

Request for Initial Proposals
Competition Number: EPA-OPEI-NCEE-04-01

ENVIRONMENTAL AND RESOURCE ECONOMICS WORKSHOPS

OVERVIEW

The US Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) National Center for Environmental Economics (NCEE) is soliciting Initial Proposals (IP) for Federal assistance in sponsoring "Environmental Economics Workshops." This is an Announcement for Funding Opportunity Number EPA-OPEI-NCEE-04-01, Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number 66.611, Environmental Policy and Innovation Grants, authorized under Delegation of Authority I-47. Initial Proposals must be submitted electronically, via e-mail, and be received by EPA before 11:59 pm, Eastern time, Tuesday, April 13, 2004. Initial Proposals received after the deadline will not be considered. Eligible applicants include States, territories, the District of Columbia, Indian Tribes, and possessions of the U.S. It is also available to public and private universities and colleges, hospitals, laboratories, and other public or private nonprofit institutions. Nonprofit 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 1995 are not eligible to apply. "For profit" organizations are generally not eligible for funding. Some of EPA's statutes may limit assistance to specific types of interested applications. Applicants must be located in, and project activities must be conducted within, the United States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, or a territory or possession of the United States.

NCEE is interested in supporting Environmental and Resource Economics workshops in each of the following categories:

- a) Dissertation Workshops – the goal of these workshops is to attract the best and brightest graduate students/new PhDs and improve the quality of current research topics.
- b) Methods Development and Training Workshops – these workshops should provide guidance and training on a specific analytical activity of importance in environmental economics.
- c) Current Issues Workshops – these workshops should advance the field of environmental economics by exploring current and emerging issues of national or regional significance.

NCEE expects to have \$200,000 to \$250,000 available in FY 2004 for award under this Request for Initial Proposals, subject to availability of funding in the agency's final FY 2004 budget. EPA anticipates workshops will cost up to \$25,000 per day. Grants may be awarded for project periods of up to 5 years where appropriate. Individual grants may be fully or incrementally funded. Cost sharing is not required, but the cost-effectiveness of the initial proposal, which can be influenced by cost sharing, is an evaluation factor. EPA anticipates awarding 3 to 10 assistance agreements under this announcement (with an expected range of 1 to 5 in each workshop category); most will be cooperative agreements, not grants. NCEE reserves the discretion to select potential awardees from the current solicitation for funding this fiscal year and next; therefore, funding for some award(s) may not occur until next fiscal year. NCEE will not issue any non-competitive or unsolicited awards in any areas covered by this competition.

A complete copy of this announcement, including discussion of application materials and requirements, is posted at: <http://yosemite.epa.gov/ee/epa/eed.nsf/Webpages/GrantSolicitations.html>.

I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. SPECIFIC CATEGORIES OF WORKSHOPS

The EPA's National Center for Environmental Economics (NCEE) is seeking Initial Proposals for workshops in three different areas (categories). The three categories are:

1. Dissertation Workshops

Purpose – The purpose of these workshops is to improve the quality of current and future research in environmental and resource economics topics by providing a forum for early and significant input for students pursuing, or considering pursuing, a Ph.D. in environmental and resource economics. It is the goal of these workshops to promote the field of environmental and resource economics by fostering a collegial atmosphere for mentoring students and giving constructive feedback on research ideas and projects, thus enticing top quality graduate students to the field to do cutting edge research. The workshop should focus on research in its early stages with no formal papers expected. It is intended that university faculty member(s) and others with significant research experience will participate in providing constructive advice to current or potential graduate students on their research agenda. Topics are not restricted, other than to the broad field of environmental and resource economics.

Intended participants – These workshops are intended to provide support and significant early guidance to graduate students who are currently pursuing, or considering pursuing, a Ph.D. in environmental and resource economics. Potential student participants are expected to be at the Master's or Ph.D. level, although exceptional undergraduate students should not be precluded from participation. Mentor/discussants should have a Ph.D. and be established researchers in the field of environmental and resource economics.

