

United States Geological Survey

Earth Mapping Resources Initiative (Earth MRI) Mine Waste Cooperative Agreements



Notice of Funding Opportunity - Fiscal Year 2023
Funding Opportunity Number (FON) G23AS00160

Closing Date: 04/12/2023

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A. Program Description

A1. Authority

The USGS Mineral Resources Program (MRP) delivers unbiased science and information to increase understanding of ore formation, mineral resource potential, production, consumption, disposal, and how minerals and mineral extraction interact with the environment. MRP conducts data collection and research on a wide variety of mineral resources that are important to the Nation’s economy and national security.

The Earth Mapping Resources Initiative (Earth MRI; <https://www.usgs.gov/special-topics/earth-mri>), a component of MRP, is a national effort to carry out the fundamental resources and mapping mission of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). The goal of Earth MRI is to modernize the surface and subsurface geologic mapping of the United States, with a focus on identifying areas that may have the potential to contain mineral resources. Earth MRI was established in FY2019 in response to Executive Order 13817 ("A Federal Strategy to Ensure Secure and Reliable Supplies of Critical Minerals") and also supports Executive Order 14017 (“America’s Supply Chains”). In FY2022, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (otherwise known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL))^[1] funded Earth MRI efforts related to critical minerals, including specific direction to:

“accelerate efforts to carry out the fundamental resources and mapping mission of the United States Geological Survey by— (1) providing integrated topographic, geologic, geochemical, and geophysical mapping; (2) accelerating the integration and consolidation of geospatial and resource data; and (3) providing interpretation of subsurface and above-ground mineral resources data.”

The BIL further provides for this work to be accomplished through cooperative agreements with State geological surveys.

This funding opportunity will initiate the above-ground portion of the BIL direction by supporting State geological surveys in coordinated activities to map, characterize, and assess the potential for critical minerals in mine waste.

^[1] U.S. Congress, Nov. 15, 2021, “H.R. 3684 – Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act”, Public Law: 117-58, [Text - H.R.3684 - 117th Congress \(2021-2022\): Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act | Congress.gov | Library of Congress](#)

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number

15.073

A2. Background, Purpose and Program Requirements

Guidelines and Requirements

The following guidelines and requirements are provided to help the State geological surveys submit a strong, competitive proposal. The membership of the Review Panel will change from year to year and applicants should not assume that reviewers will be fully aware of relevant previous work. Following these guidelines will allow the Review Panel to assess the proposed projects efficiently and effectively.

- Provide a clear justification for proposed mine waste activities. Explain how the results of the project meet the priorities of the program and applicant's organization and benefit stakeholders and society. Please be specific and provide examples.
- Request funding for one, two, and/or three Priorities: Priority 1) national mine waste inventory; Priority 2) mine waste characterization, and Priority 3) travel to the annual Earth MRI workshop.
- Describe the project and the process expected to be followed (**workflows, including methods and level of effort**) to complete the required objectives. If proposing multiple activities to complete the project, clearly state the work that will be accomplished for each activity. Please note that if reduced funds are awarded, the scope of work may require modification.
- Briefly describe previous work or pilot projects that have informed estimates of the level of effort and/or expertise needed to successfully complete the proposed work.
- A Data Management Plan (DMP) must be provided to conform with the Executive Order of February 22, 2013, "Increasing Access to the Results of Federally Funded Scientific Research". An example template is found in Attachment C.
- **State matching funds are not required.** However, if a State geological survey would like to leverage matching funds, please specify in the Budget. Priority activities must be budgeted separately and within the itemized budget for that Priority. **Review and verify budget numbers prior to proposal submission.**
- Include descriptions of project personnel and their experience and skills relevant to completing the proposed tasks. Extended supervisory hours performed by senior staff or other management activities for which funding is requested must be well justified. For each project personnel give a brief statement of their background or curriculum vita (CV) and indicate whether the person works for the State geological survey or elsewhere (contractor or volunteer). (CVs do not count toward the proposal page limit, but please keep each CV to a 2-page limit.)
- Nonexpendable equipment funding requests are acceptable if the equipment is reasonable and necessary for the successful completion of the work funded by the MRP. A full justification and a dealer or manufacturer quote are required for any proposed equipment purchase. If no justification is included the cost will be disallowed. MRP will not fund

computers, database software systems, or equipment required for an organization's IT infrastructure, operation, and maintenance. Funding requests for software may be allowed if prorated for the proposed-work and a quote is provided.

- Non-allowable expenses under the MRP include tuition, computer maintenance or travel to any other conference or workshop except the Earth MRI workshop. MRP funds may not be used to pay for USGS or other Federal services.
- If collaborating with staff from partner agencies (e.g., universities), or contractors please detail their roles and project hours as funded through the proposal or as representing optional state matching funds.
- Begin submitting proposals to Grants.gov well in advance of the due date as **there is no possibility of late submissions**. See Part Section D for more information on proposal submission.

Please contact the Contracting Officer, Margaret Eastman (mrussell@usgs.gov) with any questions. However, questions specific to what will or will not be funded cannot be addressed.

Program Priorities

PLEASE NOTE: Proposals that do not specifically address Earth MRI Mine Waste fiscal year (FY) 2023 priorities will NOT be considered for an award.

A proposal must address at least one of three FY 2023 mine waste priorities and describe activities accordingly. It is possible for proposed projects to receive reduced or no funding. If applicable, hiring students from underrepresented sectors, majoring in science, technology, engineering, and mathematical fields, is strongly encouraged to educate and diversify the next generation of geoscientists.

FY 2023 Priority 1 – National mine waste inventory

One goal of the USGS mine waste effort is to build a national mine waste inventory that will support other state, federal, and tribal agencies that are responsible for land management planning and remediation decisions. Mine wastes at legacy mine sites are potential sources of many by-product commodities that are currently critical but that were previously discarded or overlooked. To date, there has been no comprehensive inventory of these mine wastes, their compositions, and the critical minerals they may contain. The inventory will be developed in conjunction with stakeholders to answer outstanding questions including:

- How many mine waste sites are there in the United States, and where are they located?
- How much material is available that may contain critical mineral resources, and what is the tonnage and grade of that material?
- What are the characteristics of that material (geological, geochemical, mineralogical) that may influence recovery of the commodities of interest and environmental impacts?

In FY2023, State geological surveys may request funding up to \$50,000.00 to populate an ArcGIS database that documents the location of solid mine waste materials in the applicant's

state, and the geology and resources of those mine waste features. Perpetual waters are not included. Mine waste materials are limited to those from nonfuel deposits, so coal and uranium wastes are not included. For entry into the database, the areal extent of mine waste must exceed 2,000 m².

The database has four tables: location, geology, resources, and references (Figure 1). Records must be populated according to the template provided with the application materials (see [Waste_DB_Files_2022-11-03](#)). Populated records must use data that are available in the public domain. Funding for field work may not be requested.

Figure 1. Entity relation diagram showing the structure of the mine waste database.

Priority 1 activities include the following:

- State compilation of mine waste materials. Compiling geospatial data from the state that outlines the location, geology, and resources of mine waste with the goal of using existing data preserved in publicly available state-held records and in the available literature. To ensure that data are compatible with the developing national USGS database on mine waste, state data must be entered into a template provided by the USGS' mineral deposit database project (USMIN). To help state agencies populate the database, USMIN will provide training and will work closely with state agencies as described below.
 1. USMIN provides a template of the ArcGIS database and documentation (see [Waste_DB_Files_2022-11-03](#) included with application materials), and training material, and then meets with state agencies to provide training on how to populate records. At the outset, states are being asked first to populate records for five mine waste features to calibrate data entry and submit that to the USMIN project personnel to assure the data are in the proper standard format. USMIN will then check the initial five records and provide feedback to the states on those records, noting which fields are populated correctly, and which fields need to be corrected. This will assure that any questions or issues are addressed at the beginning of the project before significant time and resources are expended.
 2. Based on the feedback from the USGS USMIN personnel, states then populate records for 20 additional mine waste features. USMIN then will review those 20 records, and then provides feedback to the states on those records, noting which fields are populated correctly, and which fields need to be corrected.
 3. States incorporate that feedback to populate records for additional mine waste features.

Deliverables for Priority 1 include:

- The 25 records that have been populated according to the above quality control steps and then all subsequent records whose input incorporates the feedback provided by USMIN.
- All records are to be submitted as a single ArcGIS database to USMIN@usgs.gov.

- A brief (1-2 pages) report describing the process and summarizing what was submitted is required upon project completion.
- All Earth MRI deliverables, including reports, may be made available to the public.

FY 2022 Priority 2 – Mine Waste Characterization

The USGS mine waste characterization effort will evaluate nonfuel mine waste sites that potentially contain critical mineral resources. These sites may also be candidates for remediation, which would foster economic development in conjunction with environmental restoration. Whether mine waste is a potential resource, an environmental liability, or both will depend heavily on the geochemical and mineralogic characteristics of the mine waste materials. In addition, data collected on the compositional characterization of mine waste may inform future technologies to more efficiently reprocess mine waste for extraction of critical minerals. This information will be useful for accounting for the total costs and benefits of reuse, recycling, reprocessing, reclamation and restoration of ecosystem services. Basic datasets produced by this request will not only contribute to improved models of critical mineral resources in mine waste but will also improve the understanding of the environmental impact posed by mine wastes. This effort will inform the national mine waste inventory and government-wide strategies for supporting critical mineral supply chains as well as remediation of legacy mine lands.

Areas across the United States with the potential to host both subsurface and surface deposits of critical mineral resources ('focus areas') have been identified by the USGS and their State Geological Survey collaborators (see Dicken and others, 2019, 2021; Hammarstrom and others, 2022). Earth MRI focus areas are determined by mineral systems, deposit types, and known and potential critical mineral commodities. The mineral systems classification documents the relationship between large mineral systems that may contain multiple deposit types and the mineral commodities associated with each deposit type (Hofstra and Kreiner, 2020). Earth MRI takes a minerals systems approach for data collection efforts for both above ground and below ground critical mineral resources.

