

OVERVIEW INFORMATION

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

National Center for Environmental Research

Greater Research Opportunities (GRO) Program

2014 EPA GREATER RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES (GRO) FELLOWSHIPS FOR UNDERGRADUATE ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY

This is the initial announcement of this funding opportunity.

Funding Opportunity Numbers (FON): (See Section I.D. for descriptions)

EPA-F2014U-GRO-P1 Natural and Life Sciences

EPA-F2014U-GRO-P2 Environmental Sciences and Interdisciplinary Programs

EPA-F2014U-GRO-P3 Engineering

EPA-F2014U-GRO-P4 Social Sciences

EPA-F2014U-GRO-Q1 Physical Sciences and Earth Sciences

EPA-F2014U-GRO-Q2 Mathematics and Computer Science

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 66.513

Solicitation Opening Date: April 10, 2014

Solicitation Closing Date: May 27, 2014, 11:59:59 PM Eastern Time (ET)

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Access GRO Fellowship Application Package and Forms (<http://www.epa.gov/ncer/rfa/forms/>)

For additional guidance, see the fellowships FAQ:

http://www.epa.gov/ncer/guidance/faqs/faq_gro_undergrad.html.

SUMMARY OF PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Synopsis of Program:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), as part of its Greater Research Opportunities (GRO) Fellowships program, is offering undergraduate fellowships for bachelor level students in environmental fields of study. The deadline for receipt of applications is May 27, 2014, at 11:59:59 PM ET. Subject to availability of funding and other applicable considerations, the Agency plans to award approximately 34 new fellowships. Eligible students will receive support for their junior and senior years of undergraduate study and for an internship at an EPA facility during the summer of their junior year. The fellowship provides up to \$20,700 per academic year of support and \$8,600 of support for a three-month summer internship.

This solicitation provides the opportunity for the submission of applications for projects that may involve human subjects research. Human subjects research supported by the EPA is governed by EPA Regulation 40 CFR Part 26 (Protection of Human Subjects). This includes the Common Rule at subpart A and prohibitions and additional protections for pregnant women and fetuses, nursing women, and children at subparts B, C, and D. Research meeting the regulatory definition of intentional exposure research found in subpart B is prohibited by that subpart in pregnant women, nursing women, and children. Research meeting the regulatory definition of observational research found in subparts C and D is subject to the additional protections found in those subparts for pregnant women and fetuses (subpart C) and children (subpart D). All

applications must include a Human Subjects Research Statement (HSRS, as described in Section IV.B. Item 6), and if the project involves human subjects research, it will be subject to an additional level of review prior to funding decisions being made as described in Sections V.C and V.D of this solicitation.

Guidance and training for investigators conducting EPA-funded research involving human subjects may be obtained here:

<http://www.epa.gov/osainter/phre/support.htm>

http://www.epa.gov/osa/pdfs/phre/phre_course/index.htm

Award Information:

Anticipated Type of Award: Fellowship

Estimated Number of Awards: Approximately 34 awards

Anticipated Funding Amount: Approximately \$1,700,000 for all awards

Potential Funding per Fellowship: Up to a total of \$50,000 over a two-year period. Fellows will receive support for their junior and senior years of undergraduate study and for a paid summer internship at an EPA facility between their junior and senior years. Cost sharing is not required.

The earliest anticipated start date for these awards is September 1, 2014.

Eligibility Information:

1. Students must attend a fully accredited U.S. college or university (located in the U.S. or its territories) for their last two years of undergraduate studies during the fellowship period.
2. Students must also be citizens of the U.S. or its territories or possessions, or be lawfully admitted to the U.S. for permanent residence. Resident aliens must include their green card number in their application (you must have your green card at the time of application to be eligible for this Fellowship opportunity). EPA may verify this number with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service of the Department of Homeland Security.
3. The GRO Undergraduate Fellowship is intended for students entering their last two years of study before obtaining their first bachelor's degree. Students who have already earned one bachelor's degree and are pursuing additional degrees are not eligible. The fellowship tenure is for two academic years (9 months each) with a required paid internship during the summer after the first year. Thus, only students who will be entering their last two years of college will be considered eligible.
4. Students must have at least a "B" average overall at the time of application submittal and during the tenure of the fellowship.
5. During the tenure of the fellowship, students must attend a fully accredited four year U.S. institution of higher education. These schools must be listed as not highly funded for research and development capacity. For the purposes of this solicitation, EPA considers students attending those institutions identified as receiving more than \$35 million in annual federal research and development funding in the National Science Foundation's publication "Federal Science and Engineering Support to Universities, Colleges, and Nonprofit Institutions: FY 2009," Table 16, column 2, as ineligible under this solicitation.

Students attending those institutions either not listed, or listed as having received \$35 million or less as designated in column 2 of Table 16, are eligible to apply. These data can be found at:

http://www.nsf.gov/statistics/nsf13303/content.cfm?pub_id=4199&id=2.

6. At the time of application submittal, students attending two-year institutions or community colleges, as well as students not in attendance at an institution of higher education, may be eligible to apply. However, in order to receive the fellowship, students attending two-year institutions or community colleges or students not in attendance at the time of application will need to show evidence of having received their Associate's degree, will need to demonstrate that they only have two years left of undergraduate studies for completion of the Bachelor's degree, and that they have been accepted to attend an accredited eligible four-year institution. This requirement is considered satisfied if the student is transferring to an accredited eligible four-year institution which has an Articulation Agreement with the two-year institution, thus meaning that all credits will transfer towards requirements for the Bachelor's degree. See Section III.A. Eligible Applicants for further information.

Application Materials:

To apply under this solicitation, use the application package available at Grants.gov (for further submission information see Section IV.E. "Submission Instructions and Other Submission Requirements"). The necessary forms for submitting a STAR application will be found on the National Center for Environmental Research (NCER) web site, <http://epa.gov/ncer/rfa/forms>. If you are not currently registered with Grants.gov, you need to allow approximately one week to complete the registration process. See Section IV for further information on application submission procedures.

If you do not have the technical capability to utilize the Grants.gov application submission process for this solicitation, send a webmail message to http://www.epa.gov/ncer/contact_us.html at least 15 calendar days before the submission deadline to assure timely receipt of alternate submission instructions. In your message provide the funding opportunity number and title of the program, specify that you are requesting alternate submission instructions, and provide a telephone number, fax number, and an email address, if available. Alternate instructions will be emailed whenever possible. Any applications submitted through alternate submission methods must comply with all the provisions of this Request for Applications (RFA), including Section IV, and be received by the solicitation closing date identified above.

The following application materials must be submitted:

- Item 1. Application for Federal Assistance, Standard Form (SF) 424
- Item 2. EPA Key Contacts Form (5700-54)
- Item 3. Front Page
- Item 4. Personal Statement
- Item 5. Background Information:
Education & Relevant Experiences

- Presentations
- Course Work
- Item 6. EPA Human Subjects Research Statement (HSRS)
- Item 7. Letters of Recommendation (submitted by reference letter writers)

Applications must identify a single topic and corresponding Funding Opportunity Number (FON), as described in Section I.D, that is appropriately related to the proposed area of inquiry. If your application seems to fit under more than one topic/FON, you still must choose a single topic/FON for purposes of submission. **Your application can be submitted to one, and only one, FON.** In instances where more than one application is submitted, EPA will contact the applicant to determine which application(s) will be withdrawn.

Agency Contacts:

Program Contact: Georgette Boddie; phone: 703-347-8049; boddie.georgette@epa.gov

Eligibility Contact: Ron Josephson; phone: 703-308-0442; email: josephson.ron@epa.gov

Electronic Submissions Contact: Todd Peterson; phone: 703-308-7224; peterson.todd@epa.gov;

I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Introduction

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), National Center for Environmental Research (NCER), invites applications for the Greater Research Opportunities (GRO) Fellowships for undergraduate environmentally-related study for bachelor's level students. The deadline for receipt of applications is May 27, 2014. Subject to availability of funding, the quality of applications received and other applicable considerations, the Agency plans to award approximately 34 new fellowships. The fellowship provides up to \$20,700 per year of academic support and \$8,600 for internship support for a combined total of up to \$50,000 over the life of the fellowship. The GRO program enhances and supports quality environmental education for undergraduates, and thereby encourages them to continue their education beyond the baccalaureate level, and pursue careers in environmentally-related fields, such as biology, health, the social sciences, and engineering. The actual amount awarded per year will vary depending on the amount of tuition and fees and the number of months the stipend is required. This fellowship is intended to help defray costs associated with environmentally-oriented study leading to a bachelor's degree.

EPA recognizes that scientific, technical, engineering and mathematical (STEM) competence is essential to the Nation's future well-being in terms of national security and competitive economic advantage. For instance, the health and vitality of the economy is predicated, in part, on the availability of an adequate supply of scientists, technicians, engineers and mathematicians, to develop innovative technologies and solutions. In other words, this country must engage all available minds to address the challenges it faces. Minorities, women, and persons with disabilities historically have been under-represented in the STEM fields. For this reason, EPA strongly encourages women, minorities, and persons with disabilities to apply.