Desirable characteristics – Applicants offering a graduate program granting degrees in environmental and resource economics will have the least difficulty satisfying the expertise criteria for this category.

2. Methods Development and Training Workshops

Purpose – The purpose of these workshops is to provide guidance and training on a specific analytical activity of importance in environmental economics. The choice of analytical topic or activity should be based on two criteria: 1) it should be public policy relevant and 2) it should suffer from a lack of adequate treatment in texts, journals and other existing venues that serve as educational sources for students and practitioners in the field. The goals of these workshops are: to develop the theoretical basis for guidance of correct analytical approaches, to identify best practices that have been used by respected practitioners, to identify useful data sources, to describe and discuss potential problems typically faced by analysts and generally to educate an inexperienced audience about the activity. The workshop should give participants a shared understanding of techniques, define the process of deriving empirical information from existing research products and use the information to inform new analysis concerning an important environmental issue. The outcome of the workshop should be that attendees learn to conduct analysis at a higher level of quality and with greater credibility.

As the purpose of the workshops is to improve analytical activity, topics should be important to the conduct of public policy analysis. For example, elements of cost benefit analysis, cost-effectiveness analysis, regional economic impact analysis, simulation modeling, mathematical programming and decision analyses represent some types of analytical activities used in policy analysis. Particular issues or problems arising when these or similar analyses are conducted in the context of environmental policy analysis would be appropriate topics for training workshops. In addition, topics could also represent an analytical problem that has not been fully resolved by prior work. In this case, the workshop would be less a teaching forum and more oriented toward resolving differences that have arisen in applied work. This form should not take on an issue that is in the early stage of development or for which appropriate theoretical bases do not exist. But it could focus on an issue that is still subject to some debate about best practices, best data or appropriate applications.

Intended participants – Since this type of workshop is a teaching and training forum, it is expected that the organizer will be a well respected expert on the topic at hand with knowledge of others who are relevant experts, and that the persons who will present materials and lead discussions at the workshop will be recognized expert practitioners either in the academic community or highly credible non-academic institutions. Generally it would be useful to involve researchers with a sound theoretical understanding of the topic as well as senior practitioners who have experience with the practical difficulties typically faced in conducting field work. We expect attendees would have undergraduate or graduate level training in economics but lack extensive experience in the particular analytical topic under discussion. The workshop should reach out to students as well as professional staff employed in the nonprofit sector, the private sector and the government sector at the federal, state or local level. The materials should be accessible to inexperienced or junior staff so long as they have the requisite training in economics; and the topic could also draw interest from more senior professionals who wish to learn about a topic they have not yet studied in depth.

Workshop format – In order to maximize exposure, applicants may offer to conduct the workshop more than once either in the same location in subsequent years or in a variety of locations; such initial proposals should make clear the need for multiple deliveries.

3. Current Issues Workshops

Purpose – The purpose of this type of workshop is to explore in depth a timely topic through the use of environmental economics analyses and techniques and to disseminate findings to a wide audience. Such findings should be useful in solving relevant environmental problems or resolving issues of significant debate. Workshops should be original in facilitating use of environmental economic analysis to address an important issue. Topics should be interesting, valuable, and challenging in ways that stimulate lively discussion. The workshop should offer original, timely topics or approaches to addressing the issues, while avoiding overlap with other conferences. The topic, as well as the design of the workshop, should aim to stimulate lively interest and interaction, which might extend to a much larger audience than those able to attend.

Intended participants – Those attending should be interested in the application of the findings of the workshop and may include economists, other scientists and staff employed in the non-profit, private or government sector. Identifying effective and innovative ways to attract the right

participants and/or to disseminate workshop proceedings increases the workshop's usefulness. The intended audience may reach beyond those attending, as workshop findings should be made available in a variety of ways, such as proceedings.

