

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10

Strategic Agricultural Initiative/Food Quality Protection Act

Grant Program: FY 2009 Request for Proposals

Agency Name: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Region 10
Funding Opportunity Title: "Soil Fumigant Pilot Project", FY 2009 Strategic Agricultural Initiative/Food Quality Protection Act Grant Program
Announcement Type: Request for Proposals - Initial Announcement
Funding Opportunity Number: EPA-R10-SAI--09-001
Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number (CFDA): 66.716 Research, Development, Monitoring, Public Education, Training, Demonstrations, and Studies

Executive Summary

EPA Region 10 is soliciting proposals for a pilot project to support agricultural community transition from high-risk pesticides to the use of reduced-risk methods of agricultural pest control. The program supports grants for education, development, demonstration, and studies for Food Quality Protection Act transition and employs reduced risk practices for pest management in agriculture. The desired pilot project will develop and test a decision support system to implement FQPA requirements for soil fumigants under localized application methods and scenarios, and provide options for alternative soil-borne pest control tactics.

Funding/Award

EPA Region 10 anticipates awarding 1 grant totaling approximately \$130,000. There is no matching requirement under this program.

Eligible Applicants

States, U.S. territories or possessions, federally recognized Indian Tribal governments and Native American Organizations, public and private universities and colleges, hospitals, laboratories, other public and private non-profit institutions, local governments, international entities, and individuals are eligible to apply for funding. For profit organizations are not eligible to apply for funding. All projects must occur in one or more of the Region 10 states of Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, or Washington or Tribal Nations in Region 10.

Contact:

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IMPORTANT DATES

October 9, 2009:	closing date for receipt of hard copy or electronic submission by 5:00 PM Pacific Daylight Time
October 30, 2009:	Funding decisions are announced

November 30, 2009:	Full application and work plan due to EPA
December 31, 2009	Awards made

The above dates (other than the October 9, 2009 proposal submission date) are anticipated dates and are subject to change. Applications received after the closing date and time will not be considered for funding.

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I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Authority

The statutory authority for this program is Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), Section 20; Toxic Substances Control Act, Section 10, as supplemented by Public Law 106-74; Public Law 105-174. The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) 66.716 states that the intended use of these funds is to: “support research, development, monitoring, public education, training, demonstrations, and studies assistance relating to the protection of public health and the environment from pesticides and potential risk from toxic chemicals.”

B. Background and Program Description

The Strategic Agricultural Initiative (SAI) was developed as an EPA program to demonstrate and facilitate the adoption of pest management practices that will enable farmers to transition away from the use of high-risk pesticides. The SAI encourages the development of pest management practices and products that are less toxic, effective, and support the implementation of the [Food Quality Protection Act](#) (FQPA). A SAI guiding principle is farmer adoption of identified low-risk integrated crop or pest management tactics and strategies. The program supports innovative efforts that enable farmers to decrease reliance on agricultural chemicals while maintaining economical outcomes by developing, demonstrating and/or applying reduced-risk alternatives and ecologically-based integrated approaches to pest management.

Recent decisions made under FQPA for the use of soil fumigants will require many farmers to adopt alternative application methods and transition to lower-risk pest management practices. Specific changes required for soil fumigant use are outlined at http://www.epa.gov/oppsrrd1/reregistration/soil_fumigants/index.htm

I. **Purpose and Scope** EPA’s Office of Pesticide Priorities for 2009 – EPA’s Office of Pesticide Programs has developed a list of priorities for the Strategic Agricultural Initiative for FY2009. One of the National Pesticide Program Stewardship priorities is to develop reduced risk alternatives for the soil fumigants. Region 10 SAI Program seeks to identify and implement reduced risk methods focused specifically on the soil fumigants – these include methyl bromide, chloropicrin, dazomet, and metam sodium/potassium.

Funding under this announcement will support a grant for educational outreach, study, investigation, and/or demonstration specifically for soil fumigant FQPA transition and reduced risk practices for soil borne pest management in agriculture. Applicants are encouraged to submit proposals that develop and test a decision support system for farmers to manage risk factors associated with soil fumigation. A decision support system refers to an interactive computer-based program that integrates data, personal

preferences, and predictive models to help the user identify problems and select the desired outcome.

The type of data a soil fumigant decision support system may gather and present would include:

- Geographic characteristics of the application site (spatial location, man-made features, population distribution)
- Physical characteristics of the application site (landforms, weather and climate, soils, acreage, vegetation or residue)
- User defined inputs (pest population estimates or maps, pest management tactic or chemical name, crop rotation, application or seeding rate, treatment date, equipment or treatment method)
- Model inputs (buffer zones, emission credits, weather forecasts)
- Predicted protective measures needed based on federal, tribal, or state regulatory requirements

2. Goals and Objectives

Under this announcement, EPA Region 10 will give priority consideration to projects that:

- Develop decision support systems based on locally relevant or site specific data. This may include mapping features to display field characteristics & sensitive sites in the built environment.
- Involve farmers in the design and testing of the decision support system to enhance adoption and use by farmers.
- Generate different soil borne pest management scenarios to develop alternative plans to show the effects of various management changes in relation to potential environmental and health hazards, and to identify mitigation required for the selected option.
- Streamline regulatory requirements by producing fumigant management plans tailored to area-specific production practices and sensitive sites.
- Include access to observational weather data and scientifically-appropriate model forecast tools for consideration in application timing. Important weather information would include simulation of inversion conditions and the potential for off-target drift under high wind events.
- Provide flexibility for the tool to encompass a variety of geographic scales from the individual field to a regional view (e.g. at the section or county level).
- Include economic costs of production for various management scenarios.