This solicitation provides the opportunity for the submission of applications for projects that may involve human subjects research. Human subjects research supported by the EPA is governed by EPA Regulation 40 CFR Part 26 (Protection of Human Subjects). This includes the Common Rule at subpart A and prohibitions and additional protections for pregnant women and fetuses, nursing women, and children at subparts B, C, and D. Research meeting the regulatory definition of intentional exposure research found in subpart B is prohibited by that subpart in pregnant women, nursing women, and children. Research meeting the regulatory definition of observational research found in subparts C and D is subject to the additional protections found in those subparts for pregnant women and fetuses (subpart C) and children (subpart D). All applications must include a Human Subjects Research Statement (HSRS, as described in Section IV.B. Item 6), and if the project involves human subjects research, it will be subject to an additional level of review prior to funding decisions being made as described in Sections V.C and V.D of this solicitation.

Guidance and training for investigators conducting EPA-funded research involving human subjects may be obtained here:

<http://www.epa.gov/osainter/phre/support.htm>
http://www.epa.gov/osa/pdfs/phre/phre_course/index.htm

B. Background

The GRO Undergraduate Fellowship program is part of the national effort to help ensure that the United States meets its current and projected human resource needs in the environmental science, engineering, and policy fields. By enhancing and supporting quality environmental education for undergraduate students, the GRO Undergraduate Fellowship encourages promising students to pursue careers in environmentally-related fields and to continue their education beyond the baccalaureate level. This goal is consistent with the mission of EPA, which is to provide environmental and human health protection as well as reducing pollution. The GRO Fellowship program has benefited the public by consistently providing the nation with well-trained environmental specialists to meet environmental challenges in our society. GRO supported fellows have provided new environmental research in the physical, biological, health, and social sciences as well as in engineering.

The specific Strategic Goal and Objective from the EPA's FY 2011-2015 Strategic Plan that relates to this solicitation are:

Goal 3: Cleaning Up Communities and Advancing Sustainable Development, Objective 3.1: Promote Sustainable and Livable Communities.

The EPA's FY 2011-2015 Strategic Plan can be found at:
<http://www.epa.gov/planandbudget/strategicplan.html/>

C. Authority and Regulations

The authority for this RFA and resulting awards is contained in one or more of the following:

the Clean Air Act (CAA), Section 103, 42 U.S.C. 7403; the Clean Water Act (CWA), Section 104, 33 U.S.C. 1254; the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA), Section 1442, 42 U.S.C. 300j-1; the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), Section 20, 7 U.S.C. 136r; the Solid Waste Disposal Act (SWDA), Section 8001, 42 U.S.C. 6981; and the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA), Section 10, 15 U.S.C. 2609.

For fellowships with an international aspect, the above statutes are supplemented, as appropriate, by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Section 102(2)(F).

Planned course of study must have a focus that is supported under one of the above mentioned funding authorities. Projects that relate to other funding authorities, such as the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act or CERCLA (i.e., Superfund sites and Brownfields) are not eligible for funding under this RFA.

Applicable Regulation: 40 CFR Part 46 (Fellowships)

Descriptions of the authorizing statutes are provided below:

CAA: Clean Air Act--Section 103:

Section 103 of the Clean Air Act authorizes the EPA to make grants to institutions and individuals for research, investigations, experiments, demonstrations, surveys and studies relating to the causes, effects (including health and welfare effects), extent, prevention and control of air pollution.

CWA: Clean Water Act--Section 104:

Section 104 of the Clean Water Act authorizes the EPA to make grants to institutions and individuals for research, investigations, experiments, training, demonstrations, surveys and studies relating to the causes, effects, extent, prevention, reduction, and elimination of water pollution.

SDWA: Safe Drinking Water Act--Section 1442:

Section 1442 of the Safe Drinking Water Act authorizes the EPA to make grants for research, training, studies, and demonstrations relating to the causes, diagnosis, treatment, control, and prevention of physical and mental diseases and other impairments of man resulting directly or indirectly from contaminants in water, or to the provision of a dependably safe supply of drinking water, including (A) improved methods: (i) to identify and measure the existence of contaminants in drinking water (including methods which may be used by State and local health and water officials), and (ii) to identify the source of such contaminants; (B) improved methods to identify and measure the health effects of contaminants in drinking water; (C) new methods of treating raw water to prepare it for drinking, so as to improve the efficiency of water treatment and to remove contaminants from water; (D) improved methods for providing a dependably safe supply of drinking water, including improvements in water purification and distribution, and methods of assessing the health related hazards of drinking water; and (E) improved methods of protecting underground water sources of public water systems from contamination.

FIFRA: Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act--Section 20:

Section 20 of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act authorizes the EPA to make grants for pesticide-related research, development, monitoring, public education, training, demonstrations, and studies.

SWDA: Solid Waste Disposal Act--Section 8001:

Section 8001 of the Solid Waste Disposal Act authorizes the EPA to make grants for research, investigations, experiments, training, demonstrations, surveys, public education programs and studies relating to: (1) adverse health and welfare effects from solid waste; (2) solid waste management programs; (3) resource recovery and conservation, and hazardous waste management systems; (4) production of usable forms of recovered resources; (5) waste reduction; (6) improved solid waste collection and disposal methods; (7) identification of solid waste components; (8) small scale and low technology solid waste management systems; (9) methods to improve performance of recovered solid waste; (10) improvements in land disposal practices; (11) methods for sound disposal of resources, including sludge and coal slurry; (12) methods of hazardous waste management; and (13) air quality impacts from the burning of solid waste.

TSCA: Toxic Substance Control Act--Section 10:

Section 10 of the Toxic Substance Control Act authorizes the EPA to make grants for research, development, monitoring, public education, training, demonstrations and studies directed toward the development of the fundamental scientific basis of screening and monitoring techniques used to detect toxic chemical substances and quantify the effects of toxic chemical substances and mixtures in the environment.

D. Specific Areas of Interest

This RFA solicits applications from students interested in environmentally-related study and problem solving in a variety of environmentally-related areas which are described below. By providing financial support across disciplines, EPA expects to continue to assist in increasing the nation's environmental workforce and the ability to produce leading edge research, and in advancing the nation's research and development enterprise.

Funding Opportunity Numbers (FON)

Select a single Funding Opportunity Number (FON) for your application. **You may only submit one application under this fellowship announcement and therefore can apply for only one FON.** Failure to select a proper FON could result in an inappropriate review assignment. If your application seems to fit under more than one FON, choose the most appropriate one, or select "Environmental Sciences & Interdisciplinary Programs." **Your application can be submitted to one, and only one, FON.** In instances where more than one application is submitted, EPA will contact the applicant to determine which application(s) will be withdrawn.

Note: Your application should describe the relationship of these topic areas to the statutorily required purpose of pollution prevention and/or control.

EPA-F2014U-GRO-P1 Natural and Life Sciences

(Includes pollution prevention and/or control-related study in Biology, Ecology, Microbiology, Molecular Sciences, etc.)

EPA-F2014U-GRO-P2 Environmental Sciences and Interdisciplinary Programs

(Includes pollution prevention and/or control-related study in Environmental Studies, Urban Sustainability and Land Use Planning, Environmental Health, Environmental Policy, Environmental Education, Native/Tribal Environmental Science, etc.)

EPA-F2014U-GRO-P3 Engineering

(Includes pollution prevention and/or control-related study in Environmental Engineering, Waste Management, Green Building Engineering, Biotechnology, etc.)

EPA-F2014U-GRO-P4 Social Sciences

(Includes pollution prevention and/or control-related study in Economics, International Environmental Studies, Anthropology, Sociology, Psychology, Environmental Justice, etc.)

EPA-F2014U-GRO-Q1 Physical Sciences and Earth Sciences

(Includes pollution prevention and/or control-related study in Atmospheric Sciences, Chemistry, Geology, Geography, Biogeochemistry, Water Quality, etc.)

EPA-F2014U-GRO-Q2 Mathematics and Computer Science

(Includes pollution prevention and/or control-related study in Environmental Information Science, Mathematics and Statistics, Bioinformatics, etc.)

E. References

Environmental Protection Agency. EPA Strategic Plan, 2011-2015. Available at <http://www.epa.gov/planandbudget/strategicplan.html>.

Fellowships webpage
<http://www.epa.gov/ncer/fellow/>

F. Special Requirements

Agency policy and ethical considerations prevent EPA technical staff and managers from providing applicants with information that may create an unfair competitive advantage. Consequently, EPA employees will not review, comment, advise, and/or provide technical assistance to applicants preparing applications in response to EPA RFAs. EPA employees cannot endorse any particular application.

This solicitation provides the opportunity for the submission of applications for projects that may involve human subjects research. There are many scientific and ethical considerations that must be addressed in such studies by the study sponsor and research team, including, but not limited to, those related to recruitment, retention, participant compensation, third-party issues, researcher-participant interactions, researcher-community interactions, communications,

interventions, and education. All such research must comply with the requirements of 40 CFR Part 26, and any human observational exposure studies must also adhere to the principles set forth in the Scientific and Ethical Approaches for Observational Exposure Studies (SEAOES) (EPA/600/R-08/062) (http://www.epa.gov/nerl/sots/SEAOES_doc20080707.pdf) document. SEAOES, which was published by researchers in EPA and which discusses the principles for the ethical conduct of human research studies, serves as a resource for applicants interested in applying under this solicitation. References to “SEAOES Principles” in this solicitation refers, in general, to the issues of interest in conducting human subjects research studies that maintain the highest scientific and ethical standards and safety during the conduct of these studies. All applications must include a Human Subjects Research Statement (HSRS; described in Section IV.B. Item 6) and if the project involves human subjects research, it will be subject to an additional level of review prior to funding decisions being made as described in Sections V.C and V.D of this solicitation.