The goal of Priority 2 is to characterize mine waste to augment the internally consistent database of mine waste inventory covered under Priority 1. Priority 2 projects will focus on field-based characterization of mine waste volume estimates, geochemical composition, bulk mineralogical composition, mine water discharge load estimates, and contained mineral commodities. Also important to this effort is an understanding of the orebody from which the waste was derived.

The USGS is currently developing mine waste site characterization and sampling protocols to guide this effort under Priority 2. The protocols will, in general, follow well-established protocols for geospatial mapping and common features to support the inventory effort as well as standard sampling methods to characterize the mine waste composition. For example, sampling of solid waste material will emphasize collection of individual sub-samples that can be composited to achieve representative samples that will help to characterize waste piles. A limited latitude to collect an additional number of grab samples to address scientific interests of states

will be permitted. Water sampling protocols will follow USGS approved methods in terms of sample containers, filtration, sample preservation, and holding times, among other details. Drilling, where possible, is encouraged but not required.

In FY2023, state geological surveys may request funding up to \$250,000.00 for mine waste characterization efforts within Earth MRI focus areas. States are required to indicate the mineral system(s) and their component mineral deposit types (Hofstra and Kreiner, 2020), and specific nonfuel critical mineral commodities of interest in their proposed efforts. If additional non-critical commodities are also present, then please identify as well.

Geochemical Analyses

The USGS will support projects under Priority 2 by providing geochemical analyses on samples collected from mine waste materials. Because all data funded through Earth MRI must meet USGS quality assurance/quality control (QA/QC) standards and be made public, the USGS has set aside funds to provide specific geochemical analyses at no additional cost to the State geological surveys. The types of analyses to be supported by USGS are the following:

USGS Solid phase analysis: \$415.00 per sample

Bulk geochemistry:

- 61-element major and trace element fusion-digestion with analysis by inductively coupled plasma (ICP) optical emission spectrometry (ICP-OES) and mass spectrometry (ICP-MS). Elemental analytes are Ag, Al, As, B, Ba, Be, Bi, Ca, Cd, Ce, Co, Cr, Cs, Cu, Dy, Er, Eu, Fe, Ga, Gd, Ge, Hf, Ho, In, K, La, Li, Lu, Mg, Mn, Mo, Nb, Nd, Ni, P, Pb, Pr, Rb, Re, S, Sb, Sc, Se, Si, Sm, Sn, Sr, Ta, Tb, Te, Th, Ti, Tl, Tm, U, V, W, Y, Yb, Zn, and Zr.
- Major elements by wavelength dispersive X-ray fluorescence (WD-XRF). Analytes are Al₂O₃, BaO, CaO, Cr₂O₃, Fe₂O₃, K₂O, MgO, MnO, Na₂O, P₂O₅, SiO₂, TiO₂, SrO, V₂O₅, and Loss on Ignition (LOI)
- Fluorine by digestion and ion-selective electrode
- Gold, palladium, platinum assay
- Total sulfur, carbon, mercury, carbonate carbon

Mineralogy:

- Quantitative X-ray diffraction (XRD), limited to the composited solid samples.

Water-rock interaction

- Acid-base accounting

USGS water chemistry analysis: \$280.00 per sample

Composition:

- Major and trace element chemistry
 - Anions (ion chromatography)

- Cations and trace elements, including precious metals (ICP-OES/ICP-MS). Analytes include Ag, Al, As, Au, B, Ba, Be, Bi, Ca, Cd, Ce, Co, Cr, Cs, Cu, Dy, Er, Eu, Fe, Ga, Gd, Ge, Hf, Hg, Ho, In, Ir, K, La, Li, Lu, Mg, Mn, Mo, Na, Nb, Nd, Ni, P, Pb, Pd, Pt, Rb, Re, Rh, Ru, S, Sb, Sc, Se, Si, Sn, Sr, Ta, Tb, Te, Th, Tm, Ti, Tl, U, V, Y, Yb, Zn, and Zr.
- Alkalinity/acidity

States are responsible for sampling equipment, sample containers, and shipping. For water samples, multiple sample splits will be required to accommodate preservation and analysis requirements. Details on materials, equipment, sample duplicate, and preservation requirements will be provided in the USGS protocols. The USGS will provide additional QA/QC on data samples and archive the solid phase samples. The data will be published and combined into the periodic USGS mine waste data releases hosted on the Earth MRI website. If a State geological survey chooses to perform additional analyses as part of the proposed project, costs for these must be included in their budget. Although all Earth MRI data will become publicly available on-line, any non-contract geochemical data must be flagged as “unvalidated by the USGS”. Please note, Earth MRI funds are prohibited from being used to fund analytical work at any Federal facility.

To gain an understanding of the mineralogy and geochemistry of the original ore deposit(s) that sourced the mine waste materials generated during mining, up to 10 representative samples of ore and associated alteration (if relevant) are requested if possible for USGS archives. The ore and associated alteration samples will be analyzed using the same solid phase analytical methods described for the solid mine waste samples. The hand samples collected (up to 2 kg each) should be well described as to their location, host rock type, alteration type (for example, propylitic, argillic, phyllic, potassic, sodic, etc.), ore type (for example, supergene, hypogene, main-stage, late-stage, disseminated, stockwork, vein, breccia, replacement, massive, etc.), and visual identification of mineralogy (for example, not requesting in-depth petrography, microanalyses, x-ray diffraction analysis, etc). The ore and alteration sample descriptions are to be included in the final report.

Each project is limited to a total geochemical analysis budget of \$65,000.00, which is not included in the \$250,000.00 project budget. The project scope will determine the distribution of solid samples (\$415.00 per sample) and water samples (\$280.00 per sample) submitted to the USGS for analysis, as long as the total cost does not exceed the analytical budget maximum. Proposals should include a projection of the number of samples and sample type (solid or water) to be collected. Please also include in analytical estimates the requirements for field blanks and field duplicates for QA/QC with the following frequency:

- Solid samples: 1 duplicate per 20 samples, or at least one per sampling event, if less than 20 samples collected per event.
- Water samples: 1 field blank and 1 field duplicate per 20 samples, or one blank and one duplicate per sampling event, if less than 20 samples collected per event.

Project proposals for Priority 2 must discuss the following:

- Expected critical mineral commodities in the waste, based on mine history, previous analyses, mineral system and/or deposit type processed;
- Size of the resource: the features should be large enough to contribute to the national assessment objectives stated above;
- Accessibility to the sites: proposed sites (active, managed, or abandoned) must be safely and legally available for sample collection. The state is responsible for securing access to sites in their project;
- Material type: Primary emphasis will be on tailings and perpetual water sources as the initial target materials for FY23, but other types of waste in addition to tailings and perpetual water sources may be considered pending prior approval (contact Darcy McPhee, dmcphee@usgs.gov, at least 15 days prior to proposal due date); material type will be expanded in subsequent years. Only nonfuel mine waste is considered. Perpetual water sources are those that are long-lived, such as adit flows or pit lakes.

The FY2023 Priority 2 data collection efforts/deliverables include:

- Geospatial data including waste feature boundaries that are compatible with the Priority #1 Inventory database and sample locations (latitude/longitude with defined datum) that link to National Geochemical Database ([National Geochemical Database | U.S. Geological Survey \(usgs.gov\)](https://www.usgs.gov/national-geochemical-database)).
- Volume and load estimates. Approaches for estimating volumes and masses of mine waste piles and volumes of pit lakes may vary, particularly with regards to the third dimension. Similarly for mine adit discharge waters, seasonal flows of mine effluent may factor into load estimates. An estimate of discharge at the time of sampling should be made so that volume and load estimates can be made for adits; direct measurement does not need to be made if estimates can be obtained with other data (such as discharges measured by site managers). However, please clearly describe the methodology for solid piles and water (if collected) in the final report.
- Geochemical (solid and water) data, which will be released by USGS in USGS data releases and used in the interpretive report published by the state.
- Resource estimate of contained critical minerals and other potential commodities.
- Comprehensive description of any ore-body hand samples that are collected.
- Brief (1-2 pages) progress reports every six months for the duration of the project.
- Final interpretive report, including methods and data sets used for calculating volume and resource estimates. Report must include site description, interpretation, geospatial data on waste piles and other sample sites, and mine waste inventory data for samples sites. Report must be provided as a peer-reviewed state publication.
- Digital archive of field sheets.
- All Earth MRI deliverables may be made available to the public.

If funded for Priority 2 activities, USGS will provide protocols and in person training for established protocols that must be followed for all sampling efforts. USGS will coordinate with the project principal investigator (PI) to determine timing and location of trainings, which will occur at a mine waste site identified by the state for Priority 2 activities. No additional resources

will need to be allocated for training as training efforts will contribute to Priority 2 activities.

FY 2022 Priority 3 – Earth MRI workshop

Annual Earth MRI workshop –

An annual Earth MRI workshop is held in collaboration with the State geological surveys and other partners to help define and evaluate focus areas, or areas that have the greatest need for future Earth MRI data collection. The Earth MRI workshops bring together technical experts from across the USGS and state geological surveys and other agencies to assess and discuss data and information relevant to the identification of focus areas across the Nation with potential for hosting critical mineral deposits. The workshops will address both subsurface and above-ground (mine waste) critical mineral resources. The October 2023 workshop is planned to be hybrid, with both in-person and virtual participation for those not able to travel to the meeting. All states that request funds to attend the 2023 Earth MRI workshop will receive funds.

Mine waste efforts will be a key component of future Earth MRI annual workshops which will require State geological survey input to help define mine waste sites within each State that are important targets for Earth MRI inventory and characterization. A unified mine waste site data sampling and mapping strategy will also be discussed.

