, you may request an exception for the remainder of this calendar year by following the procedures outlined [here](#). Please note that your request must be received at least 15 calendar days before the application due date to allow enough time to negotiate alternative submission methods. Issues with submissions with respect to this opportunity only are addressed in *Section IV.C: Technical Issues with Submission* below.

## B. Submission Instructions

### 1. SAM.gov (System for Award Management) Registration Instructions

Organizations applying to this funding opportunity must have an active [SAM.gov](#) registration. If you have never done business with the Federal Government, you will need to register your organization in [SAM.gov](#). If you do not have a [SAM.gov](#) account, then you will create an account using [login.gov](#) to complete your [SAM.gov](#) registration. [SAM.gov](#) registration is FREE. The process for entity registrations includes obtaining Unique Entity ID (UEI), a 12-character alphanumeric ID assigned an entity by [SAM.gov](#), and requires assertions, representations and certifications, and other information about your organization. Please review the [Entity Registration Checklist](#) for details on this process.

If you have done business with the Federal Government previously, you can check your entity status using your government issued UEI to determine if your registration is active. [SAM.gov](#) requires you renew your registration every 365 days to keep it active.

Please note that [SAM.gov](#) registration is different than obtaining a UEI only. Obtaining a UEI only validates your organization's legal business name and address. Please review the [Frequently Asked Question](#) on the difference for additional details.

Organizations should ensure that their [SAM.gov](#) registration includes a current e-Business (EBiz) point of contact name and email address. The EBiz point of contact is critical for [Grants.gov](#) Registration and system functionality.

Contact the [Federal Service Desk](#) for help with your [SAM.gov](#) account, to resolve technical issues or chat with a help desk agent: (866) 606-8220. The Federal Service desk hours of operation are Monday – Friday 8am – 8pm ET.

### 2. Grants.gov Registration Instructions

Once your [SAM.gov](#) account is active, you must register in [Grants.gov](#). [Grants.gov](#) will electronically receive your organization information, such as e-Business (EBiz) point of contact email address and UEI. Organizations applying to this funding opportunity must have an active [Grants.gov](#) registration. [Grants.gov](#) registration is FREE. If you have never applied for a federal grant before, please review the [Grants.gov Applicant Registration](#) instructions. As part of the [Grants.gov](#) registration process, the EBiz point of contact is the only person that can affiliate and assign applicant roles to members of an organization. In addition, at least one person must be assigned as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR). Only person(s) with the AOR role can submit applications in [Grants.gov](#). Please review the [Intro to Grants.gov-Understanding User Roles](#) and [Learning Workspace – User Roles and Workspace Actions](#) for details on this important process.

Please note that this process can take a month or more for new registrants. Applicants must ensure that all registration requirements are met in order to apply for this opportunity through [Grants.gov](#) and should ensure that all such requirements have been met well in advance of the application submission deadline.

Contact [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) for assistance at 1-800-518-4726 or [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov) to resolve technical issues with [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). Applicants who are outside the U.S. at the time of submittal and are not able to access the toll-free number may reach a [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) representative by calling 606-545-5035. The [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) Support Center is available 24 hours a day 7 days a week, excluding federal holidays.

### **3. Application Submission Process**

To begin the application process under this grant announcement, go to [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and click the red “Apply” button at the top of the view grant opportunity page associated with this opportunity.

The electronic submission of your application to this funding opportunity must be made by an official representative of your organization who is registered with [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and is authorized to sign applications for Federal financial assistance. If the submit button is grayed out, it may be because you do not have the appropriate role to submit in your organization. Contact your organization’s EBiz point of contact or contact [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) for assistance at 1-800-518-4726 or [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov).

Applicants need to ensure that the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) who submits the application through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and whose UEI is listed on the application is an AOR for the applicant listed on the application. Additionally, the UEI listed on the application must be registered to the applicant organization's [SAM.gov](https://www.sam.gov) account. If not, the application may be deemed ineligible.

### **4. Application Submission Deadline**

Your organization's AOR must submit your completed application package electronically to the EPA through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) no later than **December 20, 2024**, at 11:59 PM ET. Please allow for enough time to successfully submit your application and allow for unexpected errors that may require you to resubmit.

Applications submitted through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) will be time and date stamped electronically. Please note that successful submission of your application through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) does not necessarily mean your application is eligible for award. Any application submitted after the application deadline time and date deadline will be deemed ineligible and not be considered.

### **5. Releasing Copies of Applications**

In accordance with EPA’s commitment to conducting business in an open and transparent manner, copies of applications submitted under this solicitation may be made publicly available on EPA's Office of Resource Conservation and Recovery Bipartisan Infrastructure Law website or other public website for a period of time after the selected applications are announced. The EPA recommends that applications not include trade secrets or commercial or financial information that is confidential or privileged, or sensitive information, if disclosed, that would invade another individual’s personal privacy (e.g., an individual’s salary, personal email

addresses, etc.). However, if such information is included, it will be treated in accordance with 40 CFR 2.203 (refer to *Section IV.G: Confidential Business Information* for more information.).

**Clearly indicate which portion(s) of the application you are claiming as confidential, privileged, or sensitive information, or state ‘n/a’ or ‘not applicable’ if the application does not have confidential, privileged, or sensitive information. As provided at 40 CFR 2.203(b) if no claim of confidential treatment accompanies the information when it is received by EPA, it may be made available to the public by EPA without further notice to the submitter.**

### C. Technical Issues with Submission

If applicants experience technical issues during the submission of an application that they are unable to resolve, follow these procedures **before** the application deadline date:

- 1) Contact [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) Support Center **before** the application deadline date.
- 2) Document the [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) ticket/case number.
- 3) Send an email with “EPA-I-OLEM-ORCR-24-12” in the subject line to [RecyclingED@epa.gov](mailto:RecyclingED@epa.gov) **before** the application deadline time and date which **must** include the following:
  - a) [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) ticket/case number(s)
  - b) Description of the issue
  - c) The entire application package in PDF format.

Without this information, EPA may not be able to consider applications submitted outside of [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). Any application submitted after the application time and date deadline will be deemed ineligible and **not** be considered.

Please note that successful submission through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) or email does not necessarily mean your application is eligible for award.

EPA will make decisions concerning acceptance of each application submitted outside of [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) on a case-by-case basis. The EPA will only consider accepting applications that were unable to submit through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) due to [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) or relevant [SAM.gov](https://www.sam.gov) system issues or for unforeseen exigent circumstances, such as extreme weather interfering with internet access. Failure of an applicant to submit prior to the application submission deadline date because they did not properly or timely register in [SAM.gov](https://www.sam.gov) or [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) is **not** an acceptable reason to justify acceptance of an application outside of [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov).