The fellowship awards expected to be made under this RFA may involve the collection of "Geospatial Information," which includes information that identifies the geographic location and characteristics of natural or constructed features or boundaries on the Earth or applications, tools, and hardware associated with the generation, maintenance, or distribution of such information. This information may be derived from, among other things, a Geographic Positioning System (GPS), remote sensing, mapping, charting, and surveying technologies, or statistical data.

II. AWARD INFORMATION

It is anticipated that a total of approximately \$1,700,000 will be awarded under this announcement, depending on the availability of funds, the quality of applications received, and other applicable considerations. The EPA anticipates funding approximately 34 fellowships under this RFA. The maximum projected award per fellowship is \$20,700 per year total costs for up to two years, plus \$8,600 for internship support. Requests for amounts in excess of a total of \$50,000 will not be considered.

The EPA reserves the right to reject all applications and make no awards or make fewer awards than anticipated under this announcement. The EPA reserves the right to make additional awards under this announcement, consistent with Agency policy, if additional funding becomes available after the original selections are made. Any additional selections for awards will be made no later than six months after the original selection decisions.

The fellowship provides up to \$20,700 per year of academic support and \$8,600 for internship support for a combined total of up to \$50,000 over the life of the fellowship. A more detailed breakout of the funding which covers stipend, tuition, and expenses is provided below:

Stipends: During the nine-month academic year, an \$800 stipend will be paid to the Fellow each month, for a total annual stipend of \$7,200. Stipends are paid directly to the Fellow. At its discretion, the institution may supplement a Fellow's stipend from institutional funds in accordance with the supplementation policy of the institution.

Tuition and Academic Fees: Up to \$11,000 per year will be paid directly to the institution for allowable tuition and fees. For the purposes of this fellowship, health insurance is not considered to be an academic fee even if it is required by the institution. For purposes of this fellowship, health insurance is an expense, not an academic fee.

Expense Allowance: \$2,500 per year will be paid directly to the institution to pay for items and activities for the direct benefit of the fellow's education, such as for health insurance, books, supplies, equipment, and travel to technical and scientific meetings. Specific instructions regarding the disbursement and management of the expense allowance will be provided during the award process.

Internship Allowance: During the summer internship, the fellow will receive a total of \$8,600 for the three-month period. This amount includes \$1,000 for travel to and from the summer internship site, \$1,000 getting started fee (relocation and related expenses); \$1,000 for travel while at the site, and a stipend of \$5,600 for living expenses.

Summer Internship: The fellow will participate for up to 12 weeks at an EPA facility (located in the U.S. or its territories) as a Summer Intern in the EPA GRO Summer Intern Program, during the summer of their first year of EPA fellowship support. Each Intern must complete a summer project that is designed to complement and enhance the training received under the fellowship program. An aspect of the summer project will explore topics in broader societal impacts including but not limited to: furthering environmental awareness, encouraging environmental stewardship, promoting environmental equity and justice, and broadening participation of all citizens. EPA will provide support for temporary relocation and provide a living stipend, as described above, during the Summer Internship. Fellows will be contacted during their first year to arrange for this Internship.

Annual Conference: Fellows are expected to attend one technical/scientific conference as long as they are members of the GRO undergraduate program. Resources to support this travel are to be taken from the expense allowance.

International Activities: The Fellow's proposed research may be conducted outside the U.S. However, EPA allows only \$2,500/year for all expenses, including travel. See "Expense Allowance" for details. If it becomes necessary to travel outside the U.S. or its territories, you must notify your Project Officer at least three (3) months in advance. You will also be required to obtain local permits in other countries to conduct research there. Your Project Officer will obtain the necessary EPA and State Department approvals before the fellowship funds can be used to conduct these activities. Fellows who travel overseas using federal funds will be required to comply with the provisions of the Fly America Act.

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants

Applicants must attend a fully accredited U.S. college or university (located in the U.S. or its territories) for the fellowship period. Individuals must be citizens of the U.S. or its territories or possessions, or be lawfully admitted to the U.S. for permanent residence. Resident aliens must include their green card number in their application. You must have your green card at the time of application to be eligible for this Fellowship opportunity. EPA may verify this number with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service of the Department of Homeland Security.

The GRO Undergraduate Fellowship is intended for students entering their last two years of full time study before obtaining their first bachelor's degree. Students who have already earned one bachelor's degree and are pursuing additional degrees are not eligible. The fellowship tenure is for 2 full academic years (9 months each) with a required paid summer internship after their first year. Thus, only students who will be entering their last two years of college will be considered eligible.

In order to receive the fellowship, the student must attend a fully accredited four year U.S. institution of higher education. This school must be among those that are not highly funded for research and development capacity. For the purposes of this solicitation, students attending those institutions receiving more than \$35 million in annual federal research and development funding are ineligible to apply under this solicitation. Institutions who exceed this threshold can be identified in the National Science Foundation's publication "Federal Science and Engineering Support to Universities, Colleges, and Nonprofit Institutions: FY 2009," Table 16, column 2. These data can be found at

http://www.nsf.gov/statistics/nsf13303/content.cfm?pub_id=4199&id=2.

Students attending those institutions either not listed, or listed as having received \$35 million or less as designated in column 2 of Table 16 are eligible to apply.

Students attending two-year institutions, community colleges, and those not in attendance at an institution of higher education at the time of application submittal may be eligible to apply. However, in order to be eligible to receive the fellowship, students attending two-year institutions, community colleges, or those not in attendance at the time of application will need to show evidence of having received their Associate's degree, demonstrate that they only have two years left of undergraduate studies for completion of their Bachelor's degree, and will also need to demonstrate that they have been accepted to attend an accredited eligible four-year institution. This requirement is considered satisfied if the student is transferring to an accredited eligible four-year institution which has an Articulation Agreement with the two-year institution, thus meaning that all credits will transfer towards requirements for the Bachelor's degree. *An Articulation Agreement is a signed contract between a community or technical college and a four-year college or university that guarantees that a student who earns an associate degree at a participating two-year institution can transfer all of the general education core credits to the four-year institution toward the completion of baccalaureate degree requirements. More information can usually be obtained directly from the institution's Registrar.* Alternately, a student with an Associate's degree may provide a letter from the Registrar of the accredited eligible four-year institution verifying that upon matriculation, the student will only have two remaining years of undergraduate study to complete the first Bachelor's degree.

Students must be pursuing a bachelor's degree in an environmentally-related field, such as biology, health, the social sciences, and engineering. Students must have two (2) years remaining from the start of the Fall semester (Fall 2014) before receiving their initial bachelor's degree. Students must have at least a "B" average overall at the time of application submittal and during the tenure of the fellowship.

Applicants who currently have another federal fellowship are not eligible. However, acceptance of this fellowship does not necessarily preclude acceptance of another private, state, regional, local, or non-profit scholarship, fellowship, traineeship, research assistantship, teaching assistantship, or grant aid.

Employees of the U.S. government may apply, but must be able to prove separation from Federal service before accepting this fellowship.

The exact term (start and end dates) of the undergraduate fellowship is negotiated with the student and covers a period of nine months for each fellowship year. Students seeking a bachelor's degree may be supported for a maximum of two academic years.

Diversity: EPA recognizes that scientific, technical, engineering and mathematical (STEM) competence is essential to the Nation's future well-being in terms of national security and competitive economic advantage. For instance, the health and vitality of the economy is predicated, in part, on the availability of an adequate supply of scientists, technicians, engineers and mathematicians, to develop innovative technologies and solutions. In other words, this country must engage all available minds to address the challenges it faces. Minorities, women, and persons with disabilities historically have been under-represented in the STEM fields. For this reason, EPA strongly encourages women, minorities, and persons with disabilities to apply.

B. Cost Sharing

Cost sharing is not required.

C. Other

Applications must substantially comply with the application submission instructions and requirements set forth in Section IV of this announcement or the application will be rejected. In addition, where a page limit is expressed in Section IV with respect to parts of the application, pages in excess of the limitation will not be reviewed. Applications must be submitted through grants.gov or by other authorized alternate means (see Section IV.E. "Submission Instructions and Other Submission Requirements" for further information) on or before the solicitation closing date and time in Section IV of this announcement or they will be returned to the sender without further consideration. All applicants must also follow the instructions for verifying that their application was received by NCER or their application may be rejected without review. Also, applications exceeding the funding limits described in Section II will not be reviewed. Further, applications that fail to demonstrate a public purpose of support or stimulation (e.g., by proposing research which primarily benefits a Federal program or provides a service for a

Federal Agency) will not be funded.

Applications must be submitted by the student. Applications submitted by the institution on behalf of the student will be rejected without review.

Applications must identify a single topic and corresponding Funding Opportunity Number (FON), as described in Section I.D, that is appropriately related to the proposed area of inquiry. If your application seems to fit under more than one topic/FON, you still must choose a single topic/FON for purposes of submission. **Your application can be submitted to one, and only one, FON.** In instances where more than one application is submitted, EPA will contact the applicant to determine which application(s) will be withdrawn.

Applications deemed ineligible for funding consideration will be notified within fifteen calendar days of the ineligibility determination.

Potential applicants who are uncertain of their eligibility should contact Ron Josephson in NCER, phone: 703-308-0442, email: josephson.ron@epa.gov.

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. Internet Address to Request Application Package

Use the application package available at Grants.gov (see "Submission Instructions and Other Submission Requirements"). Instructions for completing these forms follow.

An email will be sent by NCER to the applicant to acknowledge receipt of the application and to transmit other important information. The email will be sent from receipt.application@epa.gov; any email sent to this address will not be accepted. Please be aware that this notification is separate from the one you will receive from Grants.gov. NCER does not notify you of receipt of your Letters of Recommendation.