State representatives may participate in the workshop to help Earth MRI understand the national scope of mine waste and help delineate the focus areas for future above and below ground data collection. The USGS will support travel for up to two participants per state, up to \$2,000.00 in direct costs per participant to attend the workshop. All requests for workshop travel funds will be granted up to a total of \$4,000.00 (for two travelers), regardless of whether other proposed activities are funded. Requests for Priority 3 funds are not competitive and will not be subjected to panel review. The next workshop will be held in October 2023, at designated USGS facilities. In the event workshops are virtual instead of in-person, the travel funds will not be awarded. For planning purposes, assume the workshop will be held at the USGS headquarters in Reston, VA.

The total for Priority 3 including potential travel to critical minerals workshop shall not exceed \$4,000.00. To obtain funds to support travel to the Earth MRI Critical Mineral Resources Workshops, states must:

1. Request MRP funds to attend the workshop,
2. Provide travel estimates in the budget table (Attachment B),
3. Specify travelers names, and
4. If funds are awarded for Priority 3, States are required to use them on travel to the Earth MRI workshop only.

B. Federal Award Information

B1. Total Funding

Estimated Total Funding

\$5,000,000,000

B2. Award Amount

Maximum Award

\$304,000

Minimum Award

\$2,000

The approximate range for an individual award is a minimum of \$2,000.00 up to a maximum of \$304,000.00. In some circumstances, funding may be less than \$2,000.00 or more than \$304,000.00.

B3. Anticipated Award Funding and Dates

Anticipated Award Date

July 01, 2023

Proposals received after the deadline will NOT be considered for an award.

The earliest project start dates will be after the USGS receives its FY2023 BIL funding, or July 1, 2023, whichever is later. The latest start date is September 15, 2023. All deliverables are due 90 days following end of cooperative agreement performance period.

With the exception of awards for workshop travel funds only, awards will be made for a 24-month period only.

B4. Number of Awards

Expected Number of Awards

16

B5. Type of Award

Funding Instrument Type

CA - Cooperative Agreement

C. Eligibility Information

C1. Eligible Applicants

Eligible Applicants

00 – State governments

Additional Information on Eligibility

Only state geological surveys are eligible to apply to this Notice of Funding Opportunity under the – Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Public Law: 117-58, Sec. 40201). A university may submit a proposal on behalf of a state geological survey if the state geological survey is organized under a state university system.

C2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost Sharing / Matching Requirement

No

C3. Other

Non-allowable expenses under the MRP include tuition, computer maintenance or travel to any other conference or workshop except the Earth MRI workshop. MRP funds may not be used to pay for USGS services.

Excluded Parties: USGS conducts a review of the SAM.gov Exclusions database for all applicant entities and their key project personnel prior to award. USGS cannot award funds to entities or their key project personnel identified in the SAM.gov Exclusions database as ineligible, prohibited/restricted or otherwise excluded from receiving Federal contracts, certain subcontracts, and certain Federal assistance and benefits, as their ineligibility condition applies to this Federal program.

D. Application and Submission Information

Grants.gov Application Submission and Receipt Procedures

Grants.gov Application Submission and Receipt Procedures

This section provides the application submission and receipt instructions for U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) program applications. Please read the following instructions carefully and completely.

1. Electronic Delivery

USGS is participating in the Grants.gov initiative to provide the grant community with a single site to find and apply for grant funding opportunities. USGS encourages applicants to submit their applications online through Grants.gov.

2. How to Register to Apply through Grants.gov

a. *Instructions:* Read the instructions below about registering to apply for USGS funds. Applicants should read the registration instructions carefully and prepare the information requested before beginning the registration process. Reviewing and assembling the required information before beginning the registration process will alleviate last-minute searches for required information.

Organizations must have an active System for Award Management (SAM) registration, and Grants.gov account to apply for grants. If individual applicants are eligible to apply for this funding opportunity, then you may begin with step 3, Create a Grants.gov Account, listed below.

Creating a Grants.gov account can be completed online in minutes, but SAM registration may take several weeks. Therefore, an organization's registration should be done in sufficient time to ensure it does not impact the entity's ability to meet required application submission deadlines. Note: An entity will be assigned a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) by SAM. No Dun and Bradstreet (DUNS) number is required after April 4, 2022.

Complete organization instructions can be found on Grants.gov here:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html>

1) *Register with SAM:* All organizations applying online through Grants.gov must register with the System for Award Management (SAM). Failure to register with SAM will prevent your organization from applying through Grants.gov. SAM registration must be renewed annually. For more detailed instructions for registering with SAM, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-2-register-with-sam.html>

2) *Create a Grants.gov Account:* The next step is to register an account with Grants.gov. Follow the on-screen instructions or refer to the detailed instructions here: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration.html>

3) *Add a Profile to a Grants.gov Account:* A profile in Grants.gov corresponds to a single applicant organization the user represents (i.e., an applicant) or an individual applicant. If you work for or consult with multiple organizations and have a profile for each, you may log in to one Grants.gov account to access all of your grant applications. To add an organizational profile to your Grants.gov account, enter UEI assigned by SAM in the UEI field while adding a profile. For more detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/add-profile.html>

4) *EBiz POC Authorized Profile Roles:* After you register with Grants.gov and create an Organization Applicant Profile, the organization applicant's request for Grants.gov roles and access is sent to the EBiz POC. The EBiz POC will then log in to Grants.gov and authorize the appropriate roles, which may include the AOR role, thereby giving you permission to complete and submit applications on behalf of the organization. You will be able to submit your application online any time after you have been assigned the AOR role. For more

detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/authorize-roles.html>

5) *Track Role Status*: To track your role request, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/track-role-status.html>

b. *Electronic Signature*: When applications are submitted through Grants.gov, the name of the organization applicant with the AOR role that submitted the application is inserted into the signature line of the application, serving as the electronic signature. The EBiz POC **must** authorize people who are able to make legally binding commitments on behalf of the organization as a user with the AOR role; **this step is often missed and it is crucial for valid and timely submissions.**

3. How to Submit an Application to USGS via Grants.gov

Grants.gov applicants can apply online using Workspace. Workspace is a shared, online environment where members of a grant team may simultaneously access and edit different webforms within an application. For each funding opportunity announcement (FOA), you can create individual instances of a workspace.

Below is an overview of applying on Grants.gov. For access to complete instructions on how to apply for opportunities, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/workspace-overview.html>

1) *Create a Workspace*: Creating a workspace allows you to complete it online and route it through your organization for review before submitting.

2) *Complete a Workspace*: Add participants to the workspace to work on the application together, complete all the required forms online or by downloading PDF versions, and check for errors before submission. The Workspace progress bar will display the state of your application process as you apply. As you apply using Workspace, you may click the blue question mark icon near the upper-right corner of each page to access context-sensitive help.

a. *Adobe Reader*: If you decide not to apply by filling out webforms you can download individual PDF forms in Workspace. The individual PDF forms can be downloaded and saved to your local device storage, network drive(s), or external drives, then accessed through Adobe Reader.

NOTE: Visit the Adobe Software Compatibility page on Grants.gov to download the appropriate version of the software at: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html>

b. *Mandatory Fields in Forms*: In the forms, you will note fields marked with an asterisk and a different background color. These fields are mandatory fields that must be completed to successfully submit your application.

c. *Complete SF-424 Fields First*: The forms are designed to fill in common required fields across other forms, such as the applicant name, address, and UEI Number. Once it is completed, the information will transfer to the other forms.

3) *Submit a Workspace*: An application may be submitted through workspace by clicking the Sign and Submit button on the Manage Workspace page, under the Forms tab. Grants.gov

recommends submitting your application package at least 24-48 hours prior to the close date to provide you with time to correct any potential technical issues that may disrupt the application submission.

4) *Track a Workspace Submission:* After successfully submitting a workspace application, a Grants.gov Tracking Number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) is automatically assigned to the application. The number will be listed on the Confirmation page that is generated after submission. Using the tracking number, access the Track My Application page under the Applicants tab or the Details tab in the submitted workspace.

For additional training resources, including video tutorials, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-training.html>

Applicant Support: Grants.gov provides applicants 24/7 support via the toll-free number 1-800-518-4726 and email at support@grants.gov. For questions related to the specific grant opportunity, contact the number listed in the application package of the grant you are applying for.

If you are experiencing difficulties with your submission, it is best to call the Grants.gov Support Center and get a ticket number. The Support Center ticket number will assist the USGS with tracking your issue and understanding background information on the issue.

4. Timely Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission

a. *Online Submission.* All applications must be received by the due date established for each program. Proof of timely submission is automatically recorded by Grants.gov. An electronic date/time stamp is generated within the system when the application is successfully received by Grants.gov. The applicant with the AOR role who submitted the application will receive an acknowledgement of receipt and a tracking number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) from Grants.gov with the successful transmission of their application. This applicant with the AOR role will also receive the official date/time stamp and Grants.gov Tracking number in an email serving as proof of their timely submission.

When USGS successfully retrieves the application from Grants.gov, and acknowledges the download of submissions, Grants.gov will provide an electronic acknowledgment of receipt of the application to the email address of the applicant with the AOR role who submitted the application. Again, proof of timely submission shall be the official date and time that Grants.gov receives your application. Applications received by Grants.gov after the established due date for the program will be considered late and will not be considered for funding by USGS.

Applicants using slow internet, such as dial-up connections, should be aware that transmission can take some time before Grants.gov receives your application. Again, Grants.gov will provide either an error or a successfully received transmission in the form of an email sent to the applicant with the AOR role attempting to submit the application. The Grants.gov Support Center reports that some applicants end the transmission because they think that nothing is occurring during the transmission process. Please be patient and give the system time to process the application.

D1. Address to Request Application Package

Program Website Link

D2. Content and Form of Application Submission

1. SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance

Applicants must submit the appropriate Standard Form (SF)-424, Application for Federal Assistance. The required application forms are available with this announcement on Grants.gov. The SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance must be complete, signed, and dated. Do not include any proprietary or personally identifiable information. Please note: Enter only the amount requested from this Federal program in the “Federal” funding box on the SF-424 Application form. Include any other Federal sources of funding in the “Other” box and provide details on those Federal source(s) and funding amount(s) in the required Budget Narrative (see the “Budget Narrative” section below).