- Encourage partnerships among farmers, commodity groups, scientists, extension, local/state/federal government agencies, and other stakeholders to demonstrate, promote, and utilize reduced risk/IPM practices in the field.
- Quantitatively measure and document the effects of using the fumigation decision support system to reduce risk to the environment, human health, and the community.

C. FQPA/SAI Linkage to EPA Strategic Plan

Linkage to EPA Strategic Plan. The assistance agreement will support EPA Strategic Plan Goal 4 - Healthy Communities and Ecosystems; Objective 4.1 - Chemical, Organism and Pesticide Risks; Sub-objective 4.1.5: Realize the Value from Pesticide Availability. Through 2011, ensure the public health and socio-economic benefits of pesticide availability and use. To see EPA's 2006-2011 Strategic Plan: www.epa.gov/ocfo/plan/plan.htm

D. Environmental Results

Pursuant to EPA Order 5700.7, "*Environmental Results under EPA Assistance Agreements*," EPA requires that all grant recipients adequately address environmental outputs and outcomes. Outputs and outcomes differ both in their nature, and in how they are measured.

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

Expected outputs from the projects funded under this solicitation may include but are not limited to the following: 1) soil pest management decision support system for farmers; 2) soil fumigant plans for farmers that include soil-borne pest reduced-risk management techniques; 3) conferences, seminars, demonstrations, and trainings on the soil pest management decision support system; 4) partnerships established between federal and non-federal programs to provide reduced risk/IPM programs for crop producers; 5) acres impacted by the project under management that include pesticide risk reduction practices; and 6) percent reduction expected in the use of highly toxic active ingredients or percent reduction in use under high-risk conditions.

2. *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 environmental, behavioral, health-related or programmatic in nature, but must be quantitative. They may not necessarily be achievable within an assistance agreement funding period.

Expected outcomes from the projects funded under this solicitation may include but are not limited to the following: 1) increase the number of farmers employing decision support systems in managing soil borne pests; 2) quantitative and qualitative reduction in the use of soil fumigants under high-risk conditions; 3) collaborative partnerships among farmers, EPA, other federal/state/local agencies, and other interested stakeholders to implement soil fumigant reduced risk/IPM programs, and 4) reduction in community pesticide exposure incidents related to the use of soil fumigants.

II. Award Information

A. Amount of Funding Available

EPA Region 10 anticipates awarding one grant totaling approximately \$130,000. Proposals in which the applicant is requesting funds in excess of \$130,000 will not be reviewed. If an applicant is selected for funding, any costs incurred prior to actual award are incurred at the applicant's risk, unless pre-award costs have been approved by EPA.

EPA reserves the right to make additional awards under this announcement without further competition (after the original award selections are made) if additional funding becomes available. Any additional selections for awards will be made no later than six months after the original selection decisions. The additional selections must be made in accordance with the terms of this announcement and EPA policy.

Funding for these projects is not guaranteed and is subject to the availability of funds and the evaluation of proposals based on the criteria in this announcement. In appropriate circumstances, EPA reserves the right to partially fund proposals by funding discrete activities, portions, or phases of proposed projects. If EPA decides to partially fund a proposal, it will do so in a manner that does not prejudice any applicants or affect the basis upon which the proposal, or portion thereof, was evaluated and selected for award, and that maintains the integrity of the competition and selection process.

Award of funding through this year's competition is not a guarantee of future funding.

EPA reserves the right to reject all proposals and make no awards under this announcement or make fewer awards than anticipated.

B. Start Date/Project Duration

All projects should have an anticipated start date of **January 1, 2010**. Proposed project periods may be up to two (2) years.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

States, U.S. territories or possessions, federally recognized Indian Tribal governments and Native American Organizations, public and private universities and colleges, hospitals, laboratories, other public and private non-profit institutions, local governments, international entities, and individuals are eligible to apply for funding. For profit organizations are not eligible to apply for funding.

Non-profit organizations described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engage in lobbying activities as defined in Section 3 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1955 are not eligible to apply.

B. Matching funds

There is no match requirement for this program.

However, please note that leveraged resources will be considered as an evaluation criterion during the selection process (See Section V. B.). Leveraged funding or other resources need not be for eligible and allowable project costs under the EPA assistance agreement unless the Applicant proposes to provide a voluntary cost share or match. If EPA accepts an offer for a voluntary cost share/match, applicants must meet their matching/sharing commitment as a condition of receiving EPA funding. Applicants may use their own funds or other resources for voluntary match/cost share/participation if the standards at 40 CFR 30.23 or 40 CFR 31.24, as applicable, are met. Only eligible and allowable costs may be used for voluntary matches/cost shares/participation. Other Federal grants may not be used as voluntary matches or cost shares without specific statutory authority.

