

environmentally related health data, regional environmental data, data needed to fill current data gaps, etc.). EPA has recently entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to collaboratively collect data for the Environmental Public Health Tracking System; applicants may be interested in proposing activities that complement this effort using the Exchange Network.

(e) Enhance the Exchange Network by developing tools/applications that use data made available through Web services.

In addition to pursuing one or more of the activities listed above, applicants must make a commitment to share information about their projects with other partners via the Exchange Network Web site at <http://www.exchangenetwork.net>. If an applicant has received funding through a previous Exchange Network assistance agreement, the applicant must identify activities that build on, but do not duplicate, previously funded activities.

(2) 10 points

Identify the benefits of the project (*see* Section VI introduction).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Projects funded under the Challenge Category must be collaborative efforts. The pre-proposal must identify a single lead agency or department that will be responsible for administering the assistance agreement, if awarded.

In addition to the criteria outlined above, EPA may elect to fund complementary pre-proposals from different partners that address related work areas (e.g., XML schema development) and it will seek to leverage and coordinate all of the complementary pre-proposals before reaching final funding decisions.

In making award decisions, EPA will examine the past performance of those who have received previous Exchange Network assistance agreements (e.g., timely and complete semi-annual reports, achievement of performance goals/milestones, etc.). If two proposals have been scored equally, the one with the best previous track record may be ranked higher. If an applicant has not received a prior Exchange Network assistance agreement, that applicant will not be penalized.

Section VI(B). Evaluation Criteria for States

Readiness Category for States

Amount: up to \$150,000.

Eligibility: Applicants who have received no more than one Readiness Grant.

Criteria:

(1) Maximum of 90 points:

Develop an operational Exchange Network node in a reasonable period of time (e.g., one to two years) depending on the applicant's current capabilities and previously funded work. In addition to developing an Exchange Network node, applicants must make a commitment to share information about their projects with other partners via the Exchange Network Web site at <http://www.exchangenetwork.net>. If an applicant has received funding through a previous Exchange Network assistance agreement, the applicant must identify activities that build on, but do not duplicate, previously funded activities.

(2) 10 points

Identify the benefits of the project (*see* Section VI introduction).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: An Exchange Network node is considered to be operational if it performs the following: (1) Executes all Exchange Network Web service functions (i.e., Authenticate, Submit, Get Status, Query, Notify, Solicit, Download, Node Ping, and Get Services), (2) implements the minimum Exchange Network security practices (including the use of the Network Authorization and Authentication Service), and (3) routinely exchanges one or more data flows. When developing Exchange Network nodes, applicants should refer to the Node Test Suite on the Exchange Network Website. All Network Nodes should pass the interoperability tests on this site. This site also contains technical specifications and protocols, as well as the implementation guidance developed by the NSB's Node 1.0 Workgroup. Please refer to <http://www.exchangenetwork.net> and click on "Tool Box."

Implementation Category for States

Amount: up to \$300,000.

Eligibility for States: Applicants, or groups of applicants, that (1) have produced a detailed technical plan to develop an operational node by the end of calendar year 2004, (2) have developed an Exchange Network node and are in the final stages of testing that node, (3) are ready to flow data, or (4) are already flowing data.

Criteria:

(1) Maximum of 90 points. If States believe that they can implement more than two or three data flows during the two-year program period, they should identify those data flows in their pre-proposals.

(a) Implement one or more of the following data flows using the Exchange Network (*see* Section VIII for details).

- Air Quality System (AQS)

- Facility Registry System (FRS)
- National Emissions Inventory (NEI)
- Resource Conservation and Recovery Act Information System (RCRAInfo)
- Safe Drinking Water Information System (SDWIS)
- Toxics Release Inventory System (TRIS)

(b) Implement any other type of data flow (regulatory or voluntary, State-to-EPA, facility-to-State, State-to-State, etc.) using the Exchange Network. In addition to implementing one or more data flows, applicants must make a commitment to share information about their projects with other partners via the Exchange Network Web site at <http://www.exchangenetwork.net>. If an applicant has received funding through a previous Exchange Network assistance agreement, the applicant must identify activities that build on, but do not duplicate, previously funded activities.

(2) 10 points.

Identify the benefits of the project (*see* Section VI introduction).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Projects funded under the Implementation Category may be collaborative efforts among multiple parties (interstate or intrastate), but collaboration is not required. If a collaborative project is proposed, the pre-proposal must identify a single lead agency or department that would be responsible for administering the assistance agreement.

Challenge Category for States

Amount: up to \$750,000 each.

Eligibility: Applicants must propose innovative projects that involve collaboration (e.g., State-EPA, intrastate, or interstate) to develop the Exchange Network and demonstrate its value in sharing environmental, natural resources, or human health data and/or related administrative data.

Criteria:

(1) Maximum of 90 points for one or more of the following activities. If desired, applicants may propose activities from several different categories [(a)–(f) below] and receive partial credit from multiple categories; but they are not required to do so to receive the full 90 points. Applicants who submit well thought-out, innovative, collaborative proposals for multiple data flows [i.e., as in (a) and/or (b) below] or for just one of the other activities listed [i.e., in (c) through (f) below] will receive the same consideration as those who suggest activities from multiple categories.

(a) Implement one or more of the following data flows using the Exchange