Due to the volume of applications received, the emailed acknowledgement from receipt.application@epa.gov may take several weeks. Thus, our staff will not respond to queries regarding applications received before June 27, 2014. Please make a notation on your calendar to contact the program at 2014FellowshipsRFA@epa.gov from June 27, 2014 to no later than 5:00 PM Eastern Time on Day July 15, 2014 for information if you have not received the notification from receipt.application@epa.gov by that time. ***Failure to follow these instructions may result in your application being rejected without review.*** See "Submission Instructions and Other Submission Requirements" for additional information regarding acknowledgment of receipt of electronically submitted applications. Check your email spam folder and/or check your spam filter settings to ensure emails from EPA are delivered to your email inbox.

B. Content and Form of Application Submission

The application is made by submitting the materials described below. Applications must contain all information requested and be submitted in the formats described. It is essential that all contact information be that of the applicant unless specifically requested otherwise.

Summary of Application Materials

- Item 1. Application for Federal Assistance, Standard Form (SF) 424
- Item 2. EPA Key Contacts Form (5700-54)
- Item 3. Front Page
- Item 4. Personal Statement
- Item 5. Background Information:
 - Education & Relevant Experiences
 - Presentations
 - Course Work
- Item 6. EPA Human Subjects Research Statement (HSRS)
- Item 7. Letters of Recommendation (sent by letter writers)

The application is made by submitting the materials described below. For Items 3-6 prepare these **using standard 8.5" x 11" page size, 12-point, Times New Roman font, 1" margins on all sides, and single spacing**. While these guidelines establish the minimum type size requirements, applicants are advised that readability is of paramount importance and should take precedence in selection of an appropriate font for use in the proposal.

Do not exceed the page limits indicated. Excess pages will not be reviewed. **References in the end notes do not count towards the page limits.** Images may be included; however they will be reproduced only in black and white. **All images, in-text citations, and footnotes are included in the page limits.**

The applicant submits Items 1-6 as part of the Grants.gov application (See "Submission Instructions and Other Submission Requirements"). The Letters of Recommendation (Item 7) are submitted directly to EPA by those individuals writing the letters (see "Submission Instructions and Other Submission Requirements").

Item 1. Standard Form 424

The student, that is the individual applying for funding, must complete Standard Form 424 for electronic submissions via Grants.gov. This form will be the first page of the application. Use the Standard Form 424 in the electronic application package (see "Submission Instructions and Other Submission Requirements").

Instructions for Standard Form 424

Do not follow the instructions provided with the form. Instead, follow the instructions detailed below for items that may cause difficulty. **Only the yellow highlighted fields of the form need to be completed.**

1. Check "Pre-application."
- 8.a. The applicant is the student submitting the application (not an Institution).
- 8.b. Enter the student's social security number (see 8.a.).
- 8.f. The contact person is the student (see 8.a.).
9. Enter "P: individual"
15. Enter the title of your chosen FON. You do not need to provide a description.
- 16.a. For help in finding the appropriate Congressional District, enter your zip code at <http://www.house.gov/> (upper right hand corner where it says "Find Your Representative.")
- 16.b. Enter "00".
- 17.a. Enter a start date of 09/01/2014.
- 17.b. Enter an End Date up to two (2) academic years for bachelor's degree support. If necessary, these dates can be modified if you receive a fellowship.
- 18.a. Enter the amount of funding you are requesting (up to \$50,000 total for the tenure of the fellowship leading up to the bachelor's degree).
- 18.b.-f. Enter "0"
19. Enter "c" Program is not covered.

The Authorized Representative is the student (see 8.a.). You may enter "student" as the title. "Close Form" will save and close the form.

Section 6:

- a. **PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** Choose the corresponding Topic Title for the FON. **It should match the ones above.** No description is needed.
- b. **START DATE:** Enter "09/01/2014."
END DATE: For End Date, enter a date up to two (2) years later for Bachelor's support. If necessary, these dates can be modified if you receive a fellowship.

Section 7: For your application to be processed, you must check this box.

SIGNATURE:

Item 2. EPA Key Contacts Form (5700-54)

The applicant must complete the "Key Contacts" form as the second page of the application as directed below. For electronic submissions, use the EPA Key Contacts Form (5700-54) in the electronic application package (see "Submission Instructions and Other Submission Requirements"). Ignore all other instructions for completing this form that may be found elsewhere. Please make certain that all contact information is accurate.

Key Contacts Form Instructions:

Authorized Representative: Enter the applicant's name and address information.

Payee: Enter the applicant's permanent address information. This is the address NCER will use for any U.S. Postal Service correspondence.

Administrative Contact: Enter the business information for the applicant's advisor. Leave blank if the applicant has not identified an advisor.

Principal Investigator: Leave blank or, if the applicant has a second advisor, please enter the second advisor's information here.

Item 3. Front Page (1 page limit)

Use standard 8.5" x 11" page size, 12-point, Times New Roman font, 1" margins on all sides, and single spacing. While these guidelines establish the minimum type size requirements, applicants are advised that readability is of paramount importance and should take precedence in selection of an appropriate font for use in the proposal.

Do not exceed the page limits indicated. Excess pages will not be reviewed.

Instructions for Submission:

Starting with a blank page, please begin each item on a separate line using the appropriate numbered heading.

- i. Your name: Last name, first name, middle initial/name.
- ii. Your citizenship. If not a U.S. citizen, please provide your residency information.
- iii. Current College/University, School or Department: Name and location of the college/university, school or department you are currently attending. If you are not attending a college or university at the time of application, put "N/A."
- iv. Intended College/University, School or Department: Name and location of the college/university, school or department from which your bachelor's degree will be obtained. If you are considering multiple institutions, list your top two choices.
- v. Institution GRO Eligibility Letter: You must verify that your school or intended school is GRO eligible. These data can be accessed at http://www.nsf.gov/statistics/nsf13303/content.cfm?pub_id=4199&id=2, Table 16, column two. If your institution is listed, find the amount in the second column, and multiply the figure by 1000. If your institution is eligible, then complete the following statement:
"According to the National Science Foundation's report "Federal Science and

Engineering Support to Universities, Colleges, and Nonprofit Institutions: Fiscal Year 2009," Table 16, column two, my institution received \$ _____ in Federal Research and Development expenditures in fiscal year 2009. Since this is \$35 Million or less, my university is GRO eligible." If your institution is not listed, then it is eligible and you should enter "\$0". EPA will verify student eligibility before awards are made. Only students who will attend GRO eligible institutions can be awarded these fellowships.

vi. Degree Sought: Enter the type of Bachelor's Degree you are seeking to complete (e.g. B.A., B.S.). Include the month and year you expect the degree to be awarded.

vii. Funding Opportunity Number and Topic Title. This category must **match** what appears on Standard Form SF 424.

viii. Environmental Discipline. List your major(s) for your undergraduate studies.

For submission via Grants.gov this item will be combined with Items 4, 5 and 6 into **one** PDF file that will be uploaded into Grants.gov as the "Mandatory Project Narrative" (See "Submission Instructions and Other Submission Requirements"). Label the file "MandatoryProjectInfo". Please do not use spaces or special characters in the file name as this may cause Grants.gov to reject your application.

Item 4. Personal Statement (1 page limit)

Use standard 8.5" x 11" page size, 12-point, Times New Roman font, 1" margins on all sides, and single spacing. While these guidelines establish the minimum type size requirements, applicants are advised that readability is of paramount importance and should take precedence in selection of an appropriate font for use in the proposal.

Do not exceed the page limits indicated. Excess pages will not be reviewed. **References in the end notes do not count towards the page limits.** Images may be included; however they will be reproduced only in black and white. **All images, in-text citations, and footnotes are included in the page limits.**

This Personal Statement will be of paramount importance in evaluating your request for a fellowship. Therefore, your answer to all the questions should be well thought out and expressed in a clear and detailed but concise manner. Please give enough details so you may be adequately evaluated.

This personal statement will be reviewed on how well you demonstrate the following criteria:

- (a) Commitment to the stated academic and career goals; and potential for success in the proposed course of study;

- (b) Organizational, analytical, and written skills;
- (c) Commitment to environmentally-related study; and commitment to the environment.

*Personal Statements that fully address ALL of the areas below **with respect to the Criteria in Section V.** may be rated more highly.* Clearly, concisely, and with appropriate detail, address the following three areas:

1. Academic and Career Goals

What are your academic and career goals and how will this fellowship help you attain them?

2. Research Project or Environmental Issue of Concern

What environmental issue is of particular interest to you and how might you go about addressing it (this may be a description of your research project if you have one or planned course of study or inquiry)?

NOTE: To be eligible for funding consideration, your research project or environmental issue of concern must focus on activities within the statutory terms of EPA's financial assistance authorities; specifically, the statute(s) listed in Section I.C.

Generally, a project must address the causes, effects, extent, prevention, reduction, and elimination of air pollution, water pollution, solid/hazardous waste pollution, toxic substances control, or pesticide control depending on which statute(s) is listed above. These activities should relate to the gathering or transferring of information or advancing the state of knowledge. Proposals should emphasize this “learning” concept, as opposed to “fixing” an environmental problem via a well-established method. Proposals relating to other topics which are sometimes included within the term “environment” such as recreation, conservation, restoration, protection of wildlife habitats, etc., must describe the relationship of these topics to the statutorily required purpose of pollution prevention and/or control.