C. Threshold Eligibility

In order to be eligible for funding consideration under this announcement, proposals must meet all of the following conditions. Only proposals that meet all of these criteria will be evaluated against the ranking factors (See Section V) of this announcement. Applicants deemed ineligible for funding consideration as a result of the threshold eligibility review will not be considered for funding and will be notified within 15 calendar days of the ineligibility determination.

1. Proposals cannot exceed \$130,000. Proposals that request more than \$130,000 will not be considered for funding.
2. Proposals must be related to soil borne pest management and reduction of risk from soil fumigants used under field conditions.
3. Applicants must meet the eligibility requirements as described in Section III.A. Eligible Applicants.

4. Proposals must substantially comply with the proposal submission instructions and requirements set forth in Section IV of this announcement. However, where a page limit is expressed in Section IV with respect to the proposal, pages in excess of the page limitation will not be reviewed.
5. Proposals must be received via mail or courier or electronically submitted by **5:00 PM Pacific Daylight Time on October 9, 2009**. Proposals received after this time will be returned to the sender without further consideration unless the applicant can clearly demonstrate that it was late due to EPA mishandling. For hard copy or e-mailed submissions, where Section IV requires proposal receipt by a specific person/office by the submission deadline, receipt by an agency mailroom is not sufficient. Applicants should confirm receipt of their proposal with the SAI Coordinator, Sandy Halstead (halstead.sandra@epa.gov or 509-786-9225) as soon as possible after the submission deadline. Failure to do so may result in your proposal not being reviewed.
6. The project must address geographically-specific data and be piloted in one or more of the states of EPA Region 10 (Alaska, Idaho, Oregon or Washington), or Tribal Nations in Region 10.
7. The SAI/ FQPA grant program is intended to support demonstration projects, education and outreach projects, studies, and investigations. Proposals seeking funding for basic research are not eligible for funding. However, proposals may include a *component for applied on farm research*, as long as they also have *demonstration, education and/or outreach activities*.
8. Proposals from different principal investigators within an organization will be accepted. However, principal investigators may not submit more than one proposal.

IV. Proposal and Submission Information

A. How to Obtain Proposal Package

Applicants can download individual grant application forms from EPA's Office of Grants and Debarment website at: <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/application.htm>

To obtain a hard copy of materials, please send an email or written request to Sandy Halstead at halstead.sandra@epa.gov.

B. Proposal Submission Method

Applicants have the option to submit their proposals in one of three ways. Please select only one option for submitting your proposal package:

- Hard copy via Standard 1st Class Mail delivery by U.S. Postal Service,

- hard copy via express delivery (UPS, Fed Ex, USPS),
- electronically via email.

Proposals will not be accepted via fax.

All proposals must be prepared, and include the information, as described in Section IV.C, regardless of mode of transmission.

1. Directions for Hard Copy Submission (Options 1 and 2)

Please provide one original hard copy of the proposal package (including signed and completed SF 424 and SF 424A forms), and one electronic copy on a CD ROM. To reduce paper use, applicants are requested to submit double-sided printed proposals.

Hard copy proposals and disks should be sent to:
Sandy Halstead
US EPA – Region 10
24106 N. Bunn Road
Prosser, WA 99350

All hard copies of proposal packages must be received by **5:00 PM Pacific Daylight Time on October 9, 2009.**

2. Directions for email submission (Option 3)

Email submissions must be submitted to **R10.agteam@epa.gov** and received by **5:00 PM Pacific Daylight Time on October 9, 2009.**

All required documents listed below in Section IV.C of the announcement must be attached to the email as separate Adobe PDF files. Please note that if you choose to submit your materials via email, you are accepting all risks attendant to email submission including server delays and transmission difficulties. Email submissions exceeding 15MB will experience transmission delays which will affect when they are received by the Agency. For these size submissions, applicants should submit their application materials via hardcopy or else they may be received late and not considered for funding. Applicants submitting their application materials through email should confirm receipt of the materials with Sandy Halstead as soon as possible after submission.

C. Format and Content of Proposal Submission

The proposal package **must** include the following forms

1. **Signed Standard Form (SF) 424** - Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424): Complete the form. There are no attachments. Please be sure to include organization fax number and email address in Block 5 of the Standard Form SF 424.

- 2. Standard Form SF 424A – Budget Information:** Clearly state the requested funding amount for each of the budget categories under Section B for the entire project period. The total amount of federal funding requested for the two-year project period should be shown on line 5(e) and on line 6(k) of SF-424A.

If you are submitting a hard copy proposal, blank SF-424 and SF-424A forms can be found at <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/application.htm>.

Following EPA's evaluation of proposals/applications, all applicants will be notified regarding their status. Final applications and forms will be requested, as necessary, from those eligible entities whose proposal/application has been successfully evaluated and preliminarily recommended for award. Those entities will be provided with instructions and a due date for submittal of the final application package.

