Small-Scale Water Efficiency Projects NOFO

November 9, 2023
Getting Started

- To watch the recording, use the same link: [Join Live Teams Event](https://www.usbr.gov/watersmart/)
- Attendees' cameras and microphones are muted
- A copy of the slides will be available on our website after the webinar: https://www.usbr.gov/watersmart/

- Questions and comments can be posted in the Q&A icon on the bottom of the menu bar
Today’s Agenda

• Overview of the Small-Scale Water Efficiency Projects Funding Opportunity

• IMPORTANT Application Tips!

• Overview of Reclamation’s WaterSMART Selection Process

• Financial Assistance Requirements

• Tools and Resources

• Question and Answer Period
Eligible Applicants

**Category A:**
- States, Indian Tribes, irrigation districts, and water districts;
- State, regional, or local authorities, whose members include one or more organizations with water or power delivery authority; and
- Other organizations with water or power delivery authority.

**Category B:** Nonprofit conservation organizations that are acting in partnership with and with the agreement of an entity described in Category A. *Category B applicants must include with their application a letter from the Category A partner, stating that they are acting in partnership with the applicant and agree to the submittal and content of the proposal.*

To be eligible, applicants must also be located in one of the following States or Territories: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Washington, Wyoming, American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, the Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico.
Category B – Partnership Letter

Category B applicants should include with their application a letter from the Category A partner, stating that the Category A partner:

1. Is acting in partnership with the applicant;
2. Agrees to the submittal and content of the application; and
3. Intends to participate in the project in some way, for example, by providing input, feedback, or other support for the project.

Note: Partners do not necessarily need to contribute cost share funding.
Eligible Projects

• Eligible Project Types
  • Canal Lining/Piping
  • Municipal Metering
  • Irrigation Flow Measurement
  • Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition and Automation (SCADA)
  • Landscape Irrigation Measures
  • High-Efficiency Indoor Appliances and Fixtures
  • Upgrades to Commercial Cooling Systems to Improve Water Use Efficiency

Other projects that are similar to those tasks listed above may be submitted for consideration and will be allowed to the extent that they are consistent with program authorization and goals.

Refer to Section C.5. of the NOFO for ineligible projects
Award Information

• **Funding**
  • Up to $100k in Reclamation funds for 2-year projects
  • Total project costs of $225k
  • 50% non-Federal cost share
  • Approximately 50 awards per application period, depending on the number of applications received, amount requested by each applicant and the amount of funding available

**Applications Due:**
• Application Period 1: January 16, 2024, at 4:00 p.m. MST
• Application Period 2: July 9, 2024, at 4:00 p.m. MDT
• Application Period 3: January 14, 2025, at 4:00 p.m. MST
• Application Period 4: July 8, 2025, at 4:00 p.m. MDT
Evaluation Criteria

- Criterion A. Project Benefits: 35%
- Criterion B. Planning Efforts Supporting the Project: 25%
- Criterion C. Project Implementation: 20%
- Criterion D. Nexus to Reclamation: 15%
- Criterion E. Presidential and Department of Interior Priorities: 5%
**Criterion A – Project Benefits**

(35 points)

- Discuss
  - Benefits to Category A Applicant’s water supply delivery system
  - Other benefits (e.g., broader benefits to supply reliability, increasing collaboration, benefits to other sectors, collaboration with NRCS)
- Does not require quantification of water savings, but do explain the significance of the benefits

**Criterion B – Planning Efforts Supporting the Project**

(25 points)

- Prioritizes projects that are identified through local planning efforts and meet local needs
- Discuss
  - How was the plan developed?
  - How is the project supported by the plan?
- Discuss a specific plan/broad planning effort here, rather than focusing on the design for the project.
Evaluation Criteria

Criterion C – Project Implementation
(20 points)

• Describe implementation plan including schedule and milestones

• Discuss required permits and compliance, describe any engineering and design work that has been performed

• Discuss any engineering or design work performed specifically in support of the proposed project and if additional engineering or design work is needed

Criterion D – Nexus to Reclamation
(5 points)

• Describe the connection to Reclamation project activities and facilities, if applicable.
Evaluation Criteria

Evaluation Criterion E – Presidential and Department of the Interior Priorities (15 Points)

• Points will be awarded based on the extent that the project demonstrates support for the Biden-Harris Administration’s priorities, including E.O. 14008: Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad, E.O. 13985: Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government, and the President’s memorandum, Tribal Consultation and Strengthening Nation-to-Nation Relationships.