Workshop format – Designing the workshop format to encourage lively and effective interaction among presenters and participants increases its usefulness and enjoyment. Workshop initial proposals may choose either to identify a *specific topic*, or they may identify a *process* for selecting the topic and emphasize their expertise in meeting all of the criteria. In the former case, the initial proposal will be judged by how effectively the topic and the workshop design would achieve the purposes described above. In the latter case, the initial proposal will be judged based on the likelihood that the process will result in a topic and workshop design that achieves the purposes as described above.

B. OTHER WORKSHOP CONSIDERATIONS

1. Applicants may offer to develop an Internet based "virtual workshop" either as an adjunct to or a substitute for a traditional physical workshop. For example, an Internet based adjunct could be developed by first conducting a traditional workshop then establishing a web site which contains the basic materials presented in the original workshop together with a summary or transcript of the conversation that occurred in the original workshop. Alternatively, a completely virtual workshop could be offered in which a web site is developed containing the basic materials and then participants "attend" the workshop over a specified period of time to read the materials and interact with each other through a moderator by means of the Internet. Although we encourage applicants to be imaginative in devising new workshop formats, these will not necessarily be preferred to traditional workshops that require the physical presence of participants.
2. Funding received through this program may be used for a variety of types of expenses including but not limited to: cost of renting workshop facilities, provision of light refreshments (not including alcohol); payments to organizers and presenters for their time, cost of travel and per diem expenses; purchase, development and distribution of presentation materials and financial assistance to participants to defray the cost of travel and per diem expenses. Funds should not be used to purchase equipment or facilities. In reviewing all initial proposals, the cost-effectiveness of the budget will be a factor in determining awards.
3. This solicitation is not intended to provide funds for presentations that occur during the regularly scheduled annual meetings or conferences of existing professional organizations. Special sessions that are scheduled outside but contiguous with the regular meetings may be considered. Applicants should demonstrate that their initial proposal is consistent with this intent.

II. AWARD INFORMATION

NCEE expects to have \$200,000 to \$250,000 available in FY 2004 for award under this Request for Initial Proposals, subject to availability of funding within the agency's final FY 2004 budget. EPA anticipates workshops will cost \$5,000 to \$25,000 per day. Awards for events lasting more than one day will be limited in number for budget reasons and must be justified in the applicant's

initial proposal. Awards may be for a series of workshops with project periods of up to 5 years, but applicants are cautioned that only certain types of events are appropriate for multi-event or multi-year awards (see above project objectives). Individual assistance agreements for multi-event or year projects may be fully or incrementally funded: if incrementally funded, future funding is not guaranteed.

EPA anticipates awarding 1 to 5 assistance agreements under each category, but reserves the right to issue no awards in any given category. Most awards will be cooperative agreements and thus will include substantive involvement on the part of EPA. In no case will EPA have sole and/or final control over the agenda, selection of speakers, panelists, and/or attendees, or the duration, date, and location of the workshops to be supported as a result of this announcement. EPA reserves the right to issue no awards under this announcement.

EPA anticipates that some awards under this announcement will be made before the end of the fiscal year, September 30, 2004. NCEE will not authorize any pre-award costs. NCEE reserves the discretion to select potential awardees from the current solicitation for funding this fiscal year and next; therefore, funding for some award(s) may not occur until next fiscal year.

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible applicants – Eligible applicants include States, territories, the District of Columbia, Indian Tribes, and possessions of the U.S. It is also available to public and private universities and colleges, hospitals, laboratories, and other public or private nonprofit institutions. Nonprofit 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 1995 are not eligible to apply. “For profit” organizations are generally not eligible for funding. Some of EPA’s statutes may limit assistance to specific types of interested applications. Applicants must be located in, and project activities must be conducted within, the United States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, or a territory or possession of the United States.

B. Cost Sharing or Match – There are no match or cost-sharing requirements. However the degree to which the project budget effectively uses EPA funds and/or leverages internal or external matching funds will be considered as part of the cost-effectiveness evaluation criterion. Allowable costs for nonprofit organizations are defined in OMB circular A-122; allowable costs for public entities are defined in OMB circular A-87.