- 3. Narrative Proposal:** The document, prepared as described below, should be readable in PDF or MS Word and consolidated into a single file.

Project proposals must be double spaced, typed in 12 point or larger print with a minimum of one inch horizontal and vertical margins. Pages must be numbered in order starting with the summary page and continuing through the document. Project proposals (including all of the elements described below) cannot exceed 15 pages double spaced. Letters of support are not included in this page limit. If a single spaced proposal is submitted, it will only be reviewed up to the equivalent of 15 pages double spaced page limit for project proposals.

Proposals must address each of the Evaluation Criteria in Section V of this announcement and follow the format and content outlined below.

a. Summary Page: (1 page limit)

Project Title:
Project Coordinator:
Organization Name and Address:
Telephone No.:
Fax No.:
Email Address:
Project Duration (including Starting Date and Ending Date):
First Year Funding Request:
Second Year Funding Request, if applicable:
Total Funding Request (for the entire project):

Abstract. Provide a brief executive summary (approx. 150 words) that describes the proposed work and the anticipated outputs and outcomes.

- (i) Please indicate if this proposal is a continuation of a previously EPA funded project.
- (ii) Yes _____ No _____
- (iii) If yes, please provide the following:
- (iv) EPA Assistance Number: _____
- (v) Budget Period of Project: _____

b. Project Narrative:

Applicants must make sure that the proposal narrative includes the information below and addresses the selection criteria in Section V of this announcement.

Project Need.

Describe the significance of the project in terms of environmental, human health, pesticide risk and/or use reduction or pollution prevention. The target pest(s) and crop(s) should be described in regard to critical soil pest management issues and importance in the region to food or fiber production.

Objectives.

Include a numbered list (1, 2, etc.) of concisely written project objectives. In most cases, each objective can be stated in a single sentence.

Project Approach

Briefly describe relevant information currently available including data sources for the project area. This should also include information on projects currently in progress that are relevant to or provide the basis for either the design or the validation of a new approach to soil-borne pest management. Include a statement explaining why the proposal will be effective and what makes it innovative.

Project Plan.

Describe in detail the tasks and activities for the project and how they relate to achieving the identified objectives. This should include a brief background on the main issues or challenges, specific objectives, main activities and expected outcomes and deliverables.

Performance Measures and Expected Outputs and Outcomes.

Please state how you will evaluate the success of the program in terms of measurable environmental results. The work plan should include **performance measures** that demonstrate progress or environmental benefits of the project. Include outputs and outcomes tied specifically to the project objectives.

Include a clear explanation of your plan and the methods (both quantitative and qualitative) that will be used for tracking and measuring environmental results. Measures of success should be linked to reduction of pesticide use/risks, implementation of alternative agricultural practices, and/or similar impacts.

In addition, all **projects must include the following reporting elements:**

- ✓ Total number of acres impacted directly by the project under management that include pesticide risk reduction practices. If applicable, include those acres treated with biopesticides or reduced risk pesticides and/or those pest management techniques that do not employ chemical methods.
- ✓ Total number of “potential” acres impacted by the project. Potential means the total number of acres that the proposed project could impact in addition to and including the number of actual acres involved in the project.
- ✓ Percent reduction or pound per acre reduction expected in the use of highly toxic active ingredients and/or pesticide products or the percent reduction in use under high-risk conditions.
- ✓ Declared SAI Transition Gradient number (0-5 Rating) from the “SAI Transition Gradient”. A rating must be provided in your proposal for the beginning of the project, and the target level obtained by the conclusion of the project.

Strategic Agricultural Initiative (SAI) Transition Gradient:

- 0 No transition, farmers resist any change.
- 1 Farmers are interested in learning about reduced-risk pest management practices
- 2 Reduced-risk pest management practices have been initiated at the farmer level on a pilot basis.
- 3 Farmers utilize key management practices to determine pest management needs.
- 4 Full implementation of reduced-risk pest management practices.
- 5 Adoption of a *whole systems* approach.

Major Participants and Partners:

List all participating farmers/ranchers, farm/ranch organizations, researchers, educators, conservationists, and others having a role in the project. Provide name, organizational affiliation/occupation (such as farmer) and describe the role each will play in the project. A brief resume must be submitted for each major researcher or other educator.

Project Budget Accompanied by Budget Narrative (budget narrative recommended not to exceed one page).

Please submit a detailed budget with narrative, explaining the need for funding under each of the appropriate budget categories. Include an indirect cost rate if applicable. List the anticipated amount of funding and associated staff needed to achieve the project objectives. Include the requested federal and any non-federal cost share in these estimates. Link each task or activity from the project work plan to the associated resources that are needed to accomplish the activity. Under travel, include the travel location(s), estimated number of trips, estimated total mileage, and number of nights lodging required throughout the entire project period. Describe how leveraged resources will be obtained (if applicable) and what role EPA funding will play in the overall project. Include enough detail for EPA to determine if the costs are eligible, allocable, reasonable, and allowable. For more information, see <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/recipient/tips.htm>.