3. Experiences

What experiences (e.g., education, work, volunteering, study abroad, research, or other) have interested you in environmentally related study, and how have these experiences made you a good candidate for this fellowship?

Instructions:

For submission via Grants.gov this item will be combined with Items 3, 5 and 6 into **one** PDF file that will be will be uploaded into Grants.gov as the “Mandatory Project Narrative” (See “Submission Instructions and Other Submission Requirements”). Label the file “MandatoryProjectInfo”. Please do not use spaces or special characters in the file name as this may cause Grants.gov to reject your application.

Item 5. Background Information: Education & Relevant Experiences, Presentations, and

Course Work

Instructions:

Start each of these three sections on a separate page.

- a. Education & Relevant Experiences (1 Page – Use a resume format)

Under **Education**, list your educational background--names of all post-secondary institutions attended, years attended, degrees received or expected to receive, major(s), and GPA.

For **Relevant Experiences**, this section could include but is not limited to paid employment, military service, research positions, internships, study abroad, student groups, volunteering, teaching, etc., focusing on the most relevant first. For each listed experience, indicate dates, names and addresses (city and state) of employers, and a short description of your duties.

- b. Presentations (1 Page)

Presentations: List all relevant presentations both poster and oral. For each please provide the title, date, type of presentation [e.g. oral or poster] and name of event (meeting or conference).

If you have not presented, write “NA” for “not applicable”.

- c. Course Work (use as many pages as are necessary-no page limit)

Provide, in tabular form, a list of all your past and current Course Work (much of this information should be obtained from your transcripts). Include the following: the institutions at which the credits were earned, dates, names and catalog numbers of courses taken, credit hours, grades received, and cumulative GPA for all courses taken at each degree level. Be sure to list any degree(s) (e.g., Associates Degree, technical degree, etc) received. Abbreviations are allowed if their meaning is generally understood. Note if courses were audited or not completed. If any institution you attended had a grading system different from the traditional "A, B, C" system, explain the system in a short footnote. Do not leave anything out. Include data from your entire college career. **DO NOT INCLUDE COPIES OF YOUR TRANSCRIPTS.** Top-ranked applicants will be required to submit official copies of transcripts for validation prior to the award of the fellowship.

Instructions:

For submission via Grants.gov this item will be combined with Items 3, 4 and 6 into one PDF file that will be uploaded into Grants.gov as the “Mandatory Project Narrative” (See “Submission Instructions and Other Submission Requirements”).

Item 6. EPA Human Subjects Research Statement (HSRS) (6 page limit)

All human research studies conducted or supported by EPA are governed by EPA regulations at 40 CFR Part 26 (Protection of Human Subjects; <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2010-title40-vol1/xml/CFR-2010-title40-vol1-part26.xml>). This includes the Basic Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Research Subjects, also known as the Common Rule, at subpart A and additional prohibitions and special protections for pregnant women, nursing women, and children in research conducted or supported by EPA at subparts B, C, and D. Depending upon the type of research being conducted, additional subparts of 40 CFR Part 26 may be relevant.

Procedures for the review and oversight of human research subject to 40 CFR Part 26 are also provided in EPA Order 1000.17 Change A1 (http://www.epa.gov/phre/pdf/epa-order-1000_17-a1.pdf). These include review of projects for EPA-supported human research by the EPA Human Subjects Research Review Official (HSRRO). EPA Order 1000.17 Change A1 requires preliminary approval by the HSRRO of all proposed EPA-supported human research before the agreement can be entered into. Additional requirements must be met and final approval received from the HSRRO before the research can begin. When reviewing human observational exposure studies, EPA Order 1000.17 Change A1 requires the HSRRO to apply the principles described in the SEAOES document (http://www.epa.gov/nerl/sots/SEAOES_doc20080707.pdf) and grant approval only to studies that adhere to those principles.

All applications submitted under this solicitation must include a HSRS as described below. Please use the definitions below to determine whether the proposed research involves human subjects, and then prepare a HSRS as explained below in the "HSRS Requirements" section.

Definitions (from 40 CFR Part 26 Subparts A, B, and C) to determine the involvement of human subjects in proposed research:

- "Human subject" means a living individual about whom an investigator (whether professional or student) conducting research obtains (1) data through intervention or interaction with the individual, or (2) identifiable private information.
- "Intervention" includes both physical procedures by which data are gathered and manipulations of the subject or the subject's environment that are performed for research purposes.
- "Interaction" includes communication or interpersonal contact between investigator and subject.
- "Private information" includes information about behavior that occurs in a context in which an individual can reasonably expect that no observation or recording is taking place, and information which has been provided for specific purposes by an individual and which the individual can reasonably expect will not be made public (for example, a medical record).
- "Individually identifiable" means the identity of the subject is or may readily be ascertained by the investigator or associated with the information.
- "Research involving the intentional exposure of a human subject" means a study of a substance in which the exposure to the substance experienced by a human subject

participating in the study would not have occurred but for the human subject's participation in the study. Research involving intentional human exposures have additional requirements based upon the 2004 NRC Report "Intentional Human Dosing Studies for EPA Regulatory Purposes"

(http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=10927) See Sections 9 - 15.

- "Observational research" means any human research that does not meet the definition of research involving intentional exposure of a human subject.

Human Subjects Research Statement (HSRS) Requirements

If the proposed research **does not** involve human subjects as defined above, provide the following statement in your application package as your HSRS: "The proposed research does not involve human subjects." Applicants should provide a clear justification about how the proposed research does not meet the definition (for example, all samples come from deceased individuals OR samples are purchased from a commercial source and provided without identifiers, etc.).

If the proposed research **does** involve human subjects, then include in your application package a HSRS that addresses each applicable section listed below, referencing the specific location of the information in the Personal Statement, providing the information in the HSRS, or explaining why the section does not apply to the proposed research. (Not all will apply.) Please use the definitions provided above to ensure consistency in the interpretation of terminology. Do not exceed **six** consecutively numbered, 8.5x11-inch pages of single-spaced, standard 12-point type with 1-inch margins.

NOTE: Before EPA approves any research involving human subjects, the requirements of the regulations at 40 CFR Part 26 must be met. Also, before EPA approves human observational exposure research, EPA will examine it to ensure consistency with the SEA OES Principles. The federal Office for Human Research Protections requires that federally funded human subjects research only be conducted at facilities covered by a Federalwide Assurance (FWA). An FWA is a document that designates the Institutional Review Board that will review and oversee the research, specifies the ethical principles under which the research will be conducted, and names the individuals who will be responsible for the proper conduct of the research. The factors below are not intended to be exhaustive of all those needed for the HSRRO to provide the final approval necessary for research to be conducted, but provide a basis upon which the HSRRO may grant the conditional approval necessary for the funding process to begin.

Items 1 – 8 must be completed for all studies involving human subjects. (For studies involving intentional exposures, also complete Items 9 -15.)

(1) Human subjects involvement, characteristics, and design.

(a) Describe and justify the proposed involvement of human subjects in the work being

proposed.

- (b) Describe the characteristics of the subject population, including their anticipated number, age range, and health status if relevant.
- (c) Describe and justify the sampling plan, as well as the recruitment and retention strategies and the criteria for inclusion or exclusion of any subpopulations.
- (d) Describe the research material that will be obtained from or about living individuals in the form of data, specimens, or records.
- (e) List any collaborating sites where human subjects research will be performed, and describe the role of those sites and collaborating investigators in the research.
- (f) Describe and justify any compensation being provided to subjects for their participation in the research.
- (g) Describe the plan for communicating individual and/or aggregate research results to participants, if relevant.

(2) Potential risks to subjects.

- (a) Describe the potential risks to human subjects (physical, psychological, financial, legal, or other) and assess their likelihood and seriousness to the human subjects.

(3) Adequacy of protection against risks.

- (a) Describe planned procedures for protecting against or minimizing potential risks and assess their likely effectiveness.
- (b) Describe planned procedures for the process of obtaining and maintaining informed consent. Include a description of the circumstances under which consent will be sought and obtained, who will seek it, the nature of the information to be provided to prospective subjects, and the method of documenting consent.
- (c) If waiver of some or all of the elements of informed consent or of documentation of consent will be sought, provide justification for the waiver.
- (d) Where appropriate, discuss the plans for ensuring necessary medical or professional intervention in the event of adverse effects to subjects.

(4) Protection of vulnerable groups, see 40 CFR Part 26, subparts C & D.

- (a) Explain the rationale for the involvement of any vulnerable populations, including pregnant women, fetuses, and children if relevant.
- (b) Describe the additional protections in place, if any, for protecting vulnerable populations included in the research.
- (c) If children are included in the research, describe the process for obtaining parental permission and child assent if relevant.

(5) Protection of privacy and confidentiality.

- (a) Describe how data, specimens, and/or records will be collected, managed, and protected, including at collaborating sites, if any, as well as at the primary site.
- (b) Indicate who will have access to individually identifiable private information about human subjects.
- (c) Describe any additional procedures for the protection of privacy and confidentiality of the human research subjects.
- (d) Discuss any mandatory reporting requirements with the potential to come into play during the conduct of the research and describe how these will be communicated to participants if relevant.
- (e) Discuss the potential of the research to obtain information about third parties and describe how this will be handled if it occurs.

(6) Relationship between researcher and community.

- (a) If the research will take place in a community setting, describe the procedures in place for defining the community, obtaining its involvement in the research, and establishing and maintaining trust.

(7) Potential benefits of the research to the participants and others.

- (a) Discuss the potential benefits of the research to the research participants and others.
- (b) Discuss why the risks to subjects are reasonable in relation to the anticipated benefits.

