

Applicants must clearly indicate which portion(s) of their proposal they are claiming as CBI. EPA will evaluate such claims in accordance with 40 CFR Part 2. If no claim of confidentiality is made, EPA is not required to make the inquiry to the applicant otherwise required by 40 CFR 2.204(c)(2) prior to disclosure. The Agency protects competitive proposals from disclosure under applicable provisions of the Freedom of Information Act prior to the completion of the competitive selection process.

V. Application Review Information

A. SELECTION CRITERIA

All eligible proposals, based on the Section III threshold eligibility review, will be evaluated based on the evaluation criteria and weights below (100-point scale). Points will be awarded based on how well and thoroughly each criterion and/or sub-criterion is addressed in the proposal package.

<p>1) Technical Approach (30 points)</p>	<p>Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on the extent and quality to which the proposal demonstrates how the project addresses the following elements as described in Section I.B:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Water Quality Restoration – How well the proposal identifies the project area as “urban” and how well the proposed project will contribute to future environmental restoration of the urban water body. Restoration efforts include addressing important water quality threats or impairments. (15 points) b) Relevance to Community Priorities – How well the proposed project makes water quality restoration of the urban water body relevant to community priorities and strives to engage local residents in a sustainable way. (5 points) c) Success Potential/Project Feasibility – How well the proposed project demonstrates a creative or effective approach to restoring water quality within the urban area and is prepared to begin work. (10 points)
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<p>2) Partnerships (8 points)</p>	<p>Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on their ability to demonstrate appropriate and necessary partnerships to successfully conduct the project (as described in Section I.B) including whether they have provided a clear description of the roles of specific partners in the project's components/tasks, and how these partnerships will contribute to the success of the proposed projects, and the extent to which communities surrounding the urban water body (including but not limited to minority, low income, or indigenous population communities) are participating in the project. (8 points)</p>
<p>3) Benefits to Community (7 points)</p>	<p>Proposals will be evaluated based on the extent to which they demonstrate how they will benefit communities surrounding the urban water body (as described in Section I.B) that have been impacted by the water pollution issues affecting the urban water body. This includes communities comprised of minority, low income, or indigenous populations, as well as others that may be adversely impacted by the urban water body's water pollution issues. (7 points)</p>
<p>4) Milestone Schedule/Detailed Budget/Transfer of Results (15 points)</p>	<p>Proposals will be evaluated based on the extent and quality to which the proposal demonstrates the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Clearly articulated milestone schedule for project tasks. (5 points) b) Reasonableness of the budget and estimated funding amounts for each project task. Applicants will be evaluated based on: the adequacy of the information provided in the detailed budget; whether the proposed costs are reasonable and allowable; and how well the applicant demonstrated cost-effectiveness and value of the project. Total project costs must include both federal and required cost share / match (non-federal) components. (5 points) c) How well the applicant will transfer the results of the proposed project to state, tribal, and local governmental agencies, other community and watershed organizations, and/or other interested stakeholders. (5 points)

<p>5) Environmental Results (20 points)</p>	<p>Proposals will be evaluated based on the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The extent and quality to which the proposal demonstrates potential environmental results, anticipated outputs and outcomes, and how the outcomes are linked to EPA's Strategic Plans (see Section I of announcement). (10 points) b) The extent and quality to which the proposal demonstrates a sound plan for tracking progress toward achieving the expected outputs and outcomes (examples of outputs and outcomes are provided in Section I.C of the announcement). (10 points)
<p>6) Programmatic Capability/Specialized Experience (10 points)</p>	<p>Under this criterion proposals will be evaluated based on the applicant's ability to successfully complete and manage the proposed project taking into account the applicant's:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Organizational experience related to the proposed project, and their infrastructure as it relates to their ability to successfully implement the proposed project. (5 points) b) Staff experience/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources, or the ability to obtain them, to successfully implement the proposed project. (5 points)
<p>7) Past Performance (10 points)</p>	<p>Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on their ability to successfully complete and manage the proposed project taking into account their:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Past performance in successfully completing and managing federally and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements (an assistance agreement is a grant or cooperative agreement and not a contract) similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project performed within the last five years (no more than three, and preferably EPA agreements). (4 points) b) History of meeting reporting requirements under federally and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements (an assistance agreement is a grant or cooperative agreement and not a contract) similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project performed within the last five years (no more than three, and preferably EPA agreements) and submitting acceptable final technical reports under these agreements. (3 points)

	<p>c) Extent and quality to which they documented and/or reported on their progress towards achieving the expected results (e.g. outcomes and outputs) under federally and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements (an assistance agreement is a grant or cooperative agreement and not a contract) performed in the last 5 years (no more than three, and preferably EPA agreements), and if such progress was not being made, whether the applicant adequately documented why not. (3 points)</p> <p>Note: In evaluating applicants under this criterion, the Agency will consider the information supplied by the applicant in its proposal, and may also consider relevant information from other sources including Agency files (e.g. Grantee Compliance Database) and prior/current grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information provided by the applicant). Applicants who have no relevant or available past performance information will receive a neutral score for these factors (i.e., 2 points for subcriterion a), 1.5 points for subcriterion b), and 1.5 points for subcriterion c)). Failure to provide any past performance information, or to include a statement in your proposal that you do not have any relevant or available past performance information, may result in a zero score for the factors.</p>
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B. REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

Each Regional Office will review proposal submissions for proposed projects located in its associated geographic region. A proposal where the project location is served by two or more Regional Offices will be reviewed by the Regional Office to which the proposal was submitted to as described in Section IV.B.

All proposals received by EPA in hard copy or via grants.gov by the submission deadline will first be screened by EPA Regional staff against the threshold criteria in Section III of the announcement. Proposals that do not pass the threshold review will not be evaluated further or considered for funding.

All eligible proposals will then be evaluated by a Regional review panel, which will be composed of EPA staff, and which may also include representatives from other federal agencies that are part of the Urban Waters Federal Partnership. Evaluations will be based on the 100-point scale described in Section V.A above. Proposals will be ranked based on the reviewers’ scores, and the scores and rankings will be provided to the EPA Regional Selection Official(s) for final funding decisions. In making the final funding decisions, the Regional Selection Officials may also consider geographic diversity, project diversity, and funding availability.