Applicants must submit the appropriate SF-424 Budget Information form and Budget Narrative. Applicants must complete and submit the SF-424A, “Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs” form. All of the required application forms are available with this announcement on Grants.gov. Federal award recipients and subrecipients are subject to Federal award cost principles in 2 CFR 200.

Authors may need to provide additional applicant instructions if multiple SF 424 forms are included in the application kit for different applicant types. Instructions should be entered in the program specific language in this section to require the appropriate SF 424 type required to be submitted by applicant type.

All proposals must include the following documents:

1. Standard Form 424. Application for Federal Assistance (mandatory form provided in grants.gov). The person who electronically submits the SF-424 must have the authority to bind the state to the terms of the assistance award.
2. Standard Form 424A. Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs (mandatory form provided in grants.gov).
3. Standard Form 424B. Assurances – Non-Construction Programs (mandatory form provided in grants.gov).
4. Project Abstract Summary.

In accordance with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Memoranda M-21-20 and M-22-02, Federal agencies are now required to provide complete and accurate financial assistance award descriptions within USAspending.gov. As such, the Department of the Interior is requiring its bureaus and offices to provide a Project Abstract Summary for all financial assistance awards to include the following information:

- Include a plain language description Award purpose (avoid acronyms or Federal or agency-specific terminology);
- Activities to be performed;
- Deliverables and Expected Outcomes;

- Intended beneficiary(ies) as well as
- Subrecipient activities, if known or specified at the time of award

Project Abstract Summary character limitation as 1 page or less (no more than ~4000 characters) and use of 12 pt. font and Times New Roman is recommended. *This abstract should be attached as a separate project narrative document in the Grants.gov application.*

NOTE: Upon issuance of the cooperative agreement, this Project Abstract Summary will be publicly available at USA Spending.gov.

The following header will display if this checkbox is selected: **SF 424B, Assurances for Non-Construction Programs**

Any applicant organization that has not completed the financial assistance certifications and representations within their SAM.gov registration must submit the appropriate signed and dated Assurances form. All of the required application forms are available with this announcement on Grants.gov.

5. Project Description and Budget, including Attachments A and B (see explanation below).

Incomplete proposals will not be forwarded to the Review Panel and will be immediately rejected by the Contracting Officer.

Any applicant organization that has not completed the financial assistance certifications and representations within their SAM.gov registration must submit the appropriate signed and dated Assurances form. All of the required application forms are available with this announcement on Grants.gov.

Project Narrative

Proposals must be arranged according to the format provided below. Following this format ensures that every proposal contains all essential information and is evaluated equitably. The proposal may be in PDF or MS Word format. The proposal and associated forms shall be submitted to www.grants.gov. Provide requested information in the correct locations within the proposal template. Failure to do so may result in disqualification of the proposal.

Proposals are limited to 10-pages, which include 1) Project Description, provided separately for Priorities 1, 2 and 3, and limited to 5 pages each for Priority 1 and Priority 2, and limited to 1 page for Priority 3. Proposals may be shorter than 10 pages. Other forms and documents, including: (1) Standard Forms 424s, (2) Project Abstract Summary, (3) project summary sheet (Attachment A), (4) budget sheets and justification (Attachment B), (5) project personnel justification and expertise table or list, (6) Curriculum Vitae (CV; max 2 pages each), (7) letters from stakeholders, (8) DMP (see [Data Management Plans | U.S. Geological Survey \(usgs.gov\)](https://www.usgs.gov/data-management-plans)); example template is provided in Attachment C), (9) negotiated rate and cost agreements, and (10) equipment quotes do not count toward the 10-page limit.

1. FY 2023 MRP Proposal Information Sheet. (Attachment A). Summary sheet shall clearly list project and budget summary for all priorities. Please include e-mail addresses for the Principal Investigator and authorized institution representative. Outcome notifications will be sent via e-mail to the authorized institution representative and

the Principal Investigator. The Proposal Information Sheet is NOT included in the 10-page limit.

2. Project Description for Priority 1 and Priority 2 projects only. The project description of the proposal is limited to 5 single-space pages for each Priority (including figures, tables), with no smaller than 11-point font size, and 1-inch margins. The font size in figures and tables is limited to no smaller than 8-point font size. All text, figures, and tables shall be sized to fit on 8½” x 11” paper. The project description section of your proposal should include the following:

1. *Introduction:* The introduction should provide a brief overview of the project activities, methods, and goals. A statement of use/access or a letter of support from a stakeholder may be included (but are not required). Letters of support from stakeholders do not count against the page limit.

3.

1. *Project narrative:* Follow the guidelines and requirements listed in section A2 of this program announcement. Describe the procedures and workflows that will be carried out to gather mine waste data. Include descriptions of the separate activities for the designated processes, including the quality assurance and control methods to ensure accuracy and quality of products. Guidance and best practices for managing data quality can be found on the USGS Data Management site: <https://www.usgs.gov/products/data-and-tools/data-management/manage-quality>. Discuss the deliverables and provide a table or list that includes information about the Principal Investigator, staff, and support positions (such as geologist, information technologist, or database developer) and detail the estimated time by objective by person. Briefly discuss each person’s role on the project so that it links to the budget. For each person, provide a brief statement of their background, define their roles and responsibilities, and provide a CV for primary personnel (no more than two pages) that includes skills and expertise relevant to the proposed activities, and indicate whether the person works for your organization or elsewhere (contractor or volunteer). If the contractor has not yet been hired, describe experience and skills necessary for completing the work. CVs do not count against the page limit. The following header will display if this checkbox is selected: **SF 424A, Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs**

4. Budget Sheets and Justification

In addition to the following standard statement, provide any additional program specific budget narrative instructions in the text field after the standard statement. To assist applicants with a detailed a budget, a sample detailed budget worksheet may be attached and referenced within the below text field. The project budget shall include detailed information on all cost categories and must clearly identify all estimated project costs. Unit costs shall be provided for all budget items including the cost of work to be provided by contractors or sub-recipients. In addition, applicants shall include a narrative description/justification of the items included in the project budget, including the value of in-kind contributions of goods and services provided to complete the project when cost share is identified to be included (reference section C of this announcement). Please take care to provide justification for any extraordinary costs (such as specialized equipment purchase, drilling, among others). Cost categories can include, but are not

limited to, those costs items included on the SF424A form.

Proposals must include completed detailed budget sheets (Attachment B). If applicable, one budget sheet must include expenses for Priority 1 inventory activities. If applicable, a separate budget sheet must include expenses for Priority 2 characterization activities. Although it should not be included in the budget request, for Priority 2, please include the number of solid and water samples that will be collected to ensure that geochemical analyses costs do not exceed \$65,000.00 (see Attachment B, Priority 2). A budget sheet for Priority 3 must be included if requesting travel funds to the 2023 Earth MRI workshop. The detailed proposed budget(s) must be summarized and provided in the “Amount Requested” on Proposal Information Summary Sheet (Attachment A). Attachments A and B provide format guidance. Matching funds are optional and are not required, but please include if appropriate.

Please read each category description below and provide the detailed breakdown for each cost. This information will help avoid delays processing a funded proposal, as an award will not be issued until all required information is provided. Please be scrupulous in calculations as they will be meticulously analyzed for consistency and accuracy.

Applicants must submit the appropriate SF-424 Budget Information form and Budget Narrative. For non-construction programs or projects, applicants must complete and submit the SF-424A, “Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs” form. All of the required application forms are available with this announcement on Grants.gov. Federal award recipients and subrecipients are subject to Federal award cost principles in 2 CFR 200.

Detailed Budget Narrative

The project budget shall include detailed information on all cost categories and must clearly identify all estimated project costs. Unit costs shall be provided for all budget items including the cost of work to be provided by contractors or sub-recipients. In addition, applicants shall include a narrative description of the items included in the project budget, including the value of in-kind contributions of goods and services provided to complete the project when cost share is identified to be included (reference section C of this announcement). Cost categories can include, but are not limited to, those costs items included on the SF424A or SF424C.

The detailed budget **shall** include the amount proposed for each of the following:

- a. *Salaries and wages.* List names, positions, number of hours individuals will spend on various activities, their rates of compensation and project roles. Salaries or wages for student assistants (undergraduate and/or graduate students) working on the project are an acceptable cost to the Program. If a position is vacant, indicate the position title. Include only personnel actively involved in the project. If senior management salary/time is covered by the overhead (indirect cost) portion of the budget, senior management salary/time should not be included. If senior management personnel participate in project work, include an explanation of their roles. Non-state survey staff working on the project should also be included if they are being supported by other state funding. The detailed proposed budget shall include the total time worked on the project (in units of hours), rate-of-compensation (hourly, monthly, or annually), and job title or role of each person.

- b. Fringe benefits. Indicate the rates/amounts in conformance with normal accounting procedures. Explain what costs are covered in this category and the basis of the rate computations. Indicate whether rates are used for proposal purposes only or whether they are also fixed or provisional rates for billing purposes. Include a copy of the Negotiated Rate Agreement or internal memo supporting the proposed rates. The Negotiated Rate Agreement and internal memo **do not** count toward the 10-page limit.
- c. Travel expenses. State the purpose of the trip(s) and itemize estimated travel costs (including reason for travel, number of people, number of travel days, per diem rate, mileage rate, airfare, or other travel costs) necessary to perform the activities in the proposal.

In the Priority 3 budget sheet, states may request funding for travel for up to 2 participants, \$2,000.00 in direct costs per participant, not to exceed \$4,000.00 of federal share, to a regional 3-day Earth MRI Critical Mineral Resources Workshop (see section A2, Priority 3). Salary costs may be included in this \$2,000.00 per traveler to cover time spent during travel or at the workshop. Earth MRI Critical Mineral Resources Workshop travel expenses are itemized in the Priority 3 proposal budget. The 2023 Earth MRI workshop will be held in Reston, VA in October, 2023.

d. Other direct costs.