(8) Importance of the knowledge to be gained.

- (a) Discuss the importance of the knowledge to be gained as a result of the proposed research.

- (b) Discuss why the risks to subjects are reasonable in relation to the importance of the knowledge that reasonably may be expected to result.

The following sections are to be completed for projects involving the intentional exposure of a human subject. Note that intentional exposure of children, pregnant women or nursing women is prohibited, according to 40 CFR Part 26, subpart B. If your proposal does not involve intentional exposures of humans, you may enter “non-applicable” for Sections 9 – 15.

(9) Projects involving intentional exposure of human subjects should only be considered if they have the potential of providing a clear health or environmental benefit or if acquisition of such information is not obtainable by any other means. In no case should the exposure cause lasting harm to study participants.

- (a) Provide justification, in advance of being conducted, that the study could contribute to addressing an important scientific question that cannot be resolved on the basis of animal data or other study;
- (b) Discuss how the study is designed in accordance with current scientific standards and practices to i) address the research question, ii) include representative study populations for the endpoint in question, and iii) meet requirements for adequate statistical power;
- (c) Discuss how the study will be conducted in accordance with recognized good clinical practices, including appropriate monitoring for safety; and
- (d) Confirm that the grantee will report comprehensively to their EPA Project Officer, providing the full study protocol, detailed analyses of the data and report any adverse events promptly.

(10) Value of Studies that Seek to Provide a Potential Public Health or Environmental Benefit

- (a) Discuss the constitution of the IRB and their ability to consider whether a study has the potential of providing a clear health or environmental benefit to the community.

(11) Criteria for Scientific and Ethical Acceptability

- (a) Confirm that the following necessary conditions for scientifically and ethically acceptable intentional human dosing studies have been satisfied:
 - (i) prior animal studies and, if available, human observational studies;
 - (ii) a demonstrated need for the knowledge to be obtained from intentional human dosing studies;
 - (iii) justification and documentation of a research design and statistical analysis that are adequate to address an important scientific question, including adequate power to detect appropriate effects;

- (iv) an acceptable balance of risks and benefits, and minimization of risks to participants;
- (v) equitable selection of participants;
- (vi) free and informed consent of participants; and
- (vii) review by an appropriately constituted IRB.

(12) Participant Selection Criteria

- (a) Discuss how the project design ensures that the following conditions are met in selecting research participants: (i) Selection should be equitable; (ii) Selection of persons from vulnerable populations must be convincingly justified in the protocol, which also must justify the measures to be taken to protect those participants; (iii) Selection of individuals with conditions that put them at increased risk for adverse effects in such studies must be convincingly justified in the protocol, which also must justify the measures that investigators will use to decrease the risks to those participants to an acceptable level.

(13) Payment for Participation

- (a) Discuss how IRBs, all relevant review boards, investigators, and research sponsors should ensure that payments to participants in intentional human dosing studies are neither so high as to constitute undue inducement nor so low as to be attractive only to individuals who are socio-economically disadvantaged. Proposed levels of and purposes for remuneration (e.g., time, inconvenience, and risk) should be scrutinized in light of the principles of justice and respect for persons.

(14) Best Practices in Informed Consent

- (a) Discuss the proposed process regarding informed consent in intentional human dosing studies and how it compares to best practices.

(15) Compensation for Research-Related Injuries

- (a) Discuss how you ensure that participants receive needed medical care for injuries incurred in the study, without cost to the participants.

Instructions:

For submission via Grants.gov this item will be combined with Items 3, 4 and 5 into **one** PDF file that will be uploaded into Grants.gov as the “Mandatory Project Narrative” (See “Submission Instructions and Other Submission Requirements”).

SAVE all Items, 3, 4, 5, and 6 into one file. Convert this one file into a PDF file. Check the file to ensure there are no conversion errors. Label the file “MandatoryProjectInfo”. Please do not

use spaces or special characters in the file name as this may cause Grants.gov to reject your application.

Item 7. Letters of Recommendation

Each applicant must arrange for the submittal of three (3) current Letters of Recommendation from individuals who have knowledge of his or her academic record. These letters must be submitted by the letter writers directly to EPA electronically (see instructions below). **All letters of recommendation must be received by EPA no later than 11:59:59 PM Eastern Time on the solicitation closing date, May 27, 2014.**

Letters of Recommendation are critical components of the application. If the applicant has a sponsor or advisor in the program, one of these letters of recommendation should come from that individual. Select your references carefully and urge them to write letters specifically about you. Do not write the letters yourself. Letters of Recommendation that appear to be mass-produced are generally not ranked highly by the reviewers. **Applicants are advised to seek letters of recommendation from sources other than current EPA employees. Absent extenuating circumstances, EPA will not accept letters of recommendation from EPA employees. However, if the applicant worked for or interned with an EPA employee or studied under an EPA employee, then EPA will accept a letter of recommendation under those circumstances.**

Applicants are advised to start the process early of having Letters of Recommendation composed by the letter writers and timely submitted. Applicants are responsible for ensuring that all Letters of Recommendation are sent by the letter writers so that they are received by EPA by the due date and time. Only those timely submitted will be considered during the review process. Failure to submit 3 Letters of Recommendation may negatively affect the score during the evaluation outlined in Section V.

Applicants must start the letter of recommendation process by going to the following web page to receive a unique ID number and web page url to send to each of their letter writers:

<http://www.epa.gov/ncer/fellowsletters>

Applicants must fill out their contact information at the above web page and receive a

A - unique ID number, and

B – url (website link)

Applicants should receive a confirmation email with that same ID number and url. Applicants must give their newly assigned ID number and the url to each of their letter writers to be used to electronically submit the recommendation letters.

Guidelines for Letter Writers

1. Letters of Recommendations should be written on official letterhead.
2. **Letter writers should go to the url sent by the applicant to receive submission instructions using the applicant's unique ID number. Submission instructions for letter writers are also provided below. Letters of Recommendation must be submitted in PDF format only (no zip files). Both the letter writer and the applicant should receive confirmation emails once the letter has been submitted.**
3. Letter writers should include the Funding Opportunity Number (FON), corresponding Topic Title, and applicant's name at the beginning of the letter. The applicant should provide the FON and corresponding topic title to the letter writers.
4. Letter writers are advised to use the applicant's full name (as opposed to nicknames or shortened names).
5. Letters of Recommendation should address the criteria for review outlined in Section V. Letters of Recommendation should provide insights into the applicant's creativity, motivation for environmentally-related study, potential for success, communication ability, and potential for addressing environmental issues.
6. ***Letters must be in PDF format*** and must be submitted directly to EPA electronically per the instructions above. No zip files will be accepted. **All letters of recommendation must be submitted to the EPA no later than 11:59:59 PM ET on the solicitation closing date, May 27, 2014, in order to be considered during the review process.**
 - **NCER cannot guarantee that Letters of Recommendation that do not denote the applicant's name, FON, and corresponding Topic Title will be matched with the appropriate application. Due to the potentially large number of applicants, NCER CANNOT ACKNOWLEDGE NOR VERIFY RECEIPT OF LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION. *It is the applicant's responsibility to ENSURE that letters of recommendation are submitted in a timely manner.***
 - **It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that Letters of Recommendation are submitted by the letter writers in a timely manner. NCER will close the url to the public after the solicitation closing date. After that time, NCER will not accept late letters unless the writer can show that he or she attempted to send the letter before the solicitation closing date but was prevented from doing so by circumstances beyond his or her control.**

Important Note: Letters of Recommendation cannot be submitted through Grants.gov. They must be submitted as described above. Failure to submit three Letters of Recommendation may negatively affect the score during the evaluation outlined in Section V.

Confidentiality:

By submitting an application in response to this solicitation, the applicant grants the EPA permission to make limited disclosures of the application to technical reviewers both within and outside the Agency for the express purpose of assisting the Agency with evaluating the application. Information from a pending or unsuccessful application will be kept confidential to the fullest extent allowed under law; information from a successful application may be publicly disclosed to the extent permitted by law.

EPA recommends that you do not include confidential business information (“CBI”) in your proposal/application. However, if confidential business information is included, it will be treated in accordance with 40 CFR 2.203. Applicants must clearly indicate which portion(s) of their proposal/application they are claiming as CBI. EPA will evaluate such claims in accordance with 40 CFR Part 2. If no claim of confidentiality is made, EPA is not required to make the inquiry to the applicant otherwise required by 40 CFR 2.204(c)(2) prior to disclosure. The Agency protects competitive proposals/applications from disclosure under applicable provisions of the Freedom of Information Act prior to the completion of the competitive selection process.

Pre-proposal/Application Assistance and Communications:

In accordance with EPA's Assistance Agreement 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 applications/proposals. However, consistent with the provisions in the announcement, EPA 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. In addition, if necessary, EPA may clarify threshold eligibility issues with applicants prior to making an eligibility determination.

C. Submission Dates and Times

Applications must be submitted to Grants.gov by 11:59:59 PM ET on the solicitation closing date, May 27, 2014.

This includes:

- Item 1. Application for Federal Assistance, Standard Form (SF) 424 entered through Grants.gov
- Item 2. EPA Key Contacts Form (5700-54) entered through Grants.gov

Items 3, 4, 5 & 6:

Uploaded as **one** PDF file labeled “MandatoryProjectInfo” to be submitted through Grants.gov. Attach the file by selecting “Add Mandatory Project Narrative” (See “Submission Instructions and Other Submission Requirements”).