C. Other – Applicants may submit more than one initial proposal.

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. How to Get Application Materials – This announcement contains all information necessary to respond to the Request for Initial Proposals, including instructions for finding necessary forms. Both PDF and html versions of this RFIP will be posted on NCEE’s website, at <http://yosemite.epa.gov/ee/epa/eed.nsf/Webpages/GrantSolicitations.html>, while the solicitation is open. After preliminary reviews, applicants remaining in contention for FY 2004 funding will be contacted and asked to submit (in hard copy) a formal, complete assistance agreement application, including: 1) a signed SF-424, 2) required certifications, 3) a work plan and 4) a reporting plan. This formal application must be submitted on an accelerated basis in order to

allow time for further consideration and award processing this fiscal year. Applicant's initial proposals should include only those items requested in Section B below.

B. Content and Form of Application Submission – All Initial Proposals must be sent, by an authorized representative of their institution, to ncee@epa.gov, in the form of an e-mail with the files listed below attached. Information in the body of the e-mail itself will not be considered in EPA's evaluation of the Initial Proposal. The body of the e-mail need only identify the project category, title and principle contact's name. The four attachments to the e-mail should contain the information requested below, and if not a PDF file, be a Word or WordPerfect file, or in rich text format.

1. Standard Form 424 – Application for Federal Assistance – This form may be obtained in a fill-and-save PDF format at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/sf424.pdf>. Applicants should fill in this form as appropriate and include it as an attachment to their e-mail application. Applicants should pay particular attention to the following items:
 - Item 5 - (under the 'Name and telephone number of person to be contacted...') give the name of the lead environmental economist/program contact, their phone number and e-mail address.
 - Item 5 - list the applicant's DUNS number. If your organization does not have a DUNS number, one is obtainable by calling Dun and Bradstreet's dedicated toll-free DUNS number request line at 1-866-705-5711.
 - Item 11 – give both the descriptive title of the initial proposal, and note the workshop category under which the initial proposal should be evaluated (for example, 'Category 2 - Methods Development and Training Workshops').
 - Item 15 - list any anticipated matching funds (by source) and/or program income.
 - Item 16 - address the requirements under Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs." See also IV.D below.
 - Item 18 - identify the Authorized Representative. Note that block 18d (Signature of Authorized Representative) does not need to be filled in for the initial proposal.
2. Project Description, Budget Justification and Evaluation Criteria Discussion (six single-sided pages maximum) – The project description, budget justification and evaluation criteria discussion must provide:
 - (1) a concise description or abstract of the project (including literature citations),
 - (2) a justification for the proposed budget, and
 - (3) a discussion of how the initial proposal addresses each of the specific evaluation criteria (see V.A. below, Specific Evaluation Criteria).

The project description should note the structure and timing of the workshop(s). If other project partners or funding sources are involved, the project should include a description of their role and contribution. The evaluation criteria discussion should explain the basis (e.g., past success at partnering) for the applicant's assumption that the external resources will, in fact, materialize. If your initial proposal covers multiple events or years, be sure to include a narrative description of any budget implications should we determine that EPA could only incrementally fund or partially fund the initial proposal (e.g., closing costs).

The project description, budget justification and evaluation criteria discussion together must be no longer than six pages (single-sided), must use no smaller than 12-point type, and all page margins should be at least one inch. In reviewing the project description, budget justification and evaluation criteria discussion write-up, reviewers will not consider any pages beyond the first six.