- Supplies. List costs for office and laboratory/facility/field supplies. Itemize by including the number and cost for each item.
 - Equipment. MRP funds may be used to purchase nonexpendable property required for the project. Nonexpendable equipment has a useful life of more than one (1) year and an acquisition cost of \$5,000.00 or more per item. If necessary, MRP funds may be used to purchase software site licenses needed to complete mine waste inventory and characterization activities. Show the cost of all proposed equipment/software site licenses necessary and prorated if appropriate for achieving project goals. Each item should be itemized and include a **full justification** and a dealer or manufacturer quote. If full justification for equipment is not provided, equipment costs will not be supported. General-purpose equipment must be purchased from the applicant's operating funds. Routine computer maintenance contracts and charges for computer time are not acceptable direct costs under this program. Explain and justify any extraordinary items included in the proposed project budget.
 - Contractual services. Identify the activities for which such services would be used. Identify proposed contractors (individual or corporate) and provide criteria by which contractors will be, or have been, selected. For each individual, include their job title, total labor hours, and rate of compensation. Include quotes for all contractual services. MRP funds may not be used to pay for USGS or other Federal services.
- e. Total direct costs. Total items (a) through (d).

f. Indirect charges. Show the proposed rate, cost base, and proposed amount for allowable indirect costs based on the cost principles applicable to the applicant's organization. If applicant has separate rates for recovery of labor overhead and general and administrative costs, each

charge should be shown. Explain the distinction between items included in the two cost pools. Applicant should propose rates for evaluation purposes, which they are also willing to establish as fixed or ceiling rates in any resulting award. A copy of the indirect negotiated cost agreement with the Federal Government must be included. If one is not established, applicants may charge 10% indirect costs. A copy of the Indirect Negotiated Cost Agreement does not count against the 10-page limit.

g. *Total charges*. Total items (a) through (f).

Data Management Plan Requirements

Proposals submitted to USGS must include a supplementary document of no more than four pages labeled "Data Management Plan" (DMP). This supplementary document should describe how the proposal will conform to USGS policy on the dissemination and sharing of research results and associated data. A valid DMP may include only the statement that no detailed plan is needed (e.g. "No data are expected to be produced from this project"), as long as the statement is accompanied by a clear justification. This supplementary document may include:

- the types of data, samples, physical collections, software, curriculum materials, and other materials to be produced in the course of the project;
- the standards to be used for data and metadata format and content (where existing standards are absent or deemed inadequate, this should be documented along with any proposed solutions or remedies);
- policies for access and sharing including provisions for appropriate protection of privacy, confidentiality, security, intellectual property, or other rights or requirements;
- provisions for re-use, re-distribution, and the production of derivatives; and
- plans for archiving data, samples, and other research products, and for preservation of free public access to them.

Additional guidance on data management plans is available from the USGS Data Management web site here: <https://www.usgs.gov/products/data-and-tools/data-management/data-management-plans> Simultaneously submitted collaborative proposals and proposals that include subawards are a single unified project and should include only one supplemental combined DMP by the lead PI that also addresses all subaward data management needs, regardless of the number of non-lead collaborative proposals or subawards included.

Proposals submitted to USGS must include a supplementary document of no more than four pages labeled "Data Management Plan" (DMP). This supplementary document should describe how the proposal will conform to USGS policy on the dissemination and sharing of research results and associated data. A valid DMP may include only the statement that no detailed plan is needed (for example, "No data are expected to be produced from this project"), as long as the statement is accompanied by a clear justification. This supplementary document may include:

- the types of data, samples, physical collections, software, curriculum materials, and other materials to be produced in the course of the project;
- the standards to be used for data and metadata format and content (where existing standards are absent or deemed inadequate, this should be documented along with any proposed solutions or remedies);

- policies for access and sharing including provisions for appropriate protection of privacy, confidentiality, security, intellectual property, or other rights or requirements;
- provisions for re-use, re-distribution, and the production of derivatives; and
- plans for archiving data, samples, and other research products, and for preservation of free public access to them.

An example template for data management plans is provided in Attachment C. Additional guidance on data management plans is available from the USGS Data Management web site here: <https://www.usgs.gov/products/data-and-tools/data-management/data-management-plans>. The DMP does not count toward the 10-page limit.

Conflict of Interest Disclosure

Per the Financial Assistance Interior Regulation (FAIR), 2 CFR §1402.112, applicants must state in their application if any actual or potential conflict of interest exists at the time of submission.

(a) Applicability.

(1) This section intends to ensure that non-Federal entities and their employees take appropriate steps to avoid conflicts of interest in their responsibilities under or with respect to Federal financial assistance agreements.

(2) In the procurement of supplies, equipment, construction, and services by recipients and by subrecipients, the conflict of interest provisions in 2 CFR 200.318 apply.

(b) Notification.

(1) Non-Federal entities, including applicants for financial assistance awards, must disclose in writing any conflict of interest to the DOI awarding agency or pass-through entity in accordance with 2 CFR 200.112.

(2) Recipients must establish internal controls that include, at a minimum, procedures to identify, disclose, and mitigate or eliminate identified conflicts of interest. The recipient is responsible for notifying the Financial Assistance Officer in writing of any conflicts of interest that may arise during the life of the award, including those that have been reported by subrecipients.

(c) Restrictions on lobbying. Non-Federal entities are strictly prohibited from using funds under a grant or cooperative agreement for lobbying activities and must provide the required certifications and disclosures pursuant to 43 CFR part 18 and 31 U.S.C. 1352.

(d) Review procedures. The Financial Assistance Officer will examine each conflict of interest disclosure on the basis of its particular facts and the nature of the proposed grant or cooperative agreement, and will determine whether a significant potential conflict exists and, if it does, develop an appropriate means for resolving it.

(e) Enforcement. Failure to resolve conflicts of interest in a manner that satisfies the government may be cause for termination of the award. Failure to make required disclosures may result in any of the remedies described in 2 CFR 200.338, Remedies for noncompliance, including suspension or debarment (see also 2 CFR part 180).

Single Audit Reporting Statement

All U.S. states, local governments, federally recognized Indian tribal governments, and non-profit organizations expending \$750,000 USD or more in Federal award funds in the applicant's fiscal year must submit a Single Audit report for that year through the Federal Audit Clearinghouse's Internet Data Entry System. U.S. state, local government, federally recognized Indian tribal government, and non-profit applicants must state if your organization was or was not required to submit a Single Audit report for the most recently closed fiscal year. If your organization was required to submit a Single Audit report for the most recently closed fiscal year, provide the EIN associated with that report and state if it is available through the Federal Audit Clearinghouse website.

Certification Regarding Lobbying

Applicants requesting more than \$100,000 in Federal funding must certify to the statements in 43 CFR Part 18, Appendix A-Certification Regarding Lobbying. If this application requests more than \$100,000 in Federal funds, the Authorized Official's signature on the appropriate SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance form also represents the entity's certification of the statements in 43 CFR Part 18, Appendix A.

Disclosure of Lobbying Activities

Applicants and recipients must not use any federally appropriated funds (annually appropriated or continuing appropriations) or matching funds under a Federal award to pay any person for lobbying in connection with the award. Lobbying is influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any U.S. agency, a Member of the U.S. Congress, an officer or employee of the U.S. Congress, or an employee of a Member of the U.S. Congress connection with the award. Applicants and recipients must complete and submit the SF-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities" form if the Federal share of the proposal or award is more than \$100,000 and the applicant or recipient has made or has agreed to make any payment using non-appropriated funds for lobbying in connection with the application or award. The SF-LLL form is available with this Funding Opportunity on Grants.gov. See 43 CFR, Subpart 18.100 and 31 USC 1352 for more information on when additional submission of this form is required.

Overlap or Duplication of Effort Statement

Applicants must provide a statement indicating if there is any overlap between this Federal application and any other Federal application, or funded project, in regards to activities, costs, or time commitment of key personnel. If no such overlap or duplication exists, state, "There are no overlaps or duplication between this application and any of our other Federal applications or funded projects, including in regards to activities, costs, or time commitment of key personnel". If any such overlap exists, provide a complete description of overlaps or duplications between this proposal and any other federally funded project or application in regards to activities, costs, and time commitment of key personnel, as applicable. Provide a copy of any overlapping or duplicative proposal submitted to any other potential funding entity and identify when that proposal was submitted, to whom (entity name and program), and when you anticipate being notified of their funding decision. The statement and the description of overlap or duplication, when applicable, may be provided within the proposal or as a separate attachment to the application. If at any time a proposal is awarded funds that would be overlapping or duplicative of the funding requested from USGS, the applicant must immediately notify the USGS point of

contact. Any overlap or duplication of funding between the proposed project and other active or anticipated projects may impact selection and/or funding amount.

D3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)

Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM.gov) Registration: This requirement does not apply to individuals applying for funds as an individual (i.e., unrelated to any business or nonprofit organization you may own, operate, or work within), or any entity with an exception to bypass SAM.gov registration with prior approval from the funding bureau or office in accordance with bureau or office policy. All other applicants are required to register in SAM.gov prior to submitting a Federal award application and obtain a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) which replaces the Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number from Dun & Bradstreet in April 2022. A Federal award may not be made to an applicant that has not completed the SAM.gov registration. If an applicant selected for funding has not completed their SAM.gov registration by the time the program is ready to make an award, the program may determine the applicant is not qualified to receive an award. Federal award recipients must also continue to maintain an active SAM.gov registration with current information through the life of their Federal award(s).

Register with the System for Award Management (SAM)

Applicants can register on the SAM.gov website. The “Help” tab on the website contains User Guides and other information to assist you with registration. The Grants.gov “Register with SAM” page also provides detailed instructions. Applicants can contact the supporting Federal Service Desk for help registering in SAM. Once registered in SAM, entities will be assigned a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI). Entities must renew and revalidate their SAM registration at least once every 12 months from the date previously registered. Entities are strongly encouraged to revalidate their registration as often as needed to ensure their information is up to date and reflects changes that may have been made to the entity’s IRS information. There is no cost to register with SAM.gov. There are third-party vendors who will charge a fee in exchange for registering entities with SAM.gov; please be aware you can register and request help for free. If applicable, foreign entities who want to receive payment directly to a U.S. bank account must enter and maintain valid, current banking information in SAM.