### D. Application Materials

## The following forms and documents are required under this announcement:

### Mandatory Documents:

1. Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424);
2. Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A);
3. EPA Key Contacts Form 5700-54;
4. EPA Form 4700-4 Preaward Compliance Review Report; and
5. Project Narrative Attachment Form: Use this to submit your project narrative, prepared as described in *Section IV.E: Project Narrative Attachment Form*.
6. Other Attachments Form: Use this to submit a signed letter of intent from each coalition member stating the member's intent to sign the MOA (see *Section III.A: Eligible Applicants* for more information).

### Optional Documents:

Use Other Attachments Form, if applicable. This includes Timeline and Milestones (see [EPA's Recycling Education and Outreach Grant Program](#) web page for an example, the Optional REO Milestones Resource). Accepted attachments include documentation demonstrating that competitive procurement was followed if specific names of contractors or equipment is mentioned in the application (see *Section III.D: Named Contractors* for more information).

**Please do not submit the following documents, as they will not be considered as part of the application review process:** references/works cited, letters of support, staff CV/resumes, solid waste master plans, engineering reports, or feasibility studies. Letters of support will not be considered in scoring the applications (letters of intent from each coalition member per #6 in **Mandatory Documents**, above, are not letters of support). Submitting additional application materials that are not pertinent to the application can slow down the review process and potentially delay awards. Optional attachments do not count against the stated page limits in this NOFO.

### E. Project Narrative Attachment Form

In accordance with the mandatory documents listed in *Section IV.D: Application Materials*, all applications must contain the "Project Narrative Attachment Form" which is composed of the "Summary Information Cover Letter," the "Narrative Proposal," and the "Budget Table and Description."

The "Summary Information Cover Letter," a maximum of 2 pages in length, summarizes all three projects that are required to be included per *Section I.F: Scope of Work*.

The "Narrative Proposal," a maximum of 20 pages in length, must **explicitly** describe the applicant's proposed projects and specifically address each of the evaluation criteria disclosed in *Section V.A: Evaluation Criteria* and the threshold eligibility criteria in *Section III.C: Threshold Eligibility Criteria*. **Applicants should reference the numbers and titles of the evaluation criteria in their Narrative Proposal to identify where the criteria are being addressed.**

The "Budget Table and Description" is described in more detail in *Section IV.E.b.v: Budget and Expenditure of Awarded Grant Funds*, below. The "Budget Table and Description" can be a budget spreadsheet (see Optional REO Budget Table and Description Spreadsheet Resource on [EPA's](#)

[Recycling Education and Outreach Grant Program](#) web page) or 4 typed pages. It provides a response to Evaluation Criterion 5: Budget and Expenditure of Awarded Grant Funds. EPA will not review any additional budget documents beyond those described here, including pages of the budget narrative in excess of 4 pages.

**Each portion of the "Project Narrative Attachment Form" (including the 2-page "Summary Information Cover Letter," the 20-page "Narrative Proposal," and up to 4 pages for the "Budget Table and Description") will only be reviewed for the contents within the page limits detailed above. Any pages in excess of the page limits will not be reviewed. If a spreadsheet file is included for the "Budget Table and Description", it does not count toward the page limit.**

**Project Narrative Attachment Form.** Applications should be concise and well organized. The following requirements apply.

- Must not exceed the above-mentioned page limits on the "Summary Information Cover Letter," the "Narrative Proposal," and the "Budget Table and Description." Pages must be 8 1/2 x 11" typed pages.
- Must be single-line spaced, 12-point font, one column per page, and no indenting paragraphs.
- Must provide the information detailed in this section and **include responses to all *Section III.C: Threshold Eligibility Criteria; Section V.A: Evaluation Criteria;* as well as the information identified in *Section I. Funding Opportunity Description.*** Factual information about your proposed project must be provided. Do not include discussions of broad principles that are not specific to the proposed work or project covered by your application. Responses to evaluation criteria should include the criteria number and title but need not restate the entire text of the criteria. Sufficient detail must be provided to allow for an evaluation of the merits of the proposal. **Vague descriptions, redundancy, and failure to address each of the evaluation criteria will result in a lower ranking.**

**Note: Applicants may, but are not required to, use the Optional Downloadable Resources (Optional REO Project Narrative Attachment Resource (Summary Information Cover Letter and Narrative Proposal), and Optional REO Budget Table and Description Spreadsheet Resource) available on [EPA's Recycling Education and Outreach Grant Program](#) web page. Applicants that do not use the optional resources will not be penalized.**

- a. **The Summary Information Cover Letter** (maximum of two pages) must include:
  - i. **Project Title.**
  - ii. **Applicant Name.** Identify the name of the lead applicant submitting the application.
  - iii. **Eligible Entity Type.** Identify the lead applicant's organization type from *Section III.A: Eligible Applicants.*
  - iv. **[Unique Entity Identification Number \(UEI\)](#).** List the lead applicant's UEI number.

- v. **Project Summaries.** Briefly describe the three projects in a few sentences.
- vi. **Contact Information.** Include name, title, address, email address, phone number of the lead applicant. You can list both a primary and an administrative contact.
- vii. **Leveraged Resources.** Describe anticipated leveraged resources, such as non-Federal leveraged funding and/or in-kind resources.
- viii. **EPA Funding Requested.** Specify the dollar amount you are requesting from the EPA, broken down by each of the three required projects.
- ix. **Project Periods.** Provide estimated beginning and ending dates for each of the three required projects.
- x. **Program Objective Elements.** State the mandatory program objective elements addressed from *Section I.F: Scope of Work*.
- xi. **Coalition Members.** Provide names and phone numbers of points of contact from any organization(s) that is a coalition member subrecipient. Note that any transactions with entities financed with EPA funding must comply with applicable regulatory requirements.
- xii. **Statutory Set Aside.** Provide a statement that 20% of the total funding requested will be allocated to low income, rural, and Native American communities through subawards to entities that target authorized education and outreach activities to members of those communities.
- xiii. **Justice40.** Provide a statement that 40% of the overall benefits created by the projects funded in this assistance agreement will flow to disadvantaged communities and/or U.S Territories.

**b. The Narrative Proposal** (maximum of 20 pages, plus optional 4 pages for the budget narrative). Provide the information below on how the applicant will implement and conduct the projects by addressing each of the evaluation criteria in *Section V.A: Evaluation Criteria* of this announcement (the Evaluation Criterion number has been included below for your convenience). If you do not provide any response for these items, you may receive a score of 0 for these factors. The Narrative Proposal must include:

- i. **Evaluation Criterion #1: Project Summaries and Approach.** For each of the three required projects, provide a detailed project summary, description of specific actions and methods to be undertaken, including estimated timeline for each task within each of the three projects. The summary shall contain the following components:
  - i. Detailed project summary, description of specific actions and methods to be undertaken, including estimated timeline for each task.