3. **Budget** (no page limit) – This should be submitted on OMB’s Budget Form SF 424A (Budget Information - Nonconstruction Programs). A fill-and-save PDF version of the form is available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/sf424a.pdf>. The project budget should include costs for the proposed duration of the project. The budget should break out project costs by year and/or workshop (for multi-workshop proposals) and by object class. Object classes include personnel, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, contractual, and other. Details explaining the basis for the budget calculations of any indicated sums (e.g., breakouts of personnel costs by project staff or the basis for travel cost estimates) should be shown on supplemental page(s). Costs should be justified in the ‘Project Description, Budget Justification and Evaluation Criteria Discussion’ addressed in item IV.B.2 above. Any budget justification material included in this budget attachment will not be considered in EPA’s review of the application.
4. **Documentation of Qualifications** (no page limit) - The applicant must include in this attachment resumes of all principal staff, including principal staff from partner organizations, if applicable, who will have a major role in the project. It is not necessary to identify all participants in the proposed workshops. Should the applicant be proposing shifting leads with each of a series of workshops, only the resumes of the initial leads need be submitted. The process for choosing subsequent leads should be discussed in the ‘Project Description, Budget Justification and Evaluation Criteria Discussion.’

C. Submission Dates and Times – Applicants must submit their initial proposal as one e-mail with attachment(s) sent to ncee@epa.gov, with “EPA-OPEI-NCEE-04-01 proposal” as the subject line. A complete initial proposal includes Form SF 424, the ‘Project Description, Budget Justification and Evaluation Criteria Discussion’ file, Form SF 424A, and documentation of qualifications. EPA must receive initial proposals before 11:59 pm Eastern time, on **Tuesday, April 13, 2004**. No late initial proposals will be accepted. No hardcopy, mail or fax submissions will be accepted.

D. Intergovernmental Review – All applicants should be aware that formal requests for assistance might be subject to intergovernmental review under Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs. Applicants should contact their State's Single Point of Contact (SPOC's) for further information. A list of SPOC's can be accessed at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/spoc.html>. This information should be addressed in Block 16 of the required form, SF 424.

E. Funding Restrictions – Funding is only available for activities authorized under one or more of the EPA grant authorities stated in Section III.B of this RFIP, and costs deemed allowable under *OMB Circular A-122, Cost Principles for Non-Profit Organizations*, accessible at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a122/a122.html>. Funding will not be permitted for

construction activity, lobbying and entertainment expenses. Pre-award costs and equipment costs will not be allowed.

- F. Other Submission Requirements** – Both initial proposals and – if requested – complete applications for funding might be subject to the Freedom of Information Act. This means that anyone can request and receive copies of them. Applicants should clearly mark information they consider confidential and EPA will make final confidentiality decisions in accordance with agency regulations (40 CFR part 2, subpart B). Applicants are discouraged from including any confidential information in their initial proposals.

V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

Initial Proposals for workshops will first be ranked within their workshop category using the specific and general evaluation criteria discussed below. The Approving Official will then make final recommendations on the number of grants to fund in each category. Highly ranked applicants who remain under consideration for FY 04 funding will then be asked to submit complete grant application packages on an accelerated basis in order to meet EPA funding process deadlines, should their application be selected for funding.

A. Specific Evaluation Criteria – Applications will be evaluated against the following technical criteria (as appropriate for each workshop category). The criteria are listed in order of decreasing importance, although applicants are advised that initial proposals should explicitly address each of the following:

- 1. Expertise** – Initial Proposals should describe the applicants' skills and the qualities of the institution they are associated with, including, as appropriate:
 - a) Academic and other work in environmental economics in general;
 - b) Expertise in the specific topics proposed for workshops. If applicants propose workshops whose specific topics will be determined annually by a committee, then they should demonstrate their ability to attract key experts;
 - c) Degree to which the applicant is: 1) an appropriate representative for the issue addressed in the assistance agreement, 2) likely to be viewed as an authority on the subject, or 3) partnering with an organization that meets these requirements; and
 - d) Descriptions in the write-up that highlight the institutions and/or project leads directly relevant expertise (meant to complement the project leads' resumes).
- 2. Experience** – Applicants should discuss previous work, qualifications, and experience of proposed leads in any or all of the following areas.
 - a) The process of organizing and running past workshops (especially of the type applied for) and methods used to attract participants should be discussed. Applicants should design a workshop that will meet the stated goals of the program as described in this document (under “Purpose” and “General Program Objectives”);
 - b) The topic of the workshop(s);