Note that Letters of Recommendation (Item 7) cannot be submitted through Grants.gov. They

must be submitted as described above.

Letters of Recommendation:

All Letters of Recommendation must be submitted using the url provided (see IV.B. Item 7 above) no later than 11:59:59 PM ET on the solicitation closing date, May 27, 2014.

It should be noted that this schedule may be changed without prior notification because of factors that were not anticipated at the time of announcement. In the case of a change in the required solicitation closing date, a new date will be posted on the NCER web site (<http://www.epa.gov/ncer/>) and on grants.gov. Applications received after the closing date will be returned to the sender without further consideration.

D. Funding Restrictions

The funding mechanism for all awards issued under GRO solicitations will consist of assistance agreements from the EPA. All award decisions are subject to the availability of funds. In accordance with the Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreement Act, 31 U.S.C. 6301 et seq., the primary purpose of a grant is to accomplish a public purpose of support or stimulation authorized by federal statute, rather than acquisition for the direct benefit or use of the Agency. In issuing a fellowship agreement, the EPA anticipates that there will be no substantial EPA involvement in the design, implementation, or conduct of the research. However, the EPA will monitor academic progress through annual reports provided by Fellows and other contacts with the Fellows.

Applications must not include management fees or similar charges in excess of the direct costs and indirect costs at the rate approved by the institution's 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.

Generally, applicants are not prohibited from submitting the same or virtually the same proposal to EPA under multiple competitions, if appropriate. However, if an applicant does so, and the proposal is selected for award under another competition, that may affect their ability to receive an award under this competition for that proposal.

E. Submission Instructions and Other Submission Requirements

You may submit only one application for this announcement.

Contact individuals to submit your Letters of Recommendation as soon as possible. They are sent separately per the instructions above.

Please read this entire section before attempting an electronic submission through Grants.gov. It is the responsibility of the applicant to see that these instructions are followed. Failure to follow these instructions may result in your application being rejected without review.

If you do not have the technical capability to utilize the Grants.gov application submission process for this solicitation, send a webmail message to http://www.epa.gov/ncer/contact_us.html at least 15 calendar days before the submission deadline to assure timely receipt of alternate submission instructions. In your message provide the funding opportunity number and title of the program, specify that you are requesting alternate submission instructions, and provide a telephone number, fax number, and an email address, if available. Alternate instructions will be emailed whenever possible. Any applications submitted through alternate submission methods must comply with all the provisions of this RFA, including Section IV, and be received by the solicitation closing date identified above.

START EARLY! Grants.gov requires a new individual registration to submit an application for this solicitation; however, registration is not required to view the application package. To register, go to <http://www.Grants.gov/>, click on "Get Registered," click on "Individual Registration." Allow at least one day for the registration to be activated. Safeguard your username and password, as this information can take a great deal of time to retrieve should it be misplaced. Note that the use of an organizational registration (e.g., an academic institution registration) will result in a Grants.gov rejection.

Due to the potentially high volume of applications submitted as the deadline time approaches, it is possible that the Grants.gov electronic submission and telephone assistance systems may become overwhelmed. To assure successful transmission, it is highly recommended that you do not delay submission of your application past 10:00 AM ET on the deadline day. The complete application must be submitted to Grants.gov no later than 11:59:59 PM ET on May 27, 2014. Please note that the Grants.gov telephone assistance line is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week excluding Federal holidays.

Note for Fellowship Applicants

As part of the registration process with Grants.gov, applicants need to enter a Funding Opportunity Number (FON) on the "Registration with Credential Provider" page. There is a problem with some FONs that results in an error message. If you encounter this problem, please enter the following FON: 0716-INDV-REGISTRATION.

The electronic application package available through the <http://www.Grants.gov/> web site must be used for submissions. The Grants.gov Applicant Resources site provides a listing of tools and

documents to help you with the application process,
<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-resources.html>.

Note: Grants.gov is not compatible with all internet browsers nor is it readily compatible with all computers. To avoid fatal submission problems, please check the compatibility of the browser and computer system you intend to use prior to attempting to submit an application. For more information on compatible software applications, please see http://www.grants.gov/help/download_software.jsp.

Application Package Preparation. See instructions at Section IV.B above. The application package consists of 1 through 4 below.

1. On the initial electronic Grant Application Package page, complete the "Application Filing Name" field by entering the Applicant's name, starting with the last name. Note: Applicants do not need to complete the "Competition ID" field.
2. Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424): See instructions in Item 1 of Section IV.B. above. **Do not** follow the instructions provided with the form. Instead, follow the instructions in Section IV.B. above.
3. EPA Key Contacts Form 5700-54: Complete the form as described in Section IV.B. Item 2 above. Ignore all other instructions for completing this form that may be found elsewhere.
4. Items 3-6 Attachment Form (click on "Add Mandatory Project Narrative"): Attach a single electronic file labeled "MandatoryProjectInfo" that contains Items 3, 4, 5 and 6 described in Section IV.B. above. This file must be submitted in PDF format. Please review the PDF file for conversion errors prior to including it in the electronic application package. Requests to rectify conversion errors will not be accepted if made after the solicitation closing date and time.

Letters of Recommendation cannot be submitted electronically through Grants.gov; see Section IV.B. Item 7 above for submission instructions. All Letters of Recommendation MUST be submitted by the letter writer to the EPA no later than 11:59:59 PM ET on May 27, 2014.

Once the application package has been completed, the "Submit" button should be enabled (you may need to "Check Package for Errors" as well as save the file before this occurs). If the "Submit" button is not active, please contact Grants.gov for assistance (Telephone: 1-800-518-4726). Applicants should save the completed application package with two different file names to avoid having to re-key the forms should submission problems be experienced.

Submitting the application to Grants.gov:

Minor problems are not uncommon with transfers to Grants.gov. In addition, slow connection and transfer rates are generally experienced as the deadline time approaches due to high demand. To assure successful transmission, it is highly recommended that you do not delay submission of your application past 10:00 AM ET on the deadline day. For frequently asked questions

concerning submissions via Grants.gov, please see <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-resources.html>.

Close all other software before attempting to submit the electronic application package. Click the "Submit" button of the application package. Your internet browser will launch and a sign-in page will appear within a few minutes. Enter your individual registration user name and password.

A successful transfer should take no longer than 10-15 minutes and will end with an on-screen acknowledgement. "Print Screen" or "screen capture" this acknowledgement for documentation purposes. (Note: Subsequent email acknowledgements from Grants.gov regarding your submission may take as long as 48 hours to arrive.) If you experience submission problems, reboot the computer -- turning the power off may be necessary -- and re-attempt the submission. If submission problems continue, contact Grants.gov for assistance (Telephone: 1-800-518-4726 or e-mail: support@grants.gov). Applicants who are outside the U.S. at the time of submittal and are not able to access the toll-free number may reach a Grants.gov representative by calling 606-545-5035. The Grants.gov support desk operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, except Federal Holidays.

Transmission Difficulties. If transmission difficulties continue after following the above instructions, follow the guidance below. NCER may decide to review the application if it is clearly demonstrated that the transmission difficulties were due solely as a result of unavoidable and unresolvable problems associated with the transfer to Grants.gov. The decision regarding acceptance of the application for review will be made by NCER management and provided to the applicant within ten calendar days of the request. All emails, as described below, are to be sent to Todd Peterson (peterson.todd@epa.gov) with the FON in the subject line within one business day of the closing date of this solicitation. Note: Grants.gov will issue a "case number" upon being contacted for assistance.

1. **Unsuccessful transfer of the application package:** If a successful transfer of the application cannot be accomplished due to electronic submission issues, send an email before 11:59:59 PM ET on the solicitation closing date. In that email, document the problem, include the Grants.gov "case number," and attach the entire application in PDF format.
2. **Grants.gov rejection of the application:** If a notification is received from Grants.gov stating that the application has been rejected for reasons other than late submittal or use of an institutional rather than an individual registration, immediately send an email to Todd Peterson (peterson.todd@epa.gov) with the FON in the subject line within one business day of the closing date of this solicitation. In that email, document the problem, include all materials provided by Grants.gov, and attach the entire application in PDF format.

Grants.gov will send several emails during their processing of the application. The last email will state that the application has been transferred to the Agency and is undergoing review. Save these emails for documentation purposes; however, the **critical** email is the one acknowledging

receipt by the NCER Fellowship Program. This email will be sent from receipt.application@epa.gov.

Due to the volume of applications received, the emailed acknowledgement from receipt.application@epa.gov may take several weeks. Thus, EPA staff will not respond to queries regarding applications prior to June 27, 2014. Please make a notation on your calendar to contact the program at 2014FellowshipsRFA@epa.gov from June 27, 2014, to no later than 5:00 PM ET July 15, 2014, for information if you have not received the notification from receipt.application@epa.gov by that time. ***Failure to follow these instructions may result in your application being rejected without review.***

Letters of Recommendation must be submitted by the letter writers (see Item 7). Do not have letter writers mail Letters of Recommendation. Letters of Recommendation received by mail will be rejected.

NOTE: All Letters of Recommendation must be submitted to EPA no later than 11:59:59 PM ET, on May 27, 2014, (see Section IV.B. Item 7 above for further instructions).

V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

A. Peer Review

All eligible applications are reviewed by appropriate external technical peer reviewers based on the criteria and process described below. This review is designed to evaluate each application according to its scientific merit. The individual external peer reviewers include non-EPA scientists, engineers, social scientists, and/or economists who are accomplished in their respective disciplines and proficient in the technical subjects they are reviewing.