- a. A well-conceived strategy for addressing the requirements in *Section I.H: General Environmental Results and EPA Strategic Plan Information*.
- b. Clear identification of the goals and objectives of the project and an effective, easily understood plan with well-reasoned steps and milestones to meet the stated objectives in *Section I.F: Scope of Work*.
- c. A reasonable time schedule for the execution of the tasks associated with the project and for achieving the project goals and objectives by project end. Provide a schedule indicating start times and completion dates of significant tasks and responsibilities under your program. For efficiency, it is suggested that project milestones be coordinated with important events (e.g., budget cycle, meetings). Reference [EPA's Recycling Education and Outreach Grant Program](#) web page for the Optional REO Milestones Resource.
- d. (The following correspond to Evaluation Criterion #1, d. through i.) A clear description of each task and/or activity for the project, ensuring that you:
  - For Project #1, root the design and implementation of the national consumer wasted food reduction campaign in social marketing principles and clearly addresses the following elements in the proposed design of the national campaign: campaign purpose, goals, and objectives; priority audiences; desired behavior changes; barriers, benefits, and motivators; collaborator recruitment; and messages and materials as laid out in *Section I.F: Scope of Work*.
  - For Project #1, describe a clear and reasonable plan for: determining priority audiences, taking equity considerations into account; including an emphasis in campaign development on lower income families; transcreating materials; and providing equitable access to campaign outreach materials, as laid out in *Section I.F: Scope of Work*.
  - For Project #1, clearly addresses the following elements of the national consumer wasted food reduction campaign: development, research, implementation, and maintenance, as laid out in *Section I.F: Scope of Work*.
  - For Project #1, describe a clear and reasonable plan for engaging and/or recruiting collaborators for the national consumer wasted food reduction campaign and the role that each will play.
  - For Project #2, provide a clear and reasonable plan for how to conduct outreach and education promoting the use of compost in non-agricultural applications to decision-makers who could effectively achieve their objectives by using compost rather than other approaches as laid out in *Section I.F: Scope of Work*.
  - For Project #3, provide a clear and reasonable plan for how to provide technical assistance and financial support for implementation of local education and outreach campaigns that will help them increase collection rates and decrease



contamination in residential food waste composting programs as laid out in *Section I.F: Scope of Work*.

- ii. **Evaluation Criterion #2: Environmental Justice.** Describe how each of the three required projects will address the disproportionate and adverse (see below) human health, environmental, climate-related and other cumulative impacts, as well as the accompanying economic challenges of such impacts, resulting from industrial, governmental, commercial and/or other actions that have affected and/or currently affect the communities the projects would benefit.

Factors that may indicate disproportionate and adverse impacts as referenced above include: differential proximity and exposure to adverse environmental hazards; greater susceptibility to adverse effects from environmental hazards (due to causes such as age, chronic medical conditions, lack of health care access, or limited access to quality nutrition); unique environmental exposures because of practices linked to cultural background or socioeconomic status (for example, subsistence fishing or farming); cumulative effects from multiple stressors; reduced ability to effectively participate in decision-making processes (due to causes such as lack of or ineffective language access programs, lack of programs to make processes accessible to persons with disabilities, inability to access traditional communication channels, or limited capacity to access technical and legal resources); and degraded physical infrastructure, such as poor housing, poorly maintained public buildings (e.g., schools), or lack of access to transportation.

As part of this evaluation, applications will be evaluated based on:

- a. How the projects benefit communities that have experienced a lack of resources or other impediments to addressing the impacts identified above that affect their community; and
- b. The extent to which the projects address engagement with local residents in these communities who will be affected by the projects, to ensure their meaningful participation with respect to the design, project planning, and performance of the project.

Environmental Justice Web-based Screening Tool - Applicants are encouraged, as appropriate, to include data from EPA's [EJScreen](#) Supplemental Indexes tool (or other EJ-focused geospatial mapping tools) as part of their application to help characterize and describe the affected communities/populations and areas and address the environmental justice criterion in *Section V: Application Review Information*. Data from other sources (e.g. studies, census, and third-party reports) should also be included to give a more complete picture of the impacted communities and populations. Instructions, resources, and tutorials on how to use EJScreen are included at the hyperlink above.

- iii. **Evaluation Criterion #3: Measuring Environmental Results: Performance Measurement Plan, Outputs and Outcomes.** For each of the three required projects, provide a well-conceived strategy for addressing the requirements and plan for achieving

project results in *Section I.L: Measuring and Reporting Environmental Results: Evaluation, Outputs and Outcomes*.

- a. **Anticipated Outputs.** Identify the expected project outputs, including those described in *Section I.L: Measuring and Reporting Environmental Results: Evaluation, Outputs and Outcomes* and describe how you will track and measure your progress towards achieving the expected project outputs. Outputs, quantitative or qualitative, must be measurable during the project performance period. Include quantitative targets for outputs when applicable.
  - b. **Anticipated Outcomes.** Specify the expected environmental outcomes including those described in *Section I.L: Measuring and Reporting Environmental Results: Outputs and Outcomes* and describe how you will track and measure your progress towards achieving the project outcomes and results. Include quantitative targets for outcomes when applicable.
  - c. **Performance Measurement Plan.** Describe an effective plan, with associated timeframes, for tracking and measuring progress in achieving the goals identified in Project Summaries and Approach (Evaluation Criterion #1) and required project outcomes and outputs. Specify how program evaluation activities (utilizing proper evaluation tools, and personnel/organizations with experience in evaluation and project progress/success) from project initiation through project completion to meaningfully document and measure the progress towards achieving project goals and how the results of the evaluations will be used to meet the project goals within the period of performance.
- iv. **Evaluation Criterion #4: Programmatic Capability and Past Performance.** Submit a list of federally and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include Federal grants and cooperative agreements but not Federal contracts) that the lead applicant and coalition members performed within the last three years (no more than 5 agreements, and preferably EPA agreements). For each of the three required projects, describe the lead applicant's and coalition members' ability to successfully complete and manage the project based on past performance, history of meeting the reporting requirements under the assistance agreements listed, and experience and expertise. Describe:
- a. The lead applicant's and coalition members' past performance in successfully completing and managing the assistance agreements listed;
  - b. The lead applicant's and coalition members' history of meeting the reporting requirements under the assistance agreements listed, including whether the lead applicant and coalition members submitted acceptable final technical reports under those agreements and the extent to which they reported adequately and in a timely manner on their progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes under those agreements and if such progress was not being made whether they adequately reported why not; and

- c. The lead applicant's and coalition members' experience and expertise (including in developing, implementing, and assisting others in implementing campaigns aimed at reducing household food waste and/or increasing participation or reducing contamination in composting programs; and/or developing and increasing sales and markets for compost), and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed projects.