Management Fees: When formulating budgets for proposals/applications, applicants must not include management fees or similar charges in excess of the direct costs and indirect costs at the rate approved by the applicants cognizant audit agency, or at the rate provided for by the terms of the agreement negotiated with EPA. The term "management fees or similar charges" refers to expenses added to the direct costs in order 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.

4. Proposal Appendices:

These appendices must be included in the grant proposal, but **do not** count towards the page limit.

Appendix A: Timetable. A timetable that includes what will be accomplished under each of the objectives during the project and when completion of each objective is anticipated.

Appendix B: Past Performance/Programmatic Capability: Submit a list of federally funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include Federal grants and cooperative agreements but not Federal contracts) that your organization performed within the last three years (no more than 5, and preferably EPA agreements), and describe how you documented and/or reported on whether you were making progress towards achieving the expected results (e.g., outputs and outcomes) under those agreements. If you were not making progress, please indicate whether, and how, you documented why not. In addition, for these agreements describe (i) whether, and how, you were able to successfully complete and manage them and (ii) your history of meeting the reporting requirements under the agreements including submitting acceptable final technical reports.

Applicants must also provide information on their (i) organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project and (iv) staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project.

In evaluating applicants under past performance and reporting factors in Section V, 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 and prior Federal agency 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 reporting information, please indicate this in the proposal and you will receive a neutral score for those elements under Section V.

Appendix C: Letters of Support (if applicable). Applicants are encouraged to provide letters of support to demonstrate established partnerships and support for the project. See evaluation factor in section V Partnerships and Collaborations.

Appendix D: Map(s). A map outlining the proposed project area must accompany the narrative.

D. Other Submission Information

Confidential Business Information

It is recommended that confidential business information (“CBI”) **not** be included in your proposal. However, if CBI is included in your proposal, it will be handled in accordance with 40 CFR Part 2.203. 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 which is otherwise required by 40 CFR Part 2.204(2) prior to disclosure. However, EPA protects competitive proposals/applications from disclosure under applicable provisions of the Freedom of Information Act prior to the completion of the competitive selection process.

Intergovernmental Review

If selected for the award, applicants (except for federally recognized Indian Tribes and Native American Organizations) must comply with the Intergovernmental Review Process and/or consultation provisions of Executive Order 12372 or Section 204 of the Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act, if applicable, which are contained in 40 CFR Part 29. Further information regarding this requirement will be provided if your proposal is selected for funding.

Pre-proposal/Application Communications and Assistance

EPA Region 10 will respond to questions from individual applicants regarding threshold eligibility criteria, administrative issues related to the submission of the proposal, and requests for clarification about the announcement. However, in accordance with EPA’s Competition Policy (EPA Order 5700.5A1), EPA staff will not meet with individual applicants to discuss draft proposals, provide informal comments on draft proposals, or provide advice to applicants on how to respond to ranking criteria. Applicants are responsible for the contents of their proposals.

DUNS

All applicants applying for funding, including renewal funding, must have a Dun and Bradstreet Universal Data Numbering System (DUNS) number. Applicants that do not

already have a DUNS number may receive a DUNS number in one day at no cost by calling the dedicated toll-free request line at 1-866-705-5711 or by visiting the website at : www.dnb.com.

Conference and Workshops

If a conference or workshop is an element of the project, the applicant will be required to answer the following questions: Who is initiating the conference/workshop/meeting? How will it be advertised? Whose logo will be on the agenda and materials? What is the percentage of participants, i.e. federal, state, local or public? Will the grant recipient prepare the proceedings and disseminate the information back to the targeted community? Will program income be generated from this event?

Contracts and Subawards Questions and Answers

a. Can funding be used for the applicant to make subawards, acquire contract services, or fund partnerships?

EPA awards funds to one eligible applicant as the recipient even if other eligible applicants are named as partners or co-applicants or members of a coalition or consortium. The recipient is accountable to EPA for the proper expenditure of funds.

Funding may be used to provide subgrants or subawards of financial assistance, which includes using subawards or subgrants to fund partnerships , provided the recipient complies with applicable requirements for subawards or subgrants including those contained in 40 CFR Parts 30 or 31, as appropriate. Applicants must compete contracts for services and products, including consultant contracts, and conduct cost and price analyses, to the extent required by the procurement provisions of the regulations at 40 CFR Parts 30 or 31, as appropriate. The regulations also contain limitations on consultant compensation. Applicants are not required to identify subawardees/subgrantees and/or contractors (including consultants) in their proposal/application. However, if they do, the fact that an applicant selected for award has named a specific subawardee/subgrantee, contractor, or consultant in the proposal/application EPA selects for funding does not relieve the applicant of its obligations to comply with subaward/subgrant and/or competitive procurement requirements as appropriate. Please note that applicants may not award sole source contracts to consulting, engineering or other firms assisting applicants with the proposal solely based on the firm's role in preparing the proposal/application.