D4. Submission Dates and Times

Due Date for Applications

April 12, 2023

Application Due Date Explanation

Electronically submitted applications must be submitted no later than 3:00 p.m., ET, on the listed application due date.

D5. Intergovernmental Review

Prior to application submission, U.S. state and local government applicants should visit the OMB Office of Federal Financial Management website and view the “State Point of Contact (SPOC) List” to determine whether their application is subject to the state intergovernmental review process under Executive Order (E.O.) 12372 “Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs.” States not on the list do not participate in the intergovernmental review process, and therefore do not have a SPOC. If you are located within a State that does not have a SPOC, you may send application materials directly to a Federal awarding agency. If your state is on the list, contact the designated entity for more information on the state’s prior review requirements for Federal assistance applications.

D6. Funding Restrictions

The Federal awarding agency that provides the largest amount of direct funding to your organization is your cognizant agency for indirect costs, unless otherwise assigned by the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB). If the Department of the Interior is your organization’s cognizant agency, the Interior Business Center will negotiate your indirect cost rate. Contact the Interior Business Center by phone 916-930-3803 or using the IBC Email Submission Form. See the IBC Website for more information.

Organizations must have an active Federal award before they can submit an indirect cost rate proposal to their cognizant agency. Failure to establish an approved rate during the award period renders all costs otherwise allocable as indirect costs unallowable under the award. Recipients must have prior written approval from USGS to use amounts budgeted for direct costs to satisfy cost-share or match requirements or to cover unallowable indirect costs. Recipients shall not shift unallowable indirect costs to another Federal award unless specifically authorized to do so by legislation.

Required Indirect Cost Statement to be submitted with Application

All organizations must include the applicable statement from the following list in their application, and attach to their application any documentation identified in the applicable statement:

We are:

- A U.S. state or local government entity receiving more than \$35 million in direct Federal funding each year with an indirect cost rate of [insert rate]. We submit our indirect cost rate proposals to our cognizant agency. Attached is a copy of our most recently approved rate agreement/certification.
- A U.S. state or local government entity receiving less than \$35 million in direct Federal funding with an indirect cost rate of [insert rate]. We have prepared and will retain for audit an indirect cost rate proposal and related documentation.
- A [insert your organization type; U.S. states and local governments, do not use this statement] that has previously negotiated or currently has an approved indirect cost rate with our cognizant agency. Our indirect cost rate is [insert rate]. [Insert either: “Attached is a copy of our most recently approved but expired rate agreement. In the event an award is made, we will submit an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant

agency within 90 calendar days after the award is made.” *or* “Attached is a copy of our current negotiated indirect cost rate agreement.”]

- A [insert your organization type] that has never submitted an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency. Our indirect cost rate is [insert rate]. If we receive an award, we will submit an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency within 90 calendar days after the award date.
- A [insert your organization type] that has never submitted an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency and has an indirect cost rate that is lower than 10%. Our indirect cost rate is [insert rate; must be lower than 10%]. However, if we receive an award we will not be able to meet the requirement to submit an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency within 90 calendar days after award. We request as a condition of award to charge a flat indirect cost rate of [insert rate; must be lower than 10%] against [insert a clear description of the direct cost base against which your rate is charged (e.g., salaries; salaries and fringe benefits; or modified total direct costs). However, please note that your organization cannot charge indirect costs in excess of the indirect costs that would be recovered if applied against modified total direct costs as defined in §2 CFR 200.68]. We understand that we must notify USGS in writing if we establish an approved rate with our cognizant agency at any point during the award period.
- A [insert your organization type] that has never submitted an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency and has an indirect cost rate that is 10% or higher. Our indirect cost rate is [insert your organization’s indirect rate; must be 10% or higher]. However, if we receive an award we will not be able to meet the requirement to submit an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency within 90 calendar days after award. We request as a condition of award to charge a flat *de minimis* indirect cost rate of 10% to be charged against modified total direct project costs as defined in 2 CFR §200.68. We understand that we must notify USGS in writing if we establish a negotiated rate with our cognizant agency at any point during the award period. We understand that additional Federal funds may not be available to support an unexpected increase in indirect costs during the project period and that such changes are subject to review, negotiation, and prior approval by USGS.
- A [insert your organization type] that is submitting this proposal for consideration under the “Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit Network”, which has a Department of the Interior-approved indirect cost rate cap of 17.5%. If we have an approved indirect cost rate with our cognizant agency, we understand that we must apply this reduced rate against the same direct cost base as identified in our approved indirect cost rate agreement per 2 CFR §1402.414. If we do not have an approved indirect cost rate with our cognizant agency, we understand that we must charge indirect costs against the modified total direct cost base defined in 2 CFR §200.68 “Modified Total Direct Cost (MTDC)”. We understand that we must request prior approval from USGS to use the 2 CFR 200 MTDC base instead of the base identified in our approved indirect cost rate agreement. We understand that USGS approval of such a request will be based on: 1) a determination that our approved base is only a subset of the MTDC (such as salaries and wages); and 2) that use of the MTDC base will still result in a reduction of the total indirect costs to be charged to the award. In accordance with 2 CFR §200.405, we understand that indirect costs not recovered due to a voluntary reduction to our federally negotiated rate are not allowable for recovery via any other means.

- A [insert your organization type] that will charge all costs directly.

Most states and universities have a rate agreement with the Federal Government, which may be titled “State and Local Rate Agreement” or “Colleges and Universities Rate Agreement”. This agreement provides the rates approved for use in grants, contracts, and other agreements with the Federal Government. **If you request fringe benefits or indirect costs, the indirect cost rate agreement is requested to verify rates requested. In the absence of an indirect rate agreement, applicants may charge no more than 10% indirect costs.**

D7. Other Submission Requirements

A. Electronic Proposal Submission Requirement Applicants are responsible for electronically submitting the proposal to www.grants.gov by 3:00 pm, Eastern Daylight Time, April 12, 2023. Be sure to **read the instructions carefully**. Contrary to Section D.1, only proposals submitted through grants.gov will be acceptable. Paper copies will NOT be accepted.

Please be aware the electronic submission process requires first-time users to register using eAuthentication process. This registration process can be complex and take up to 3 weeks to complete. Be advised that you may not be successful completing electronic submission for the first time if you begin the process only a few days before the due date. If your organization is affiliated with a university, contact the Office of Sponsored Programs, which may be familiar with the federal grant process and can work with you to submit the proposal.

If you have any questions or problems with the registration process, or the completion of the application package, please contact the grants.gov help desk at 1-800-518-4726 or support@grants.gov.

When you submit a grant application package to Grants.gov, you will receive a confirmation screen as well as three additional emails over two business days from Grants.gov informing you of your application processing status:

1. Confirmation screen
2. Submission Receipt (with “Track My Application” link)
3. Submission Validation (or Rejection with Errors)
4. Agency Retrieval

1. CONFIRMATION: Submission Confirmation Screen After a grant application package is submitted, a confirmation message will appear on the computer screen. This screen confirms that an application has been submitted to Grants.gov. This page contains a tracking number and a “Track My Application” link for monitoring the progress of the submission.

2. NOTIFICATION 1: Submission Receipt Email Within two business days after the application package has been received by the Grants.gov system, a submission receipt email will be sent that indicates the submission has entered the Grants.gov system and is ready for validation. This email contains the same tracking number and a “Track My Application” link that

is shown in submission confirmation screen for monitoring the progress of the submission.

3. NOTIFICATION 2: Submission Validation Receipt Email – This is the important one!

This second email will include a message validating or rejecting the submitted application package due to errors. The Grants.gov system is designed to check for technical errors within the submitted application package. Grants.gov does not review application content for award determination.

4. NOTIFICATION 3: Grantor Agency Retrieval Email Once the application package has passed validation, it is delivered to the grantor for award determination and further approval. After the grantor has confirmed receipt of the application, a third and final email will be sent from Grants.gov. The grantor may also assign the application package an agency-specific tracking number for use within their

internal system. **IF THIS E-MAIL HAS NOT BEEN RECEIVED WITHIN FOUR DAYS OF THE CLOSING DATE, PLEASE CONTACT THE CONTRACTING OFFICER, Margaret Eastman, (703) 648-7366, mrussell@usgs.gov.**

If you need help entering your proposal, you can reach the **Grants.gov Contact Center at: 1-800518-4726**. Their hours of operation are Monday-Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., Eastern Time, and they are closed on federal holidays.

When contacting the Grants.gov Contact Center, please have the following information available to help expedite the inquiry:

- Funding Opportunity Number (FON)
- Name of Agency You Are Applying To
- Specific Area of Concern

The electronic submission will consist of required forms SF-424, SF-424a, and SF-424b, plus the additional items described in Section C of this Announcement.

During the application period an applicant may submit a revised or corrected proposal through grants.gov. Include a cover letter as the first page of the proposal stating that the proposal is revised and the previous submittal is to be withdrawn from consideration. Revised submissions must be completed by April 12, 2023, **at 3:00 pm EDT**.

Please allow sufficient time for the proposal to be submitted electronically through Grants.gov and allow time for possible computer delays. Applicants are strongly advised not to wait until the last minute for submission. A proposal received after the closing date and time will NOT be considered for award. If the USGS determines that a proposal will not be considered for award due to lateness, the applicant will be notified immediately.

B. Involvement of Federal Employees

Federal employees, including USGS employees, are prohibited from assisting in any capacity (paid or unpaid) with preparation of any proposal submitted under this Announcement. Proposals that have a real, or apparent, conflict of interest related to federal employees will not be processed for evaluation.