In evaluating applicants under factor iv.a. above (Criterion 4.a. in *Section V.A: Evaluation Criteria*), EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources, including information from EPA files and from current/prior grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information provided by the applicant). If you do not have any relevant or available past performance or past reporting information, please indicate this in the application and you will receive a neutral score for Criterion 4.a. in *Section V.A: Evaluation Criteria* (a neutral score is half of the total points available in a subset of possible points). If you do not provide any response for these items, you may receive a score of 0 for these factors.

v. **Evaluation Criterion #5. Budget and Expenditure of Awarded Grant Funds.**

Describe your organization's approach, procedures, and controls for ensuring that awarded grant funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner.

**Budget Table and Description.** Include a detailed budget narrative (up to 4 pages) which clearly explains how funds will be used **broken down by each of the three required projects**. Applicants may develop their own budget table and description or use the EPA provided Optional REO Budget Table and Description Spreadsheet Resource to respond to this evaluation criterion, available on [EPA's Recycling Education and Outreach Grant Program](#) web page. If a spreadsheet is included for the "Budget Table and Description", it does not count toward the page limit. Please note, the Budget Table and Description is different than the SF-424A form. Both are required to be completed as part of this NOFO. The successful applicant's budget description should identify (1) specific tasks for which EPA funding will be used, (2) the costs associated with each task, and (3) what outputs will be produced as a result of each task. Refer to *Section I.L. Measuring and Reporting Environmental Results: Evaluation, Outputs and Outcomes* for a definition and examples of outputs and outcomes.

**Voluntary committed cost share described in work plans or budgets will not be accepted by EPA or evaluated.** Please refer to *Section III.B: Cost Share* for more detailed information.

**Leveraged funding should only be included in the Summary Information Cover Letter (item vii.) and in the form of a statement addressing evaluation criterion #7 in the Narrative Proposal.** In doing so, the applicant is expected to produce the proposed leveraging consistent with the terms of the announcement and their proposal. **Only Federal funds should be included in the SF-424, SF-424A, and Budget Table and Description. Do not include leveraged funding in the SF-424, SF-424A, or**

**Budget Table and Description.** If non-Federal funds are included on the SF-424, SF-424A, and/or Budget Table and Description, it may not be possible to evaluate the application for funding.

Applicants must **itemize** costs related to personnel, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, contractual costs, other direct costs, indirect costs, and total costs. **Each of these categories should be broken down by project.** Applicants should use the following instructions and budget object class descriptions to complete the Budget Table and Description and can refer to [EPA's Recycling Education and Outreach Grant Program](#) web page for the Optional REO Budget Table and Description Spreadsheet Resource. EPA's [How to Develop a Budget](#) and [Interim General Budget Development Guidance for Applicants and Recipients of EPA Financial Assistance](#) web pages can also be useful resources. Do not include cents in any budget amounts, only use whole dollar amounts.

- **Personnel - List all staff positions by title. Give annual salary, percentage of time assigned to the project, and total cost for the budget period.** This category includes only direct costs for the salaries of those individuals who will perform work directly for the project (paid employees of the lead applicant organization as reflected in payroll tax records). If the lead applicant organization is including staff time (in-kind services), this should be included as Personnel costs. Personnel costs **do not include:** (1) costs for services of contractors (including individual consultants), which are included in the "Contractual" category; (2) costs for employees of subrecipients under subawards, or non-employee program participants (e.g., interns or volunteers) which are included in the "Other" category; or (3) effort that is not directly in support of the proposed project, which may be covered by the lead applicant's negotiated indirect cost rate. The Budget Table and Description must identify the personnel category type by Full Time Equivalent (FTE), including percentage of FTE for part-time employees, number of personnel proposed for each category, and the estimated funding amounts.

If budget information is not provided on requested personnel costs, applications should include in their narrative how they expect to manage the administrative components of the grant.

- **Fringe Benefits - Identify the percentage used, the basis for its computation, and the types of benefits included.** Fringe benefits are allowances and services provided by employers to their employees as compensation in addition to regular salaries and wages. Fringe benefits may include, but are not limited to, the cost of leave, employee insurance, pensions, and unemployment benefit plans. If the lead applicant's fringe rate does not include the cost of leave, and the applicant intends to charge leave to the agreement, it must provide supplemental information describing its proposed method(s) for determining and equitably distributing these costs.
- **Travel - Specify the mileage, per diem, estimated number of trips, number of travelers, and other costs for each type of travel.** Travel may be integral to the purpose of the proposed project or related to proposed project activities (e.g., attendance at meetings or events). Only include travel costs for employees in the

travel category. Travel costs do not include: (1) costs for travel of contractors (including individual consultants), which are included in the “Contractual” category; (2) travel costs for employees of subrecipients under subawards, and non-employee program participants (e.g., trainees) which are included in the “Other” category. Further, travel does not include bus rentals for group trips, which would be covered under the contractual category. Finally, if the lead applicant intends to use any funds for travel outside the United States, it must be specifically identified. All proposed foreign travel must be approved by the EPA’s Office of International and Tribal Affairs prior to being taken.

- **Equipment** - Identify each item to be purchased and owned by the lead applicant which has an estimated acquisition cost of \$10,000 or more per unit and a useful life of more than one year. Equipment also includes accessories necessary to make the equipment operational. Note: If your organization has written procurement procedures that define a threshold for equipment costs that is lower than \$10,000, then that threshold takes precedence. Refer to the [EPA’s Best Practice Guide for Procuring Services, Supplies, and Equipment Under EPA Assistance Agreements](#) for EPA’s policies on competitive procurements. When evaluating the application pursuant to Evaluation Criterion #5, the EPA will take into consideration costs necessary to successfully manage the project. This includes ensuring that your budget includes costs for the management of funds, reporting on outcomes/outputs, etc., in addition to the cost of equipment. Some equipment for the creation of educational materials and as incentives for participation in programs are allowed but should not be the primary focus of the project. Please include an explanation of this matter in the Budget Table and Description.
- **Supplies** - “Supplies” means all tangible personal property other than “equipment.” The budget detail should identify categories of supplies to be procured (e.g., laboratory supplies or office supplies). Non-tangible goods and services associated with supplies, such as, occasional photocopy services, and rental costs should be included in the “Other” category.
- **Contractual** - Identify each type of proposed contract and specify its purpose and estimated cost. Contractual services (including consulting services) are those services to be carried out by an individual or organization, other than the applicant, in the form of a procurement relationship. [EPA’s Subaward Policy for EPA Assistance Agreements](#) and [EPA’s Subaward Frequent Questions](#) have detailed guidance available for differentiating between contractors and subrecipients. Leased or rented goods (equipment or supplies) should be included in the “Other” category.

The EPA does not require or encourage applicants to identify specific contractors. The lead applicant should list the proposed contract activities along with a brief description of the anticipated scope of work or services to be provided, proposed duration, and proposed procurement method (competitive or non-competitive), if known. Any proposed non-competitively/sole-source contracts more than \$10,000 must include a justification. Note that it is unlikely that the EPA will accept proposed sole source contracts for goods and services (e.g., consulting) that are widely available in

the commercial market. Refer to the [EPA's Best Practice Guide for Procuring Services, Supplies, and Equipment Under EPA Assistance Agreements](#) for the EPA's policies on competitive procurements and encouraging the use of small and disadvantaged business enterprises.