Successful applicants cannot use subgrants or subawards to avoid requirements in EPA grant regulations for competitive procurement by using these instruments to acquire commercial services or products from for-profit organizations to carry out its assistance agreement. The nature of the transaction between the recipient and the subawardee or subgrantee must be consistent with the standards for distinguishing between vendor transactions and subrecipient assistance under Subpart B Section .210 of OMB Circular A-133 , and the definitions of subaward at 40 CFR 30.2(ff) or subgrant at 40 CFR 31.3,

as applicable. EPA will not be a party to these transactions. Applicants acquiring commercial goods or services must comply with the competitive procurement standards in 40 CFR Part 30 or 40 CFR Part 31.36 and cannot use a subaward/subgrant as the funding mechanism.

b. How will an applicant's proposed subawardees/subgrantees and contractors be considered during the evaluation process described in Section V of the announcement?

Section V of the announcement describes the evaluation criteria and evaluation process that will be used by EPA to make selections under this announcement. During this evaluation, except for those criteria that relate to the applicant's own qualifications, past performance, and reporting history, the review panel will consider, as appropriate and relevant, the qualifications, expertise, and experience of:

(i) an applicant's named subawardees/subgrantees identified in the proposal/application if the applicant demonstrates in the proposal/application that if it receives an award that the subaward/subgrant will be properly awarded consistent with the applicable regulations in 40 CFR Parts 30 or 31. For example, applicants must not use subawards/subgrants to obtain commercial services or products from for profit firms or individual consultants.

(ii) an applicant's named contractor(s), including consultants, identified in the proposal/application if the applicant demonstrates in its proposal/application that the contractor(s) was selected in compliance with the competitive Procurement Standards in 40 CFR Part 30 or 40 CFR 31.36 as appropriate. For example, an applicant must demonstrate that it selected the contractor(s) competitively or that a proper non-competitive sole-source award consistent with the regulations will be made to the contractor(s), that efforts were made to provide small and disadvantaged businesses with opportunities to compete, and that some form of cost or price analysis was conducted. EPA may not accept sole source justifications for contracts for services or products that are otherwise readily available in the commercial marketplace.

EPA will not consider the qualifications, experience, and expertise of named subawardees/subgrantees and/or named contractor(s) during the proposal/application evaluation process unless the applicant complies with these requirements.

V. Proposal Review Information

A. Proposal Review

All proposals will be reviewed for threshold eligibility purposes (See Section III) by the Region 10 Strategic Agricultural Initiative Coordinator. Each proposal that meets all of the threshold eligibility requirements will then be evaluated by a panel of EPA staff based on the criteria set forth below. In your proposal, please make sure that you address each criterion.

B. Selection Criteria (Total 100 points)

Selection Criteria and description	Maximum points
<p>Significance of the Project</p> <p><u>Importance of project in relation to FQPA.</u> Proposals will be evaluated based on the extent that they address critical soil fumigant pest management issues and requirements relative to the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA), and are consistent with the goals of the R10 Strategic Agricultural Initiative to (i) Reduce or eliminate the risk from the use of soil fumigants; and (ii) Increase farmers' adoption of reduced risk alternatives and/or sustainable integrated pest or crop management methods. (See Section I for goals and priorities.) (10 points)</p> <p><u>Commodity and region-wide significance and degree of transferability to other areas.</u> Proposals will be evaluated based on the extent they address agricultural commodity pest problems, and discuss and explain the importance of the project and the commodity. In addition, the proposal should address how the decision support system could be adapted to other geographic locations or other cropping systems in EPA Region 10. (10 points)</p>	<p>20 points</p>
<p>Quality of the Proposal</p> <p>Reviewers will evaluate whether the approach is technically/scientifically sound and/or innovative and if the methods are appropriate. Reviewers will focus on the following components:</p> <p><u>Extent to which the project has clearly stated objectives and methods.</u> Proposals will be evaluated based on their clarity and ability to explain the project objectives and the methods or approach used to accomplish the project. (10 points)</p> <p><u>Extent to which the project has environmental measurement/outputs and outcomes.</u> Proposals will be scored on the performance measures selected and the supporting data that will be used to track the selected performance measures as described in Section IV.3.b. Projects must focus on actual results, getting information and agricultural practices into the hands of farmers who actually use them to reduce risk from FQPA-targeted soil fumigants to other methods of pest management. (15 points)</p> <p><u>Evaluation of project progress and outcomes.</u> Projects will be evaluated on their plan for tracking and measuring progress towards achieving the expected project environmental results. Proposals must provide a plan to track progress on meeting targeted goals, and the mechanism on how success will be measured and verified to show goals have been achieved.</p>	<p>45 points</p>