• Sub-criterion No. E1: Climate Change

• Sub-criterion No. E2: Disadvantaged or Underserved Communities

• Sub-criterion No. E.3: Tribal Benefits

Note: We urge applicants to utilize the White House Council on Environmental Quality’s Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool to discover how communities in their project area may be classified as disadvantaged or underserved. Explore the map - Climate & Economic Justice Screening Tool (geoplatform.gov)
WaterSMART Application Tips
General Application Tips

• The most successful projects are those that fit well with the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO).

• Review the objective of the NOFO, the eligible project types, and the evaluation criteria carefully to choose the right NOFO.
  
  • Contact the Program Coordinator to discuss any questions about your project fit or applicant eligibility.

  • Look at past successful applications at www.usbr.gov/WaterSMART
Application Tips
General Considerations

• **Important**: Read *everything* in the NOFO!
  • Ask questions if something does not make sense.

• **Give yourself plenty of time to write and submit the proposal.**

• **Do not assume the Application Review Committee knows you.**
  • Committee is comprised of Reclamation staff from throughout the Western states.

• **If your application is not awarded, ask for a debriefing to help prepare a better proposal.**
Application Tips

Evaluation Criteria

• Make sure you respond to every criterion and every sub-criterion

• Your responses should:
  • Directly respond to the criterion – We recommend you copy and paste the criteria directly into your proposal and place your response immediately below each criterion/sub-criterion
  • Provide support in the form of quantification or citations to reference documents
  • Make the case for how your project meets the criterion – general statements without explanation or support will not score well

• Application Tip: Well-supported responses to the evaluation criteria are the key to writing a competitive proposal
Application Tips
Environmental and Cultural Resource Compliance

• All projects funded through WaterSMART funding opportunities must comply with Federal environmental and cultural resources laws and regulations. Reclamation regional and area office staff will ensure compliance. This compliance must occur prior to any ground-disturbing activities taking place.

• We highly recommend you discuss your project with compliance staff at your local Reclamation regional or area office. If you are uncertain who to contact, please contact the Program Coordinator identified in Section G of the funding opportunity.
WaterSMART
Financial Assistance Requirements
What happens next?

From NOFO to Selection
WaterSMART Selection Process

Sample schedule

NOFO Posting Phase (8-12 weeks)
- NOFO Posted
- NOFO Open for approximately 60-90 Days

ARC Review Phase (12-14 Weeks)
- NOFO Closes
- ARC Reviews and Ranks Proposals

Selection Phase (6-8 Weeks)
- Selections Announced in Press Release – All Applicants are Notified
- Management Review

Pre-Award Phase (8-15 Weeks)
- Recipient provides detailed budget info, business practices, final scope of work
- Reclamation Awards Funding

Project Implementation (2 Years)
- Recipient Submits Annual Performance and Financial Reports
- Entity Submits Final Report to Reclamation
- Environmental Compliance (3-12 months)

From NOFO Posting to Award of Funding = 12-14 Months
Pre-award Documentation
What to expect if selected for funding

You may be asked to provide:
• Additional budget clarifications
• Pre-award system survey (if no audit is required) or single audit if not available on the Federal Audit Clearinghouse
• Cost-share documentation
• Explanation of requested pre-award costs
• All reports up to date on other Reclamation awards
Financial Assistance (FA) Office
Primary Role of the FA Office

• Answer questions about financial assistance requirements during the application process

• Conduct Initial Screening and remove applications that do not meet the completeness, eligibility and timeliness for submission requirements of the NOFO.

• Notify Applicants of Application status based on the contact information provided on the SF-424 Form
Before you Begin
Register in SAM.gov

Account Set Up

• “Sign Up” in Sam.gov (Login.gov)
• Obtain a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)
• Register Entity in SAM.gov
• Entity Registration Checklist
• If you have difficulties – document communications with help desk.
  • Include communications with your application

NOTE: For all new registrants, creating the account with SAM.gov may take up to several weeks for the account to be approved and considered as ACTIVE!
Before you Begin

Register in Grants.gov

- Grant Applicants | GRANTS.GOV
- Applicant Registration | GRANTS.GOV
How to Apply

Where to Start?