- **Other - List each item in sufficient detail for the EPA to determine the reasonableness and allowability of its cost.** This category should include only those types of direct costs that do not fit in any of the other budget categories. Examples of costs that may be in this category are: insurance; rental/lease of equipment or supplies; occasional photocopying; participant support costs such as non-employee training stipends and travel; subsidies or rebates for purchases of pollution control equipment; and subaward costs. Applicants should describe the items included in the "Other" category and include the estimated amount of participant support costs (e.g., stipends to encourage participation in community meetings) in a separate line item. Please refer to [EPA Guidance on Participant Support Costs](#) for additional information.
  - **Subawards** (e.g., subgrants) are a distinct type of cost under the "other" category. The term *Subaward* is defined in 2 CFR 200.1. Subcontracts are not subawards and belong in the contractual category. Applicants must provide the amounts they propose to issue as subawards to each coalition member subrecipient and the amounts being set aside for competitive campaign implementation subrecipients as separate line items in the "Other" category, along with a description of the types of activities to be supported. Applicants may also choose to include other types of subrecipients. Refer to the [EPA's Subaward Policy for EPA Assistance Agreements](#) and [EPA Subaward Frequent Questions](#) for additional guidance. The application should explain how the subrecipient will provide adequate resources to manage the award, including providing required financial and programmatic reports to the EPA, and for monitoring subrecipients as required by [2 CFR 200.332](#). Please see *Section III. E: Subrecipients* for more information.
- **Indirect Charges:** Please refer to the Indirect Costs clause in the [EPA Solicitation Clauses](#).
- **Management Fees:** When formulating budgets for applications, applicants must not include management fees or similar charges more than the direct costs and indirect costs at the rate approved by the applicant's cognizant audit agency, or at the rate provided for by the terms of the agreement negotiated with the EPA. The term "management fees or similar charges" refers to expenses added to the direct costs to accumulate and reserve funds for ongoing business expenses, unforeseen liabilities, or for other similar costs that are not allowable under EPA assistance agreements. Management fees or similar charges may not be used to improve or expand the project funded under this agreement, except to the extent authorized as a direct cost of carrying out the scope of work.

EPA financial assistance under this NOFO cannot be used for fundraising without prior approval. Therefore, any costs associated with fundraising may not be included in the budget for your application or charged to the resultant cooperative agreement.

**vi. Evaluation Criterion #6. Subaward Competitive Process.** Describe a clear plan for how you will:

- a. Conduct a competitive subaward process for the competitive campaign implementation subrecipients (note the coalition member subrecipients would not be brought on using a competitive process), taking into account the 20% statutory set aside requirements, as laid out in *Section I.F: Scope of Work*;
- b. Ensure the subaward process is accessible to low income, rural, or Native American communities, including a plan and approach for making these communities and the entities that serve them aware of the existence of the subaward opportunity; and
- c. Ensure that competitive campaign implementation subawards will be distributed geographically across the U.S. and accessible to communities beyond low income, rural, or Native American communities, and describe how you will ensure that the total amount allocated to competitive campaign implementation subawards will go beyond the 20% statutory set aside requirements.

**vii. Evaluation Criterion #7. Leveraged Funding.** Describe whether you will leverage additional funds/resources beyond the EPA grant funds awarded to support each of the proposed projects' activities and how these funds/resources will be used to contribute to the performance and success of the proposed project. This includes but is not limited to funds and other resources leveraged from businesses, labor organizations, nonprofit organizations, education and training providers, and/or Federal, state, Tribal, and local governments, as appropriate. Describe the amount and type of leveraged resources to be provided, how you will obtain the leveraged resources, the likelihood the leveraging will materialize during grant performance, the strength of the leveraging commitment, and the role the leveraged funds/resources will play to support the proposed projects' activities, including surveys related to evaluation activities. Leveraged funding or other resources need not be for eligible and allowable project costs under the EPA assistance agreement. EPA strongly encourages applicants to obtain non-Federal sources of funding to develop and administer robust and replicable evaluation activities (e.g., surveys, focus groups, etc.). **Do not include leveraged funding in the SF-424, SF-424A, or in the Budget Table and Description. Leveraged funding may only be included in the Summary Information Cover Letter (item vii.) and in the form of a statement in the Narrative Proposal. In doing so, you are expected to produce the proposed leveraging consistent with the terms of the announcement and their proposal.**

**(Optional) Other Attachments.** Use Other Attachments Form, if applicable. This includes Timeline and Milestones (see [EPA’s Recycling Education and Outreach Grant Program](#) web page for an example, the Optional REO Milestones Resource) and documentation demonstrating that competitive procurement was followed if specific names of contractors or equipment is mentioned in the application. Please do not submit the following documents, as they will not be considered as part of the application review process: references/works cited, letters of support, staff CV/resumes, solid waste master plans, engineering reports, or feasibility studies. Letters of support will not be considered in scoring the applications. (Letters of intent from each coalition member per #6 in **Mandatory Documents, Section IV.C: Application Materials**, are not letters of support. Use the Other Attachments Form to submit a signed letter of intent from each coalition member stating the member’s intent to sign the MOA (see *Section III.A: Eligible Applicants for more information.*) Submitting additional application materials that are not pertinent to the application can slow down the review process and potentially delay awards. Optional attachments do not count against the stated page limits in this NOFO.

## **F. Pre-Application Assistance**

In accordance with the EPA's Assistance Agreement Competition Policy (EPA Order 5700.5A1), EPA staff will not meet with individual applicants to discuss draft applications, provide informal comments on draft applications, or provide advice to applicants on how to respond to ranking criteria. Applicants are responsible for the contents of their applications. However, consistent with the provisions in the announcement, the EPA will respond to questions from individual applicants regarding threshold eligibility criteria, administrative issues related to the submission of the application, and requests for clarification about any of the language or provisions in the announcement. Please note that applicants should raise any questions they may have about the solicitation language to the contact identified in *Section VII: Agency Contact* as soon as possible so that any questions about the solicitation language may be resolved prior to submitting an application. Questions and answers will be posted on [EPA’s Recycling Education and Outreach Grant Program](#) web page.

In addition, if necessary, the EPA may clarify threshold eligibility issues with applicants prior to making an eligibility determination.

The Office of Resource Conservation and Recovery has recorded a webinar presentation entitled “**Recycling Education and Outreach Grants Round Two**” to assist potential applicants under this competitive funding opportunity. This webinar will be available on EPA’s [Recycling Education and Outreach Grant Program](#) web page by September 30, 2024 and may be used as a reference, as needed.

For additional EPA Resources related to the circular economy, sustainable materials management, and new funding opportunities under the IIJA, please visit [EPA’s Bipartisan Infrastructure Law: Transforming U.S. Recycling and Waste Management](#) web page.