Prior to the external technical peer review panel meeting, all reviewers will receive electronic copies of all applications to be reviewed by the entire panel. Each application will be assigned to a minimum of three primary peer reviewers, one of whom will be assigned the role of Rapporteur. Each reviewer will be assigned between 15 and 20 applications on which to serve as a primary reviewer. During the review period leading up to the panel meeting, primary reviewers will read the entire application package for each application they are assigned. They will also prepare a written individual evaluation for each assigned application that addresses the peer review criteria described below and rate the application with a score of excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor.

At the beginning of the panel meeting, each primary reviewer will report their ratings for the applications they reviewed. Those applications receiving at least two ratings of *Very Good* or one rating of *Excellent* from among the primary reviewers will then be further discussed by the entire panel as described below. In addition, if there is one *Very Good* rating among the primary reviewers of an application, the primary reviewer, whose initial rating is the *Very Good*, may

request discussion of the application by the entire peer review panel. All other applications will be declined for further consideration.

After the discussion of an application by the entire panel, the primary reviewers may revise their initial ratings and if they do so, this will also be documented. The final ratings of the primary reviewers will then be translated by EPA into the final peer review score (excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor) for the application. This is reflected in a peer review results document developed by the Rapporteur, which combines the individual initial and final evaluations of the primary reviewers and captures any substantive comments from the panel discussion. This score will be used to determine which applications undergo the internal programmatic review discussed below.

Reviewers will consider the entirety of the application—including the Personal Statement, Education & Experiences, Presentations (if applicable), and Course Work Information—with respect to the criteria below. Additionally, the content of the Letters of Recommendation will be considered with respect to how they speak to the criteria below. Applications with fewer than three letters of recommendation may not be rated as highly.

Peer reviewers consider an application's merit based on the criteria below. Criteria I-II are listed in descending order of importance.

Criteria I. The Applicant's Potential for Success in the Proposed Course of Study

Reviewers will consider the following elements, to be weighted equally:

- The degree to which the candidate is committed to the stated academic and career goals;
- The candidate's potential for scientific curiosity, creativity, and achievement in his or her planned course of study, including where appropriate, the scientific merit of the proposed project; and
- The candidate's organizational, analytical, and written skills as evidenced in his or her personal statement.

Criteria II: The Applicant's Demonstrated Commitment to Environmental Study

Reviewers will consider the following elements, to be weighted equally:

- The degree to which the candidate is committed to an environmentally-related study and the environment; and
- The degree to which the candidate's experiences (e.g., education, work, volunteering, study abroad, research, etc.) are relevant to environmental study.

B. Programmatic Review

Applications receiving scores of excellent or very good as a result of the peer review process will then undergo an internal **programmatic review**, which will be conducted by technical experts from the EPA, including individuals from the Office of Research and Development (ORD) and program and regional offices involved with the science or engineering proposed. All other applications are automatically declined.

The purpose of the programmatic review is to assure an integrated, balanced research portfolio for the Agency, and to help determine which applications to recommend for award. Applications will be evaluated to determine the strength and the degree to which the candidate is committed to the Agency's mission to protect human health and the environment.

C. Human Subjects Research Statement (HSRS) Review

Applications being considered for funding after the Programmatic Review that involve human subjects research studies will have their HSRS reviewed by EPA's HSRRO prior to award. The HSRRO will review the information provided in the HSRS and the Personal Statement to determine if the ethical treatment of human subjects is described in a manner appropriate for conditional approval to be granted.

D. Funding Decisions

Final funding decisions are made by the NCER Director based on the results of the peer review and the internal programmatic review and, where applicable, the EPA HSRRO's assessment of the applicant's HSRS (see Section IV.B. Item 6). In addition, in making the final funding decision, the NCER Director may also consider availability of funds and program balance, including distribution of awards across disciplines, institutions and geography. Applicants selected for funding will be required to provide the additional information listed below under "Award Notices." The application will then be forwarded to EPA's Grants and Interagency Management Division for award in accordance with the EPA's procedures.

VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. Award Notices

External peer review results will be provided to each student with an award or declination letter. The earliest anticipated start date for these awards is September 1, 2014.

You are advised to retain this announcement for future reference.

The official notification of an award will be made by the EPA's Grants and Interagency Management Division. Applicants are cautioned that only a grants officer is authorized to bind the Government to the expenditure of funds; preliminary selection by the NCER Director in the Office of Research and Development does not guarantee an award will be made. For example,

statutory authorization, funding, or other issues discovered during the award process may affect the ability of EPA to make an award to an applicant. The award notice, signed by an EPA grants officer, is the authorizing document and will be provided through electronic or postal mail.

Selected applicants will be required to provide the following information to complete the application process:

1. EPA Form 5770-2, "Fellowship Application" **This form is available on the NCER web page (www.epa.gov/ncer/fellow/).**
2. Additional information and documentation about your educational status and tuition/other costs.
3. Sealed official transcripts from all institutions.

B. Disputes

Disputes related to this assistance agreement competition will be resolved in accordance with the dispute resolution procedures set forth in 70 FR 3629, 3630 (January 26, 2005) which can be found at <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/competition/resolution.htm>. Questions regarding disputes may be referred to the eligibility contact.

C. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Terms and conditions associated with this award can be found at <http://www.epa.gov/ncer/guidance/>.

EPA is moving towards electronic submission of all grant applications through www.grants.gov. It is expected that all solicitations issued on or after October 1, 2014 will require applicants to submit their application materials electronically through www.grants.gov.

i. Meetings: Fellows are expected to attend a technical/scientific conference as long as they are members of the GRO program. Resources to support this travel are to be taken from the expense allowance.

ii. Human Subjects: An 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 CFR Part 26. Studies involving intentional exposure of human subjects who are children or pregnant or nursing women are prohibited by Subpart B of 40 CFR Part 26. For observational studies involving children or pregnant women and fetuses please refer to Subparts C & D of 40 CFR Part 26. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services regulations at 45 CFR Part 46.101(e) have long required "... compliance with pertinent Federal laws or regulations which provide additional protection for human subjects." EPA's regulation 40 CFR 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 Part 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.

Guidance and training for investigators conducting EPA-funded research involving human subjects may be obtained here:

<http://www.epa.gov/osainter/phre/support.htm>
http://www.epa.gov/osa/pdfs/phre/phre_course/index.htm

iii. Animal Welfare:

A fellowship recipient must agree to comply with the Animal Welfare Act of 1966 (P.L. 89-544), as amended, 7 U.S.C. 2131-2159. The recipient must also agree to abide by the "U.S. Government Principles for the Utilization and Care of Vertebrate Animals used in Testing, Research, and Training." (50 Federal Register 20864-20865 (May 20, 1985))

* This clause applies if a research facility (defined as any school (except elementary or secondary), institution, organization or person) receives funds under a grant from a federal agency for the purpose of carrying out research, tests, or experiments involving animals.

iv. Reporting: A fellow is expected to manage fellowship funds efficiently and effectively and make sufficient academic progress for each year of fellowship funding. The fellowship agreement will include terms/conditions implementing this requirement. In order to retain their funding, fellowship recipients must provide their EPA project officer with an annual, written statement from their advisor stating that they are maintaining the same criteria under which they were selected (i.e., acceptable grade-point average, full-time student, and still in the same discipline). Students must also participate in a summer internship for up to 12 weeks at an EPA facility (located in the U.S. or its territories), complete a summer project and explore topics in broader societal impacts including but not limited to: furthering environmental awareness, encouraging environmental stewardship, promoting environmental equity and justice, and broadening participation of all citizens. Fellows will also provide a final transcript that states that they have completed their studies.

v. Acknowledgement of EPA Support: EPA's full or partial support must be acknowledged in journal articles, oral or poster presentations, news releases, interviews with reporters and other communications. Any documents developed under the agreement for distribution to the public or inclusion in a scientific, technical, or other journal shall include the following statement:

This publication [article] was developed under Assistance Agreement No. _____ awarded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to [*name of recipient*]. It has not been formally reviewed by EPA. The views expressed in this document are solely those of [*name of recipient or names of authors*] and do not necessarily reflect those of the Agency. EPA

does not endorse any products or commercial services mentioned in this publication.

A graphic that can be converted to a slide or used in other ways, such as on a poster, is located at http://www.epa.gov/ncer/guidance/star_images.html. EPA expects recipients to use this graphic in oral and poster presentations.

vi. Website References in Solicitation: Any non-federal websites or website links included in this solicitation are provided for proposal preparation and/or informational purposes only. U.S. EPA does not endorse any of these entities or their services. In addition, EPA does not guarantee that any linked, external websites referenced in this solicitation comply with Section 508 (Accessibility Requirements) of the Rehabilitation Act.

vii. Unfair Competitive Advantage: EPA personnel will take appropriate actions in situations where it is determined that an applicant may have an unfair competitive advantage, or the appearance of such, in competing for awards under this announcement. Affected applicants will be provided an opportunity to respond before any final action is taken.

VII. AGENCY CONTACTS

Further information, if needed, may be obtained from the EPA contacts indicated below. Information regarding this RFA obtained from sources other than these Agency Contacts may not be accurate. Email inquiries are preferred.

Program Contact: Georgette Boddie; phone: 703-347-8049; boddie.georgette@epa.gov
Eligibility Contact: Ron Josephson; phone: 703-308-0442; email: josephson.ron@epa.gov
Electronic Submissions: Todd Peterson; phone: 703-308-7224; peterson.todd@epa.gov