Start at www.grants.gov

Search for Funding Opportunity
R24AS00059

How to use Grants.gov

Reclamation partnered with grants.gov to bring you this webinar to help familiarize yourself with the site and to provide an overview of how to submit a grant application. View the Powerpoint
View Grant Opportunity

Reference: R23AS00362 CWMP Phase I
R23AS00106 AERP

www.grants.gov

View SYNOPSIS for key information

PLEASE SUBSCRIBE
To receive notifications of any changes
View Grant Opportunity

Reference: R23AS00362 CWMP Phase I
R23AS00106 AERP

www.grants.gov

View VERSION HISTORY for older Versions and Modifications
### Notification History:

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<td>Related Documents</td>
<td>Aug 02, 2023</td>
<td>The following updates have been made to the NOFO. See attachment. Title change. Removed column in Application Checklist. Adds BIL Authority. A.4. Updated Planning Program Description. B.5. Updated Technical Assistance. C.4.1.1 Permits are not an allowable activity. C.4.2. Updated Construction start date. C.5.5 Updated Ineligible studies. C.5.1 Inserted Small Surface Water Storage Projects. F.2.1.2 Environmental costs considered project costs removed. F.2.3.2 Added Cost Share/Match Waiver for Insular Areas.</td>
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<td>May 01, 2023</td>
<td>An FAQ that was developed based on questions we received during the AERP Webinar and in calls and emails.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Related Documents</td>
<td>Apr 20, 2023</td>
<td>There was a minor change to the fourth bullet in Section C.1.1. Category A Applicants. The word “facility” was replaced with “facility to reflect the exact language in the statutory authority.”</td>
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<td>Related Documents</td>
<td>Apr 11, 2023</td>
<td>The AERP NOFO was updated to add Section C.5.1 – Ineligible Studies.</td>
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Mandatory Forms are:
- SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance

Plus, either the forms for Non-Construction projects
- Budget Information for Non-Construction (SF-424A)
- Assurances for Non-Construction (SF-424B)

OR the forms for Construction projects
- Budget Information for Construction Programs (SF-424C)
- Assurances for Construction Programs (SF-424D)
Preparing your budget

Budget Narrative is Required

• There is No Required Format

• We Recommend using
  Attachment B – Budget Narrative Guidance
  AND
  Attachment A – Budget Detail and Narrative Excel (seen in picture)

• You budget must address the Total Project Cost, which is the cost for BOTH for Federal and Nonfederal expenditures.
Application Tips
Before you Submit

Verify that your Application is Complete!

• SAM.gov Registration is ACTIVE
• Grants.gov Registration account set up
• SF-424 (remember signature)
• SF-424A and SF-424C (Non-Construction projects)
• SF-424B and SF-424D (Construction projects)
• Technical Proposal (» Project Narrative Attachment Form [V1.2])
• Budget Narrative (» Budget Narrative Attachment Form [V1.2]
  Budget Narrative or Budget Detail and Narrative Excel)
Financial Assistance – First Level Screening

All application packages will be screened to ensure:

• The applicant meets the completeness, eligibility, and timeliness requirements
• The applicant meets the Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and SAM registration requirements
• The application meets the content requirements
• The application contains completed mandatory forms
Financial Assistance – Selection Notification

• Once Initial screening is complete,
  • Ineligible applicants will be notified by the Grants Officer, and
  • Eligible applicants will move on to the Merit Review

• All successful applications will be notified by the Grants Officer of selection.

• The Financial Assistance Office will reach out to the applicant regarding next steps for entering a Financial Assistance award.
For Questions relating to the Application Process, SF-424 and Application Forms, Grants.gov, and SAM Registration, please reach out to the Reclamation Financial Assistance Contact:

bor-sha-fafoa@usbr.gov

**Please include the NOFO number in the subject of your email.**
Additional Opportunities, Tools and Resources
WaterSMART Program Resources

- WaterSMART Program Website: https://www.usbr.gov/watersmart
  - Previously funded applications for all programs
  - Interactive Data Visualization Tool
  - WaterSMART Dashboard
  - WaterSMART mailing list
  - Recent announcements
  - Funding opportunity calendar
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Join the WaterSMART Mailing List

You may complete this form to receive WaterSMART program notification from the Bureau of Reclamation.

WaterSMART Project Selections Overview

Since January 2021, Reclamation has selected 255 projects to be funded with $1 million in WaterSMART funding, in conjunction with $314.3 million in non-Federal funding, across the western states.
WaterSMART Program Resources

Additional Resources

• All open Funding Opportunities can be found at: www.grants.gov
  • General guide on how to submit a grant application on Grants.Gov located on WaterSMART website.

• Climate Mapping and Resilience and Adaptation: https://resilience.climate.gov/

• Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool: https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/en/#3/33.47/-97.5
Thank you!

Questions regarding project and applicant eligibility:
Nickie McCann; nmccann@usbr.gov; (303)445-3733
Questions?

Please utilize the Q&A Function to ask questions.