Training opportunities related to grants management can be found on [EPA’s Grant Recipient Training Opportunities](#) web page.

## **G. 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 2](#). If no claim of confidentiality is made, EPA is not required to make the inquiry to the applicant otherwise required by [40 CFR 2.204\(c\)\(2\)](#) prior to disclosure.

## **SECTION V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION**

Note: Additional provisions that apply to this section can be found at [EPA Solicitation Clauses](#).

### **A. Evaluation Criteria**

Eligible entities whose applications meet the threshold criteria in *Section III.C: Threshold Eligibility Criteria* will be reviewed according to the evaluation criterion set forth below. Applicants must directly and explicitly address these criteria in the Narrative Proposal as described in *Section IV.E: Project Narrative Attachment Form*. Please reference the downloadable optional resources (Optional REO Project Narrative Attachment Resource, Optional REO Budget Table and Description Resource, Optional REO Milestones Resource, and Optional REO Application Checklist Resource) available on [EPA’s Recycling Education and Outreach Grants](#) web page. These are optional resources and applicants will not be penalized if they do not use them. The information provided must be easily identifiable and clearly described to ensure the content of the application is clearly laid out for reviewers. Each application will be rated under a points system, with a total of 170 points possible. **Applicants should reference the numbers and titles of the evaluation criteria in their Narrative Proposal to identify where the criteria are being addressed.**

<b>Evaluation Criteria and Description</b>	<b>Maximum Points per Criterion</b>
<p><b>1. Project Summaries and Approach.</b> EPA will evaluate the extent and quality to which the application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Meets the requirements in <i>Section I.H: General Environmental Results and Strategic Plan Information</i> (5 points);</li> <li>b. Clearly identifies the goals and objectives of each of the projects and includes an effective, easily understood plan with well-reasoned steps and milestones to meet the stated objectives in <i>Section I.F: Scope of Work</i> (10 points);</li> <li>c. Sets forth a reasonable time schedule for the execution of the tasks associated with each of the projects and for achieving the projects’ goals and objectives by projects’ end (5 points);</li> <li>d. For Project #1, roots the design and implementation of the national consumer wasted food reduction campaign in social marketing principles and clearly</li> </ul>	<b>65</b>

Evaluation Criteria and Description	Maximum Points per Criterion
<p>addresses the following elements in the proposed design of the national campaign: campaign purpose, goals, and objectives; priority audiences; desired behavior changes; barriers, benefits, and motivators; collaborator recruitment; and messages and materials as laid out in <i>Section I.F: Scope of Work</i> (10 points);</p> <p>e. For Project #1, describes a clear and reasonable plan for: determining priority audiences, taking equity considerations into account; including an emphasis in campaign development on lower income families; transcreating materials; and providing equitable access to campaign outreach materials as laid out in <i>Section I.F: Scope of Work</i> (5 points);</p> <p>f. For Project #1, clearly addresses the following elements of the national consumer wasted food reduction campaign: development, research, implementation, and maintenance, as laid out in <i>Section I.F: Scope of Work</i> (5 points);</p> <p>g. For Project #1, describes a clear and reasonable plan for engaging and/or recruiting collaborators for the national consumer wasted food reduction campaign and describes the role that each will play (5 points);</p> <p>h. For Project #2, provides a clear and reasonable plan for how to conduct outreach and education promoting the use of compost in one or more non-agricultural applications to decision-makers who could effectively achieve their objectives by using compost rather than other approaches as laid out in <i>Section I.F: Scope of Work</i> (10 points);</p> <p>i. For Project #3, provides a clear and reasonable plan for how to provide technical assistance and financial support to entities to implement education and outreach campaigns that will help them increase collection rates and decrease contamination in residential food waste composting programs as laid out in <i>Section I.F: Scope of Work</i> (10 points).</p>	
<p><b>2. Environmental Justice.</b> Applications will be evaluated based on the extent and quality to which they demonstrate how each of the three required projects will address the disproportionate and adverse (see below) human health, environmental, climate-related and other cumulative impacts, as well as the accompanying economic challenges of such impacts, resulting from industrial, governmental, commercial and/or other actions that have affected and/or currently affect the communities the project would benefit. Specifically, applications will be evaluated based on:</p>	<p><b>10</b></p>

Evaluation Criteria and Description	Maximum Points per Criterion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. How the projects benefit communities including those that have experienced a lack of resources or other impediments to addressing the impacts identified above that affect their community (5 points); and,</li> <li>b. The extent to which the projects address engagement with local residents in these communities described in this solicitation, to ensure their meaningful participation with respect to the design, project planning, and performance of the projects (5 points).</li> </ul>	
<p><b>3. Measuring Environmental Results: Evaluation, Outputs and Outcomes.</b> Outputs and outcomes must be quantitative or qualitative and must measure environmental improvement or should be directly linked to environmental improvement. Include quantitative targets as appropriate. EPA will evaluate the extent to which the application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. For each of the three required projects, provides a detailed description of the anticipated projects’ outputs and outcomes, including quantitative targets as appropriate, per <i>Section I.L: Measuring and Reporting Environmental Results: Evaluation, Outputs and Outcomes</i> (10 points);</li> <li>b. <i>Performance Management Plan.</i> Describes how they will measure success in meeting the three projects’ objectives and articulates a clear plan, with associated timeframes, for tracking and measuring progress toward achieving each project’s outputs and outcomes, and evaluating success, per <i>Section I.L: Measuring and Reporting Environmental Results: Performance Management Plan, Outputs and Outcomes</i> (15 points).</li> </ul>	<b>25</b>
<p><b>4. Programmatic Capability and Past Performance.</b> Applications will be evaluated based on the applicant’s ability to successfully complete and manage each of the three required projects considering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The lead applicant’s and coalition members’ past performance in successfully completing and managing any federally and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements identified in response to <i>Section IV.E.b.iv: Project Narrative Attachment Form</i> (5 points);</li> <li>b. The lead applicant’s and coalition members’ history of meeting the reporting requirements under the assistance agreements identified in response to <i>Section IV.E.b.iv: Project Narrative Attachment Form</i>, including whether the lead applicant and coalition members submitted acceptable final technical reports</li> </ul>	<b>25</b>