<p>(10 points)</p> <p><u>Proposals will be evaluated based on the applicant's programmatic capability to perform the proposed project based on the applicants:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) past performance in successfully completing federally funded assistance agreements (an assistance agreement is a grant or cooperative agreement and not a federal contract) within the last three years; (ii) history of meeting reporting requirements on federally funded assistance agreements (an assistance agreement is a grant or cooperative agreement and not a federal contract) within the last three years and submitting acceptable final technical reports under the agreements; (iii) past performance in documenting and/or reporting on its progress towards achieving the expected outcomes and outputs (e.g., results) under federally funded assistance agreements (an assistance agreement is a grant or cooperative agreement and not a federal contract) performed within the last three years and if such progress was not made whether the documentation and/or reports satisfactorily explained why not); (iv) organizational experience and ability to plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the project; and staff qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the project. <p>(10 points)</p> <p>In evaluating applicants under this factor, EPA will consider information provided by the applicant and may also consider information from other sources including prior grantors and agency files. Applicants with no relevant or available past performance and/or reporting history (items i, ii, and iii above) will receive a neutral score for those elements of this factor.</p>	
<p>Partnerships and Collaborations</p> <p><u>Extent to which the project includes active roles for multiple farmer participation.</u> Proposals will be evaluated based on the extent of their partnerships and the participation of the farmers as part of the project activities. Cooperation with scientists, extension agents, pest control advisors, crop consultants, state agencies, non-profit organizations, and other partners is encouraged. Letters of support from collaborators, indicating their contributions to the project, may be provided for this factor.</p> <p>(10 points)</p> <p><u>Outreach/Use of extension to enhance the likelihood of farmer adoption.</u> Proposals will be evaluated to the extent that there are clear plans for extension, outreach, or communications that will likely lead to effective learning and adoption of new practices, and how the long term, sustainable</p>	<p>20 points</p>

adoption will be measured (10 points)	
<p>Financial Integrity</p> <p><u>Extent to which the costs in the proposal budget appears eligible, reasonable and allowable.</u> Proposals will be evaluated on the clarity and detail of the proposed budget. All proposal budgets will be evaluated for the inclusion of a detailed budget with narrative, explaining the need for funding under each of the appropriate budget categories. Budget descriptions will also be evaluated for the linkage to each task or activity from the project work plan to the associated resources that are needed to accomplish the activity. (10 points)</p> <p><u>Extent to which the project utilizes additional funding sources and partnerships.</u> Applicants will be evaluated based on the extent they demonstrate (i) how they will coordinate the use of EPA funding with other Federal and/or non Federal sources of funds to leverage additional resources to carry out the proposed project(s) and/or (ii) that EPA funding will compliment activities relevant to the proposed project(s) carried out by the applicant with other sources of funds or resources. (5 points)</p>	15 points
Total Points Possible	100 points

C. Review and Selection Process

A panel of EPA staff will review the eligible applications based on the criteria outlined in this Request for Proposals (RFP). The quality of the proposals will play a significant role in the selection of grants for funding.

The review panel will develop a list of the most highly rated proposals, and funding recommendations will then be made to the EPA Region 10 Office of Ecosystems, Communities, and Public Affairs Director, who will make the final funding decision. In making the final funding decisions, the EPA Region 10 Office of Ecosystems, Communities, and Public Affairs Director may also consider program diversity/balance, available funds, and geographic diversity.

The selected Applicant will be notified of recommendation for funding by e-mail after final decisions have been made, approximately 60 days after the closing of this announcement. This notification is not an authorization to begin performance. The applicants not selected will be also notified electronically, consistent with the Agency’s Disputes Procedures. (Note that applications will be subject to review under Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs.)

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Decisions and Formal Application Process

Following evaluation of proposals, all applicants will be notified regarding their status. EPA anticipates notifying *successful* applicants via electronic or postal mail by approximately Friday, October 30, 2009. The notification will advise applicants that their proposals have been successfully evaluated and recommended for award. The notification will be sent to the original signers of the applications. The notice shall require submission of a final application. This notification, which advises that an applicant's proposal has been recommended for award, is not an authorization to begin performance and is not a guarantee of funding. The award offer signed by the EPA Award Official is the authorizing document and will be provided through postal mail. At a minimum, this process can take up to 90 days from the date of award recommendation.

EPA anticipates notification to *unsuccessful* applicants will be made via electronic or postal mail by approximately November 10, 2009. The notification will be sent to the original signers of the applications.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

The award and administration of these grants will be governed by the Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements set forth at 40 CFR Part 30 or 31. In addition, the provision in 40 CFR Part 32 governing government-wide debarment and suspension, and the provisions in 40 CFR Part 34 regarding restrictions on lobbying applies.

Once a proposal is selected, the recipient may be required to submit before award, in addition to a full application, a copy of its written procurement procedures developed in accordance with 40 CFR 30.40 – 30.48 or 40 CFR 31.36, as applicable, for review.

All costs incurred under this program must be allowable under the applicable OMB Cost Circulars. Copies of the circulars can be found at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars>. In accordance with the EPA policy and the OMB circular, any recipient of funding must agree not to use assistance funds for fund-raising, or political activities such as lobbying members of Congress or lobbying for other federal grants, cooperative agreements, or contracts. EPA grant funds may only be used for the purposes set forth in the grant agreement, and must be consistent with the statutory authority for the award. Grant funds may not be used for matching funds for other Federal grants, or intervention in Federal regulatory or adjudicatory proceedings. In addition, Federal funds may not be used to sue the Federal government or any other government entity. Cost rates will not increase the \$130,000 maximum funding amount.