- c) The administration of Federal grants; and
 - d) The performance history of the applicant. EPA will consider the applicant's past performance in administering federal financial assistance and carrying out projects supported by EPA and other federal agencies. This may include the results of audits conducted by EPA's Office of Inspector General, other federal agencies, or state, local or tribal oversight entities. Applicants are strongly encouraged to discuss their performance history in their initial proposals and to provide contacts for EPA to obtain additional information.
- 3. Cost-Effectiveness** – Initial proposals should discuss how effectively workshop funds will be used (i.e., the marginal value of the workshop) in the following areas:
- a) The expected audience size, the number of speakers and sessions, and the length of the workshop. How do these numbers improve the productivity of a workshop and result in good outcomes relative to larger or smaller numbers?
 - b) Leveraging EPA funds through: 1) additional funding from other sources, 2) cost-sharing from the host institution, 3) contributions from the key personnel or 4) collaborating with other institutions to reduce the requested budget. Applicants relying on co-funding should support their expectations (e.g., based on past successes in obtaining multiple funding sources).
 - c) Applications for multiple workshops, large workshops, and two or three-day workshops should justify the benefits of the series, size or duration of the workshops. Note any budget implications should the initial proposal be incrementally or partially funded.
 - d) The appropriate and allowable use of funds.
- 4. Design** – The three types of workshops have specific objectives and applicants should demonstrate how the relevant objectives will be achieved. Below is a short summary of the objectives. (For a full description, see the workshop summaries in I.A above).
- a) Dissertation Workshops are expected to: 1) improve students organizational, writing, research and presentation skills, 2) emphasize important and interesting environmental economic topics, 3) seek to encourage students to pursue advanced degrees in environmental and resource economics, and 4) attract top participants.
 - b) Methods Development and Training Workshops are expected to: introduce new tools and techniques for addressing issues that are: 1) policy relevant, 2) inadequately treated in the literature, and 3) emerging or unique.
 - c) Current Issues Workshops should have topics chosen that are policy relevant and the applicant should discuss: 1) the methods they will use to publicize the topic, 2) extend the results of the workshop beyond the workshop participants to academic,

government, and business sectors, and 3) the qualifications and experience of the expected speakers and how they will be attracted.

5. Social Value and Environmental Outcomes – Workshops have multiple objectives and a discussion of the public benefits provided should include the following:

- a) The workshop must 1) support and benefit the general public, 2) advance the sciences, and 3) increase the quality of research in the field of environmental and resource economics.
- b) EPA emphasizes sound economic and policy analysis by continually investigating emerging analytical approaches and adopting them as appropriate. We encourage applicants to indicate how their workshop will enhance EPA's ability to serve the public interest by improving economic and policy analysis.
- c) Initial Proposals should explain the environmental and policy relevance of the topic and, as appropriate, the significance of the knowledge gap being addressed for the training workshops and the emerging topics workshops. Important topics often center on analytical activities used in policy analysis. These include: 1) analyses used in the design, development or evaluation of public policies, 2) elements of cost-benefit analysis and cost-effectiveness analysis, 3) regional economic impact analysis, 4) simulation modeling, 5) mathematical programming and 6) decision analysis. Particular issues or problems arising when these or similar analyses are conducted in the context of environmental policy analysis would be appropriate topics for training workshops.
- d) How does the proposed effort advance the field of environmental economics? Will the tools and training demonstrated in the workshops meet the needs of a broad range of stakeholders?