Evaluation Criteria and Description	Maximum Points per Criterion
<p>under those agreements and the extent to which they reported adequately and in a timely manner on their progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes under those agreements and if such progress was not being made whether they adequately reported why not (5 points);</p> <p>c. The lead applicant’s and coalition members’ expertise and expertise (including in developing, implementing, and assisting others in implementing campaigns aimed at reducing household food waste and/or increasing participation or reducing contamination in composting programs; and/or developing and increasing sales and markets for compost), and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed projects (15 points);</p> <p>Note: In evaluating applications under item a. of this criterion, the Agency will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources including agency files and prior/current grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information supplied by the applicant). If you do not have any relevant or available past performance or past reporting information, please indicate this in the application and you will receive a neutral score for item a. (a neutral score is half of the total points available in a subset of possible points). If you do not provide any response for these items, you may receive a score of 0 for these factors.</p>	
<p><b>5. Budget and Expenditure of Awarded Grant Funds.</b> Under this criterion, applications will be evaluated based on their approach, procedures, and controls for ensuring that awarded grant funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner. EPA will evaluate the proposed Budget Table and Description to determine the extent to which:</p> <p>a. Costs are reasonable to accomplish the proposed goals, objectives, and measurable environmental outcomes of each project (5 points);</p> <p>b. The proposed budget provides a detailed breakout of the approximate funding used for each major activity for each project (5 points);</p> <p>c. The budget does not include cents and only includes amounts in whole dollars (1 point);</p> <p>d. The application conveys the approach, procedures, and controls for ensuring that awarded grant funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner (5 points).</p>	<p><b>16</b></p>

Evaluation Criteria and Description	Maximum Points per Criterion
<p>Please provide the response to this criterion as part of your Budget Table and Description (see <a href="#">EPA's Recycling Education and Outreach Grant Program</a> web page for the Optional REO Budget Table and Description Spreadsheet Resource).</p>	
<p><b>6. Subaward Competitive Process.</b> EPA will evaluate applications based on the extent to which they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Describe a clear plan for how they will conduct a competitive subaward process for subawards to competitive campaign implementation subrecipients, taking into account the 20% statutory set aside requirements, as laid out in <i>Section I.F: Scope of Work</i> (7 points);</li> <li>b. Describe how they will ensure the subaward process is accessible to low income, rural, or Native American communities, including a plan and approach for making these communities and the entities that serve them aware of the existence of the subaward opportunity (4 points);</li> <li>c. Describe how they will ensure that competitive campaign implementation subawards will be distributed geographically across the U.S. and accessible to communities beyond low income, rural, or Native American communities, and describe how they will ensure that the total amount allocated to competitive campaign implementation subawards will go beyond the 20% statutory set aside requirements (11 points).</li> </ul>	22
<p><b>7. Leveraged Funds.</b> EPA will evaluate applications based on the extent they demonstrate that they will leverage additional funds/resources beyond the EPA grant funds awarded to support each of the three proposed project's activities and how these funds/resources will be used to contribute to the performance and success of the proposed project. This includes but is not limited to funds and other resources leveraged from businesses, labor organizations, nonprofit organizations, education and training providers, and/or Federal, state, Tribal, and local governments, as appropriate. Applicants will also be evaluated based on the amount and type of leveraged resources to be provided, how they will obtain the leveraged resources, the likelihood the leveraging will materialize during grant performance, the strength of the leveraging commitment, and the role the leveraged funds/resources will play to support the proposed projects' activities, including surveys related to evaluation activities. Leveraged funding or other resources need not be for eligible and allowable project costs under the EPA assistance agreement. EPA strongly encourages applicants to obtain non-Federal sources of funding to develop and administer robust and replicable evaluation activities (e.g., surveys, focus groups, etc.).</p>	7

Evaluation Criteria and Description	Maximum Points per Criterion
<p><b>Do not include leveraged funding in the SF-424, SF-424A, or in the Budget Table and Description. Applicants may describe leveraged funds in the Summary Information Cover Letter (item vii.) and in a statement in the Narrative Proposal.</b> In doing so, the applicant is expected to produce the proposed leveraging consistent with the terms of the announcement and their proposal.</p>	
<p><b>Total points possible</b></p>	<p><b>170</b></p>

## B. Review and Selection Process

- 1. Threshold Eligibility Screening Process.** All applications received by the submission deadline will first be screened by the EPA using the threshold eligibility criteria in *Section III.C: Threshold Eligibility Criteria*. Applications that do not pass the threshold eligibility review will not be evaluated further or considered for funding. Applicants deemed ineligible for funding consideration as a result of the threshold eligibility review will be notified within 15 calendar days of the ineligibility determination. Applications meeting the threshold eligibility criteria will proceed to the panel review and evaluation process.
- 2. Panel Review and Evaluation Process.** All applications that meet the Threshold Eligibility Criteria after the screening review will undergo a technical review based on the criteria in *Section V.A: Evaluation Criteria*. Review panels will be comprised of EPA staff and/or external reviewers.
- 3. Final Selection Process.** Final rankings and selection recommendations from EPA panels will be presented to the Selection Official who will then make the final selection for the award.

EPA expects to award one assistance agreement of approximately \$39,094,000 under this NOFO. The EPA reserves the right to reject all applications and make no awards under this announcement.

## SECTION VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

Note: Additional provisions that apply to this section can be found at [EPA Solicitation Clauses](#)

### A. Award Notification

The EPA anticipates notification to the successful applicant will be made via electronic mail by the end of **March 2025**. The notification will be sent to the original signer of the application or the project contact listed in the application. This notification, which informs the applicant that its application has been selected and is being recommended for award, is not an authorization to begin work. The official notification of an award will be made by the EPA's Grants and Interagency Agreement Management Division. Applicants are cautioned that only a grants officer is authorized to bind the Government to the expenditure of funds; selection does not guarantee an award will be made. For example, statutory authorization, funding, or other issues discovered during the award process may affect the ability of the EPA to make an award to an applicant. The award notice, signed by an EPA grants officer, is the

authorizing document and will be provided through electronic or postal mail. The successful applicant may need to prepare and submit additional documents and forms (e.g., work plan), which must be approved by the EPA, before the grant can officially be awarded. The time between notification of selection and award of a grant can take up to 90 days or longer.

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

1. Applicants selected for award will be required to submit a final cooperative agreement application package to the EPA. This package will include an EPA-approved final work plan that describes the work to be performed, a final budget, the coalition member MOA, and the required certification forms. Programmatic terms and conditions will be negotiated with the selected recipient.
2. Approved cooperative agreements will include terms and conditions that will be binding on the grant recipient. Terms and conditions specify what grant recipients must do to ensure that grant-related and program-related requirements are met. Terms and conditions may be viewed at: [Grant Terms and Conditions](#). A listing and description of general EPA Regulations applicable to the award of assistance agreements may be viewed at: [Introduction to Regulations, Policies and Guidance for EPA Grants](#).
3. **Reimbursement Limitation:** If the recipient expends more than the amount of funding in its EPA approved budget in anticipation of receiving additional funds from the EPA, it does so at its own risk. The EPA is not legally obligated to reimburse the recipient for costs incurred in excess of the EPA approved budget.

## **C. Use of Funds**

An applicant that receives an award under this announcement is expected to manage cooperative agreement funds efficiently and effectively and make sufficient progress towards completing the project activities described in the work plan in a timely manner. The cooperative agreement will include terms/conditions implementing this requirement. The Agency expects timely drawdown of funds and a yearly financial report. In addition to quarterly reports, other required financial reports will provide the Agency with information regarding progress being made.