In certain circumstances costs incurred prior to the grant award may be eligible for reimbursement. However, this does not include any costs associated with responding to this solicitation or in finalizing the application package. As stated in Section II.A, if an applicant is selected for funding, any costs incurred prior to actual award are incurred at the applicant's own risk.

Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP)

In accordance with 40 CFR 30.54 and 31.45, projects that include the generation or use of environmental data are required to submit a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP). This includes efficacy and performance data, surveys and similar results. The award recipient must develop and implement quality assurance and quality control procedures, specifications and documentation that are sufficient to produce data of adequate quality to meet project objectives. 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. The QAPP should be prepared in accordance with EPA QA/R-5: EPA Requirements for Quality Assurance Project Plans. The QAPP must be submitted to the EPA Project Officer at least 30 days prior to the initiation of data collection or data compilation. Requirements for QAPP's can found at http://www.epa.gov/quality1/qa_docs.html.

Indirect Cost Rates

If indirect costs are budgeted in the assistance application and the non-profit organization or educational institute does not have a previously established indirect cost rate, it agrees to prepare and submit its indirect cost rate proposal and/or cost allocation plan in accordance with the appropriate Federal cost principle, 2 CFR Part 230 (formerly OMB Circular A-122), "Cost Principles for Non-Profit Organizations" or 2 CFR Parts 215 and 220 (formerly OMB Circular A-21), "Cost Principles for Educational Institutions" within ninety (90) from the effective date of the award for this assistance agreement.

If a local government does not have a previously established indirect cost rate, it will need to prepare its indirect cost rate proposal and/or cost allocation plan in accordance with 2 CFR Part 225 (formerly OMB Circular A-87), "Cost Principles for State, Local, and Indian Tribal Governments." The local government recipient whose cognizant Federal agency has been designated by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) must develop and submit its indirect cost rate proposal for approval to its cognizant Federal agency within six (6) months after the close of the governmental unit's fiscal year. If the cognizant Federal agency has not been identified by the OMB, the local government recipient must still develop (and when required, submit) its proposal within that period.

Studies Using Human Subjects

A grant recipient must agree to meet all EPA requirements for studies using human subjects prior to implementing any work with these subjects. These requirements are given in 40 C.F.R. 26. For observational studies involving children and/or pregnant women, please refer to Subparts B & D of 40 C.F.R. 26. No work involving human subjects, including recruiting, may be initiated before the EPA has received a copy of

the applicant's Institutional Review Board's (IRB) approval of the project and the EPA has also provided approval.

Where human subjects are involved in the research, the recipient must provide evidence of subsequent IRB reviews, including amendments or minor changes of protocol, as part of annual reports. A grant applicant must agree to meet all EPA requirements for studies using human subjects prior to implementing any work with these subjects. These requirements are given in 40 C.F.R. § 26. Studies involving intentional exposure of human subjects who are children or pregnant or nursing women are prohibited by Subpart B of 40 CFR Section 26. For observational studies involving children or pregnant women and fetuses please, refer to Subparts C & D of 40 CFR Section 26. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services regulations at 45 CFR § 46.101(e) have long required "... compliance with pertinent Federal laws or regulations which provide additional protection for human subjects." EPA's regulation 40 C.F.R. Part 26 is such a pertinent Federal regulation. Therefore, the applicant's Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval must state that the applicant's study meets the EPA's regulations at 40 CFR § 26.

No work involving human subjects, including recruiting, may be initiated before the EPA has received a copy of the applicant's IRB approval of the project and the EPA has also provided approval. Where human subjects are involved in the research, the recipient must provide evidence of subsequent IRB reviews, including amendments or minor changes of protocol, as part of annual reports. Until further notice, EPA will not consider funding for research that involves intentional dosing human toxicity studies with pesticides.

C. Reporting

The successful applicant(s) will be required to submit quarterly progress report throughout the duration of the project. Reports should include a description of project activities including accomplishments, successes and lessons learned along with any problems and/or delays. Environmental outcomes should be indicated in relation to the approved schedule and milestones. A final project report is also required 90 days following the end of the project period according to the same format. All reports can be submitted either electronically or by hard paper copy.

D. Dispute Resolution Process

Grant 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: http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getpage.cgi?position=all&page=3629&dbname=2005_register. Copies of these procedures may also be requested by contacting the contact listed in Section VII.

E. Non-profit Administrative Capability

Non-profit applicants that are recommended for funding under this announcement are subject to pre-award administrative capability reviews consistent with Section 8b, 8c and 9d of EPA Order 5700.8 - Policy on Assessing Capabilities of Non-Profit Applicants for Managing Assistance Awards (http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/award/5700_8.pdf). In addition, non-profit applicants that qualify for funding may, depending on the size of the award, be required to fill out and submit to the Grants Management Office the Administrative Capabilities Form, with supporting documents, contained in Appendix A of EPA Order 5700.8.

VII. Agency Contacts

If you have questions or need additional information regarding the EPA Region 10 Strategic Agricultural Initiative/Food Quality Protection Act Grant Program: FY 2009 Request for Proposals, please contact:

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