B. General Evaluation Criteria – In addition to the specific, technical criteria described above, final recommended rankings of initial proposals will also take into consideration the following Agency management concerns (listed in approximate priority order):

- Geographic diversity of the recipients and workshop locations;
- Topic diversity;
- Balance between: national and local workshops, workshop scope (single and multi-year efforts, small and large workshops, single and multi-day activities), and immediate value and institution building; and
- Anticipated budget availability and agency priorities as reflected, for example, in NCEE's budget and the Agency's draft Environmental Economic Research Strategy (see <http://www.epa.gov/ORD/htm/EERS-06052003.pdf>).

C. Selection Process – After all applicants are ranked (within their category), the Director of NCEE will then make final funding recommendations. Any disputes regarding funding decisions

will be resolved in accordance with 40 CFR Part 30 or 31, depending on the applicant. The EPA reserves the right to reject all applications and make no awards.

EPA expects to identify and notify final contending proposers regarding the need for complete applications within four weeks of the closing of this solicitation. Final contending applicants will then have less than four weeks to complete and submit a full assistance agreement application.

NCEE reserves the discretion to select potential awardees from the current solicitation for funding this fiscal year and next; therefore, funding for some award(s) may not occur until next fiscal year.

VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. Award Notices – Highly ranked applicants who remain under consideration for FY 04 funding will be asked to submit complete grant application packages on an accelerated basis in order to meet EPA funding process deadlines should their application be selected for funding. Applicants should be aware that if selected, they will need to submit a formal request for funding within four weeks or less after being contacted by EPA. Upon receipt and processing of the formal grant applications, EPA will announce recipients through the posting of information on NCEE’s website, <http://yosemite.epa.gov/ee/epa/eed.nsf/Webpages/Grants.html>.

This information will be posted approximately 30 days after EPA’s Grants Administration Division issues a written offer of award to each recipient. EPA expects to announce successful awards for fiscal year 2004 no later than September 2004.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements – Applicants must comply with standard EPA assistance agreement requirements. Funded activities must be allowable under EPA statutory authority (see Section III, *Eligibility Information*).

C. Reporting – The recipient of these financial awards will be subject to post award monitoring by a designated EPA Project Officer. A Project Officer will be designated at the time of award of these assistance agreements. To comply with standard EPA post award monitoring requirements, the recipient must submit progress reports quarterly, and participate in an annual review of the project with the EPA Project Officer. Annual reviews may take place on or off-site. Quarterly progress reports detail the project status, tasks completed during the reporting period, compliance with the workplan, anticipated goals and tasks for the upcoming quarter, expenditures, and remaining grant funds.

During annual reviews, the designated EPA Project Officer will evaluate the progress of the grantee in completing tasks detailed in the workplan, ensure that the grantee is meeting all programmatic requirements, and spending federal funds on allowable activities under the grant or cooperative agreement.

VII. AGENCY CONTACTS

Applicants with questions about this solicitation should e-mail their questions to ncee@epa.gov, using “Grant Solicitation Question” as the subject. Questions will not be replied to directly.

Instead, we will respond to all appropriate questions by posting answers on our website on the frequently asked questions (FAQ) page, <http://yosemite.epa.gov/ee/epa/eed.nsf/Webpages/GrantsFAQ.html>. We will acknowledge receipt of e-mail questions within two business days, indicating whether a response will be posted on our FAQ page.

Questions should be submitted as early as possible. Only questions posed to us by nine days before the closing date (**April 4th**) will be considered, and no changes will be made to the FAQ page after six days prior (**April 7th**) to the closing date of the solicitation (**April 13th**).

Please do not contact individual NCEE staff with questions by phone or e-mail. This is to ensure that all applicants are given equal access to solicitation information.

NCEE's point of contact for this solicitation is:

Brett Snyder

U. S. Environmental Protection Agency

Mail code 1809T

1200 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.

Washington, DC 20460

Phone: 202-566-2261

Fax: 202-566-2339

E-mail: snyder.brett@epa.gov

VIII. OTHER INFORMATION

A brief overview of assistance agreements NCEE has awarded over the last year is available at: <http://yosemite.epa.gov/ee/epa/eed.nsf/Webpages/Grants.html>.