C. Rejection of Proposals after Initial Review

If the proposal does not meet all requirements specified in the Program Announcement, as determined by the Contracting Officer in consultation with the MRP management, the applicant will be promptly notified in writing of the rejection along with the reason for the rejection.

D. Award recipients must comply with the 2023 MRP Terms and Conditions (Attachment D). Submittal of an application constitutes the applicant's acceptance of these terms and conditions for inclusion in any award resulting from their application. Any concerns with the requirements of the 2023 MRP Terms and Conditions shall be presented to the Contracting Officer at least seven (7) days prior to the closing date of the announcement.

E. Application Review Information

E1. Criteria

Technical Merit

Maximum Points: 30

This factor assesses the technical approach of the proposed work on mine waste inventory and/or characterization of nonfuel critical mineral materials in mine waste and the probability of achieving positive results within the designated period. Assessment includes analysis of methodologies, technology, and workflows. Proposals must address the priorities outlined in the Notice of Funding Opportunity. Proposals must clearly specify mineral system(s), deposit types, and critical mineral commodities of interest and adhere to the guidelines presented in the Notice of Funding Opportunity.

Societal Benefits

Maximum Points: 20

This factor assesses the value of the proposed mine waste inventory and/or characterization products to advancing scientific understanding, enhancing environmental health, improving the knowledge base in underserved communities, and increasing economic growth and/or public safety.

Knowledge, Performance, and Experience

Maximum Points: 25

This factor considers knowledge, performance, and experience of the principal investigator and coworkers, including demonstrating the ability to successfully complete mine waste activities, and satisfying MRP reporting requirements. This factor includes the capability to provide necessary facilities and support to ensure satisfactory completion of the proposed work.

Appropriateness and Reasonableness of the Budget

Maximum Points: 25

This factor considers whether the proposed budget is commensurate with the level of effort needed to accomplish the project and reasonable relative to the value of the anticipated results. Proposals include clear, itemized budgets and all costs are allowable and adhere to the requirements presented in the Notice of Funding Opportunity.

E2. Review and Selection Process

MRP proposals for Priority 1 and Priority 2 projects will be reviewed separately by a seven-member peer panel consisting of four USGS representatives, one state geological survey representative, and two non-USGS representatives (for example, representatives from other

Federal agencies or the Interstate Mining Compact Commission). Each Priority will be scored according to the maximum points available for each criterion. If projects for both priorities are proposed, but only one priority is recommended for funding, then only partial funding for that specific priority will be recommended for award. The maximum score for each priority is 100 according to the maximum cumulative number of points for each evaluation criterion. Proposal priorities must meet a minimum cumulative score of 50 to be considered for funding; as long as proposals meet the minimum, the proposals will be ranked for funding based on scores and forwarded to the Program for final award determination.

Evaluation Criteria. **All proposals for Priority 1 and Priority 2 projects will be evaluated in accordance with the criteria listed above.** NOTE: To avoid conflict of interest, no panelist may vote on a proposal from his or her state geological survey or state agency, nor may any panelist discuss with other panel members his or her state's proposal. This does not prohibit collaboration between USGS and state scientists once an agreement is in place.

E3. CFR – Regulatory Information

Refer to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Award Terms and Conditions for the general administrative and national policy requirements applicable to USGS awards. USGS will communicate any other program- or project-specific special terms and conditions to recipients in their Notice of Award.

E4. Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates

F. Federal Award Administration Information

F1. Federal Award Notices

F2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

See the “DOI Standard Terms and Conditions” for the administrative and national policy requirements applicable to DOI awards.

Refer to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Award Terms and Conditions for the general administrative and national policy requirements applicable to USGS awards. The USGS will communicate any other program- or project-specific special terms and conditions to recipients in their Notice of Award.

Data Availability

Per the Financial Assistance Interior Regulation (FAIR), 2 CFR §1402.315:

(a) All data, methodology, factual inputs, models, analyses, technical information, reports, conclusions, valuation products or other scientific assessments in any medium or form, including textual, numerical, graphic, cartographic, narrative, or audiovisual, resulting from a financial assistance agreement is available for use by the Department of the Interior, including being available in a manner that is sufficient for independent verification.

(b) The Federal Government has the right to:

(1) Obtain, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the data, methodology, factual inputs, models, analyses, technical information, reports, conclusions, or other scientific assessments, produced under a Federal award; and

(2) Authorize others to receive, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use such data, methodology, factual inputs, models, analyses, technical information, reports, conclusions, or other scientific assessments, for Federal purposes, including to allow for meaningful third-party evaluation.

MRP Information Products

All Earth MRI information products received as deliverables may be made available to the public. The following information products will be required, if applicable, as a condition of receiving federal funds:

- ArcGIS database of inventory records
- Geospatial data including waste feature boundaries that are compatible with the Priority #1 Inventory database and sample locations (latitude/longitude with defined datum) that link to National Geochemical Database ([National Geochemical Database | U.S. Geological Survey \(usgs.gov\)](https://www.usgs.gov/national-geochemical-database)).
- Volume and load estimates. Approaches for estimating volumes and masses of mine waste piles may vary, particularly with regards to the third dimension. Similarly for mine adit discharge waters, seasonal flows of mine effluent may factor into load estimates. An estimate of discharge at the time of sampling should be made so that volume and load estimates can be made for adits; direct measurement does not need to be made if estimates can be obtained with other data (such as discharges measured by site managers). However, please clearly describe the methodology for solid piles and water (if collected) in the final report.
- Geochemical (solid and water) data, which will be released by USGS in USGS data releases and used in the interpretive report published by the state.
- Resource estimate of contained critical minerals and other potentially valuable commodities.
- Brief (1-2 pages) progress reports every six months for the duration of the project.
- Digital archive of field sheets.
- Samples of mine waste collected in accordance with USGS protocols (training and resource to be provided to successful applications by USGS).

Final Technical Report(s)

Following project completion of Priority 1 and/or Priority 2 efforts, all awards made under the

MRP will require submittal of a final technical report(s) that must document and summarize the results of the work. If funding is received for both Priorities, two separate final reports are required. All reports will be made available to the public.

Priority 1 (Inventory):

- A brief (1-2 pages) report describing the process and summarizing what was submitted to the inventory for Priority 1 efforts.

Priority 2 (Characterization):

- Final interpretive report, including methods and data sets used for calculating volume and resource estimates. Report must include site description, interpretation, geospatial data on waste piles and other sample sites, and mine waste inventory data for samples sites. **Report must be provided as a peer-reviewed state publication.**

Final technical reports should be accompanied by a cover page that contains:

- Award Number
- Title
- Author and affiliation with address and zip code
- Author's telephone number and e-mail address
- Term covered by the award (start and end dates)
- Submittal date of final technical report
- Abstract

Final technical report(s) must be submitted within 90 days after the end of the grant performance period. Failure to submit a final technical report may hinder receipt of future MRP funds. Final technical reports shall be submitted electronically to the general MRP email box, minerals@usgs.gov. A courtesy copy shall be submitted to Margaret Eastman, USGS Contract Specialist, mrussell@usgs.gov.

Use of Geospatial Data

All geospatial data collected for a produced through the use of the Department of the Interior financial assistance funds are required to meet all relevant standards established by the Federal Geospatial Data Committee (FGDC) as authorized by Geospatial Data Act of 2018, Pub. L. 115-254, Subtitle F – Geospatial Data §§ 751-759C codified at 43 U.S.C. §§ 2801– 2811. Interior requires fully compliant metadata on all Geographic Information Systems files developed for financial assistance projects. If a funded financial assistance project involves acquiring or collecting geospatial data, the recipient is required to search GeoPlatform.gov to determine that no existing Federal, State, local or private data meet the Government's needs and are available at no cost before acquiring or collecting additional geospatial data.

2 CFR 1402.315 Availability of Data

(a) All data, methodology, factual inputs, models, analyses, technical information, reports, conclusions, valuation products or other scientific assessments in any medium or form, including textual, numerical, graphic, cartographic, narrative, or audiovisual, resulting from a financial assistance agreement is available for use by the Department of the Interior, including being available in a manner that is sufficient for independent verification.

(b) The Federal Government has the right to:

(1) Obtain, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the data, methodology, factual inputs, models, analyses, technical information, reports, conclusions, or other scientific assessments, produced under a Federal award; and

(2) Authorize others to receive, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use such data, methodology, factual inputs, models, analyses, technical information, reports, conclusions, or other scientific assessments, for Federal purposes, including to allow for meaningful third-party evaluation.

(c) Bureaus and offices of the Department of the Interior must include the language in paragraphs (a) and (b) of this section in full text in all NOFOs and financial assistance agreements.”

F3. Reporting

Financial Reports

All recipients must use the SF-425, Federal Financial Report form for financial reporting. At a minimum, all recipients must submit a **final** financial report. Final reports are due no later than 90 calendar days after the award period of performance end date or termination date. For awards with periods of performance longer than 12 months, recipients are required to submit **interim** financial reports on the frequency established in the Notice of Award. The only exception to the interim financial reporting requirement is if the recipient is required to use the SF 270/271 to request payment and requests payment at least once annually through the entire award period of performance. We will describe all financial reporting requirements in the Notice of Award.

Performance Reports

Performance reports must contain a comparison of actual accomplishments with the established goals and objectives of the award; a description of reasons why established goals were not met, if appropriate; and any other pertinent information relevant to the project results. Final reports are due no later than 90 calendar days after the award period of performance end date or termination date. For awards with periods of performance longer than 12 months, recipients are required to submit **interim** financial reports on the frequency established in the Notice of Award.

Significant Development Reports

Events may occur between the scheduled performance reporting dates which have significant impact upon the supported activity. In such cases, recipients are required to notify the Bureau in writing as soon as the recipient becomes aware of any problems, delays, or adverse conditions that will materially impair the ability to meet the objective of the Federal award. This disclosure

must include a statement of any corrective action(s) taken or contemplated, and any assistance needed to resolve the situation. The recipient should also notify USGS in writing of any favorable developments that enable meeting time schedules and objectives sooner or at less cost than anticipated or producing more or different beneficial results than originally planned.