## **D. Program Income**

In accordance with 2 CFR 200.307(e)(2) and 2 CFR 1500.8(b), the recipient is hereby authorized to retain program income earned during the project period.

The program income shall be added to funds committed to each of the three projects by EPA and used for the purposes and under the conditions of the assistance agreement.

The recipient must provide as part of its quarterly performance report, a description of how program income is being used. Further, a report on the amount of program income earned during the award period must be submitted with the quarterly Federal Financial Report, Standard Form 425.

## E. Disputes

Assistance agreement competition-related disputes will be resolved in accordance with the dispute resolution procedures published in 70 FR (Federal Register) 3629, 3630 (January 26, 2005) which can be found at EPA's [Grant Competition Dispute Resolution Procedures](#). Copies of these procedures may also be requested by contacting the person listed in *Section VII: Agency Contact* of the announcement. Note, the FR notice references regulations at 40 CFR Parts 30 and 31 that have been superseded by regulations in 2 CFR parts 200 and 1500. Notwithstanding the regulatory changes, the procedures for competition-related disputes remains unchanged from the procedures described at 70 FR 3629, 3630, as indicated in 2 CFR Part 1500, Subpart E.

## F. Quality Management Plans (QMPs) & Quality Assurance Project Plans (QAPPs)

In accordance with 2 CFR 1500.12, projects that include the generation or use of environmental data, including for grant reporting, are required to submit a QMP and QAPP. EPA Project Officers will work with all selected recipients on quality assurance (QA) requirements. Once the award is made, if a QMP and / or QAPP is required for any of the three projects, the applicant will develop the document and submit for EPA's approval. Selected applicants cannot begin environmental information operations until EPA approves the QMP and/or QAPP.

**Quality Management Plan (QMP):** The recipient may need to develop a QMP. The QMP describes an organization's Quality Program. Requirements for QMPs are found in the most recent version of EPA's [Quality Management Standard](#). A QMP documents the technical activities to be performed and how the organization's quality program will integrate QA, quality control, QAPPs, training, etc., into all its environmental information operations.

**Quality Assurance Project Plans (QAPP):** The recipient may need to develop a QAPP(s) for any of the three projects. A QAPP describes how environmental information operations are planned, implemented, documented, and assessed during the life cycle of a project. The QAPP is the document that provides comprehensive details about the quality assurance/quality control requirements and technical activities that must be implemented to ensure that project objectives are met. Requirements for QAPPs are found in the most recent version of [EPA's Requirements for Quality Assurance Project Plans](#). Quality assurance is sometimes applicable to assistance projects (see 2 CFR 1500.12).

Approval of a QMP/QAPP may take up to 100 days and, therefore, applicants should take this into account when developing their project timeline.

## G. Reporting Requirements

Semi-annual progress reports and a detailed final report will be required. The semi-annual progress reports will be submitted to the EPA Project Officer within thirty days after each reporting period. These reports shall cover work status, work progress, summary of financial expenditures, difficulties encountered, preliminary data results and a statement of activity anticipated during the subsequent reporting period. A discussion of expenditures along with a comparison of the percentage of each of the three required projects completed to the project schedule and an explanation of significant discrepancies shall be included in the report. The report shall also include any changes of key personnel concerned with the projects. Recipients will need to describe in their workplan how they plan to meet the



requirement to provide as part of its semi-annual performance reports, a description of how program income is being used. Recipients will also need to indicate in their workplan how they plan to meet the requirement to submit a report on the amount of program income earned during the award period that must be submitted with the semi-annual Federal Financial Report, Standard Form 425. The semi-annual reports shall also include progress on outputs and outcomes in *Section I.L: Measuring and Reporting Environmental Results: Evaluation, Outputs, and Outcomes*.

At the close of the grant, the successful applicant will submit a final technical report to the EPA Project Officer within 90 calendar days of completion of the period of performance. The final technical report shall include a summary of the three projects or activities, advances or goals achieved, and costs of the projects or activities. The technical report shall include description of:

- the change in volume of composted material collected through the activities funded with the grant,
- the change in participation rate of the composting programs supported through the activities funded with the grant, and
- the reduction of contamination in the composting stream as a result of the activities funded with the grant.

The final technical report shall also include progress towards and/or accomplishment of the outcomes listed in *Section I.L: Measuring and Reporting Environmental Results: Evaluation, Outputs, and Outcomes* above. In addition, the final technical report should discuss the challenges, successes, and lessons learned during the project period.

All semi-annual reports and the final technical report will be submitted through the Grantee Portal of EPA's Grant Management System. This system will help EPA monitor the recipient's progress with implementing their project and directly supports the continuation of the REO program by highlighting measurable accomplishments progress to the public and Congress.

For further reporting guidance and requirements, please refer to "EPA Recycling Education and Outreach Grant (Round 2): A Quick Reference Guide for Evaluating Progress and Reporting Achievements Over Time" which can be found at available on [EPA's Recycling Education and Outreach Grants](#) web page.

## **SECTION VII. AGENCY CONTACT**

Claudia Fabiano, U.S. EPA, Office of Resource Conservation and Recovery (MC 5306P), 1301 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC; e-mail: [RecyclingEd@epa.gov](mailto:RecyclingEd@epa.gov).

## **APPENDIX A. GUIDELINES FOR A MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT FOR A COALITION**

A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) is not due at time of application, but the MOA signed by all members of a coalition must be provided to EPA before EPA will award any grant. Coalitions should plan on submitting their MOAs to EPA at [RecyclingEd@epa.gov](mailto:RecyclingEd@epa.gov) by **March 1, 2025**. Failure to submit the MOA in a timely manner may impact EPA's ability to award the grant. The MOA provides documentation that the organizations have consulted with each other and are committed to fulfilling their respective roles and responsibilities to successfully implement the projects described in the application.

The following elements should be included in an MOA:

- List each entity committing to participate in the coalition.
- State the purpose of the MOA.
- Clearly describe the agreed upon roles, responsibilities, and commitments each coalition member will provide to ensure project success. The roles and responsibilities should align with overall project goals, objectives, and target outputs.
- Describe the proposed operating model for the coalition.
- Describe how the collaboration and partnerships associated with the coalition will benefit the project.
- Describe the resources each coalition member will contribute to the project. Such resources could include project management, staff time, technical analyses, in-kind contributions, training or facilitation, or other related services.
- Provide a statement that the lead applicant will be accountable to EPA and accepts full responsibility for effectively carrying out the full scope of work and the proper financial management of the grant.
- Provide a statement that other coalition members who are grant subrecipients will be accountable to the lead applicant for proper use of EPA funding and successful project implementation.
- The MOA must be signed by all coalition members. Signatories must be officially authorized to sign on behalf of their agency or organization, and their signature should include title and agency name.