Conflict of Interest Disclosures

Recipients must notify the program immediately in writing of any conflict of interest that arise during the life of their Federal award, including those reported to them by any subrecipient under the award. Recipients must notify the program in writing if any employees, including subrecipient and contractor personnel, are related to, married to, or have a close personal relationship with any Federal employee in the Federal funding program or who otherwise may have been involved in the review and selection of the award. The term employee means any individual engaged in the performance of work pursuant to the Federal award. Recipients may not have a former Federal employee as a key project official, or in any other substantial role related to their award, whose participation put them out of compliance with the legal authorities addressing post-Government employment restrictions. See the [U.S. Office of Government Ethics website](#) for more information on these restrictions. USGS will examine each conflict of interest disclosure based on its particular facts and the nature of the project and will determine if a significant potential conflict exists. If it does, USGS will work with the recipient to determine an appropriate resolution. Failure to disclose and resolve conflicts of interest in a manner that satisfies USGS may result in any of the remedies described in 2 CFR 200.338 Remedies for Noncompliance, including termination of the award.

Other Mandatory Disclosures

The Non-Federal entity or applicant for a Federal award must disclose, in a timely manner, in writing to the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity all violations of Federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting the Federal award. Non-Federal entities that receive a Federal award including the terms and conditions outlined in 2 CFR 200, Appendix XII—Award Term and Condition for Recipient Integrity and Performance Matters are required to report certain civil, criminal, or administrative proceedings to SAM. Failure to make required disclosures can result in any of the remedies described in 2 CFR 200.338 Remedies for Noncompliance, including suspension or debarment.

Reporting Matters Related to Recipient Integrity and Performance

If the total value of your currently active grants, cooperative agreements, and procurement contracts from all Federal awarding agencies exceeds \$10,000,000 for any period of time during the period of performance of this Federal award, then you as the recipient during that period of time must maintain the currency of information reported to the System for Award Management (SAM) that is made available in the designated integrity and performance system (currently the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIS)) about civil, criminal, or administrative proceedings in accordance with Appendix XII to 2 CFR 200.

G. Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s)

G1. Program Technical Contact

For **programmatic technical assistance**, contact:

First Name:

Margaret

Last Name:

Eastman

Address:

Telephone:

703-283-9642

Email:

mrussell@usgs.gov

G2. Program Administration Contact

For **program administration assistance**, contact:

First Name:

James

Last Name:

Mosely

Address:

Telephone:

703-648-6312

Email:

jmosely@usgs.gov

G3. Application System Technical Support

For **Grants.gov technical registration and submission, downloading forms and application packages**, contact:

Name:

Grants.gov Customer Support

Telephone:

1-800-518-4726

Email:

Support@grants.gov

H. Other Information

Payments

Domestic recipients are required to register in and receive payment through the U.S. Treasury's

Automated Standard Application for Payments (ASAP), unless approved for a waiver by the USGS program. Foreign recipients receiving funds to a final destination bank outside the U.S. are required to receive payment through the U.S. Treasury's International Treasury Services (ITS) System. Foreign recipients receiving funds to a final destination bank in the U.S. are required to enter and maintain current banking details in their SAM.gov entity profile and receive payment through the Automated Clearing House network by electronic funds transfer (EFT). The Bureau will include recipient-specific instructions on how to request payment, including identification of any additional information required and where to submit payment requests, as applicable, in all Notices of Award.

Buy America Domestic Procurement Preference

As required by Section 70914 of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (also known as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act), P.L. 117-58, on or after May 14, 2022, none of the funds under a federal award that are part of Federal financial assistance program for infrastructure may be obligated for a project unless all of the iron, steel, manufactured products, and construction materials used in the project are produced in the United States, unless subject to an approved waiver. The requirements of this section must be included in all subawards, including all contracts and purchase orders for work or products under this program.

Recipients of an award of Federal financial assistance are hereby notified that none of the funds provided under this award may be used for a project for infrastructure unless:

1. all iron and steel used in the project are produced in the United States--this means all manufacturing processes, from the initial melting stage through the application of coatings, occurred in the United States;
2. all manufactured products used in the project are produced in the United States—this means the manufactured product was manufactured in the United States; and the cost of the components of the manufactured product that are mined, produced, or manufactured in the United States is greater than 55 percent of the total cost of all components of the manufactured product, unless another standard for determining the minimum amount of domestic content of the manufactured product has been established under applicable law or regulation; and
3. all construction materials are manufactured in the United States—this means that all manufacturing processes for the construction material occurred in the United States.

The Buy America preference only applies to articles, materials, and supplies that are consumed in, incorporated into, or affixed to an infrastructure project. As such, it does not apply to tools, equipment, and supplies, such as temporary scaffolding, brought to the construction site and removed at or before the completion of the infrastructure project. Nor does a Buy America preference apply to equipment and furnishings, such as movable chairs, desks, and portable computer equipment, that are used at or within the finished infrastructure project, but are not an integral part of the structure or permanently affixed to the infrastructure project.

For further information on the Buy America preference, please visit www.doi.gov/grants/BuyAmerica. Additional information can also be found at the White House Made in America Office website: www.whitehouse.gov/omb/management/made-in-america/.

Waivers

When necessary, recipients may apply for, and the Department of the Interior (DOI) may grant, a waiver from these requirements, subject to review by the Made in America Office. The DOI may waive the application of the domestic content procurement preference in any case in which it is determined that one of the below circumstances applies:

1. Non-availability Waiver: the types of iron, steel, manufactured products, or construction

materials are not produced in the United States in sufficient and reasonably available quantities or of a satisfactory quality;

2. Unreasonable Cost Waiver: the inclusion of iron, steel, manufactured products, or construction materials produced in the United States will increase the cost of the overall project by more than 25 percent; or

3. Public Interest Waiver: applying the domestic content procurement preference would be inconsistent with the public interest.

There may be instances where an award qualifies, in whole or in part, for an existing DOI general applicability waiver as described at:

www.doi.gov/grants/BuyAmerica/GeneralApplicabilityWaivers. If the specific financial assistance agreement, infrastructure project, or non-domestic materials meets the criteria of an existing general applicability waiver within the limitations defined within the waiver, the recipient is not required to request a separate waiver for non-domestic materials.

If a general applicability waiver does not already apply, and a recipient believes that one of the above circumstances applies to an award, a request to waive the application of the domestic content procurement preference may be submitted to the financial assistance awarding officer in writing. Waiver requests shall include the below information. The waiver shall not include any Privacy Act information, sensitive data, or proprietary information within their waiver request. Waiver requests will be posted to www.doi.gov/grants/buyamerica and are subject to public comment periods of no less than 15 days. Waiver requests will also be reviewed by the Made in America Office.

1. Type of waiver requested (non-availability, unreasonable cost, or public interest).

2. Requesting entity and Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) submitting the request.

3. Department of Interior Bureau or Office who issued the award.

4. Federal financial assistance listing name and number (reference block 2 on DOI Notice of Award)

5. Financial assistance title of project (reference block 8 on DOI Notice of Award).

6. Federal Award Identification Number (FAIN).

7. Federal funding amount (reference block 11.m. on DO Notice of Award).

8. Total cost of Infrastructure expenditures (includes federal and non-federal funds to the extent known).

9. Infrastructure project description(s) and location(s) (to the extent known).

10. List of iron or steel item(s), manufactured goods, and construction material(s) the recipient seeks to waive from Buy America requirements. Include the name, cost, countries of origin (if known), and relevant PSC or NAICS code for each.

11. A certification that the recipient made a good faith effort to solicit bids for domestic products supported by terms included in requests for proposals, contracts, and nonproprietary communications with the prime contractor.

12. A statement of waiver justification, including a description of efforts made (e.g., market research, industry outreach) by the recipient, in an attempt to avoid the need for a waiver. Such a justification may cite, if applicable, the absence of any Buy America-compliant bids received in response to a solicitation.

13. Anticipated impact if no waiver is issued. Approved waivers will be posted at www.doi.gov/grants/BuyAmerica/ApprovedWaivers; recipients requesting a waiver will be notified of their waiver request determination by an awarding officer.

Questions pertaining to waivers should be directed to the financial assistance awarding officer.

Definitions

“Construction materials” includes an article, material, or supply that is or consists primarily of:

- non-ferrous metals;
- plastic and polymer-based products (including polyvinylchloride, composite building materials, and polymers used in fiber optic cables);
- glass (including optic glass);
- lumber; or
- drywall.

“Construction Materials” does not include cement and cementitious materials, aggregates such as stone, sand, or gravel, or aggregate binding agents or additives.

“Domestic content procurement preference” means all iron and steel used in the project are produced in the United States; the manufactured products used in the project are produced in the United States; or the construction materials used in the project are produced in the United States.

“Infrastructure” includes, at a minimum, the structures, facilities, and equipment for, in the United States, roads, highways, and bridges; public transportation; dams, ports, harbors, and other maritime facilities; intercity passenger and freight railroads; freight and intermodal facilities; airports; water systems, including drinking water and wastewater systems; electrical transmission facilities and systems; utilities; broadband infrastructure; and buildings and real property. Infrastructure includes facilities that generate, transport, and distribute energy.

“Project” means the construction, alteration, maintenance, or repair of infrastructure in the United States.”

OMB Control Number: 1028-0133, Expiration Date: 08/31/2023

We are collecting this information in accordance with the program identified above. Your response is required to obtain or retain a benefit. We will use the information you provide to conduct a competitive review and select projects for funding and, if awarded, to evaluate performance. We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number. Public report burden for this collection is estimated to average 45 hours per grant application and 12 hours to prepare a final technical report. Actual time for these activities will vary depending on program- specific requirements. You may send comments on the burden estimate or any other aspect of this information collection to the Bureau Clearance Officer, U.S. Geological Survey, 12201 Sunrise Valley Drive, MS807, Reston VA 20192.