

Release Date: August 15th, 2019

Lake Champlain Basin Program Announcement

Request for Proposals

Best Management Practices for Pollution Reduction: Implementation and Planning Grants

The Lake Champlain Basin Program (LCBP) in conjunction with the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission (NEIWPCC) is pleased to announce a Request for Proposals (RFP) for projects to develop and install large Best Management Practices for pollution reduction in the US-portion of the Lake Champlain Basin, and for projects to provide planning and prioritization for future on-the-ground interventions.

Eligible projects for installation of best management practices might include innovative tasks for shoreline stabilization, green infrastructure project implementation, stormwater management projects, combined sewer overflow (CSO) reduction, or the purchase of equipment to be shared among organizations. Eligible projects for planning and prioritization of interventions might include innovative green infrastructure planning at a municipal level, CSO reduction strategies, or watershed scale assessments and prioritizations.

Up to **\$500,000** is available for supporting two types of projects from this RFP. Projects for installation of best management practices (Category A projects) should be scoped for \$50,000 to \$125,000; projects for planning and prioritization (Category B projects) should be scoped to a budget up to \$50,000.

This work is applicable to the Clean Water and Healthy Ecosystem goals of LCBP's long-term management plan *Opportunities for Action: An Evolving Plan for the Future of the Lake Champlain Basin* (<http://plan.lcbp.org>). This grant opportunity is supported by funds awarded to the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission (NEIWPCC) by the US Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) and Great Lakes Fishery Commission (GLFC).

This Request for Proposals is available on the Lake Champlain Basin Program website at lcbp.org/grants. To receive a copy of the RFP via U.S. Postal Service, contact the Lake Champlain Basin Program office at (802) 372-3213 or toll free at (800) 468-LCBP in New York and Vermont.

Applicants must submit proposals in electronic format. Please see the RFP and the attached proposal format information for complete details.

DEADLINE NOTICE:

Electronic versions of proposals must be RECEIVED by the Lake Champlain Basin Program office no later than:

October 3rd, 2019

Late or incomplete proposals will not be considered.

Successful applicants will be notified by February 2020 for project initiation by May, 2020. LCBP anticipates granting multiple awards from this RFP. All awards are subject to funding availability.

Lake Champlain Basin Program Request for Proposals

Best Management Practices for Pollution Reduction: Implementation and Planning Grants

I. Overview

Congress designated Lake Champlain as a resource of national significance with the Lake Champlain Special Designation Act of 1990. The Special Designation Act also established the Lake Champlain Basin Program (LCBP) and authorized it to receive direct support from US EPA under the Clean Water Act. LCBP works in partnership with government agencies from New York, Vermont, and Québec, private organizations, local communities, and individuals to coordinate and fund efforts that benefit the Lake Champlain Basin's water quality, fisheries, wetlands, wildlife, recreation, and cultural resources. These efforts are guided by the comprehensive management plan *Opportunities for Action: An Evolving Plan for the Future of the Lake Champlain Basin*.

Since 1992, the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission (NEIWPCC) has served as the primary program administrator of LCBP at the request of the Lake Champlain Steering Committee, and administers the program's personnel and finances. NEIWPCC is a congressionally authorized not-for-profit interstate organization whose membership includes all six New England states and New York State and whose mission is to help its member states to realize their individual and collective water program goals.

II. Background

LCBP has seen an increasing demand from municipalities, watershed organizations, and other groups to make funds available to support implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) on sites that require larger interventions than are supported through typical LCBP annual implementation grants. In addition, there continues to be a need for support to these groups to develop prioritization plans within their respective watersheds of interest, or for planning and engineering design purposes to bring a project up to "shovel-ready" status. This RFP seeks to fund projects that require \$50,000 - 125,000 (Category A projects) of support from LCBP to install an intervention to reduce pollution, as well as to fund municipalities, watershed organizations, and other groups that require funding (up to \$50,000 for Category B projects) to develop a list of projects or prepare projects to be "shovel-ready" for future funding opportunities.

III. Project Tasks and Deliverables

The Lake Champlain Basin Program seeks proposals for two categories of projects: **Category A** (Installation) projects will require funds to install large-scale BMPs that will reduce pollution into Lake Champlain or its tributaries. Outputs of projects in this category will be the installation of a BMP or series of BMPs, public-facing informational signage, and a maintenance plan.

Anticipated outcomes should be identifiable pollution reductions in that subwatershed. Estimates of pollution reductions post-installation should be provided for the anticipated lifespan of the BMP. These projects should be scaled for LCBP support ranging from \$50,000-125,000.

Category B (Planning/Prioritization) projects will request up to \$50,000 in funding support to develop engineering plans for future BMP projects, or planning and prioritization grants that will assist eligible organizations in development of plans to prioritize or install BMPs in their watersheds of interest to optimize pollution reductions for future implementation opportunities. Examples of outputs from projects in Category B would be engineered design plans for BMP(s) or a prioritized list of projects the applicant can use for future implementation opportunities.

Anticipated tasks in Category A will include the following elements:

1. Identification of a specific site or sites where the BMP(s) will be installed
2. A timeline detailing the tasks required to complete installation of the BMP(s), including appropriate permits, construction timeframes, and reporting to LCBP
3. Estimate of pollution reduction for the BMP or series of BMPs for the anticipated lifespan of the practices
4. Public-facing informational signage that includes LCBP and NEIWPC logos
5. A maintenance plan for the BMPs that will be in place once the practices are installed (beyond the scope of the LCBP award), including identification of the organization that will be assuming maintenance responsibilities (if different than applicant, a letter of commitment from said organization should be provided with the application)

Anticipated tasks in Category B will include the following elements:

1. Identification of the watershed, subwatershed, or geographic area where the planning grant will be focused (this also could include the boundaries of a municipality). If the project is for engineered design, provide specific location and description of the site of interest and the issues to be addressed when the pollution reduction practice is installed.

All applications should provide a brief description of the land uses that will be addressed in the project (e.g. urban, suburban, agriculture, forested lands)

IV. Summary of Other Requirements for the Selected Proposal(s)

The selected applicants will be required to complete the following additional tasks:

1. Within thirty days of LCBP grant award notification, applications must submit a detailed project workplan that will be subject to the LCBP approval process before a contract will be issued. The workplan describes the project methods, tasks, timeline, outputs, and task-based budget. As you develop the task-based budget, keep in mind that payments will only be made for completed tasks. Payments for partially completed tasks will not be processed.. If a project is selected for funding, LCBP staff will provide the grant recipient with workplan guidance. We strongly encourage all applications to visit the LCBP website for more information on the LCBP grant process: <http://www.lcbp.org/about-us/grants-rfps/grant-toolkit/>.
2. Quality Assurance Project Plans (QAPPs) are required for all activities involving the collection, generation, compilation, management, analysis, evaluation, and/or use of environmental data. When necessary the successful applicant will prepare a QAPP as part of the project workplan. It is possible that some grants might not require a QAPP. Please contact LCBP staff if you are unsure about the QAPP requirement. The QAPP must be fully-approved before any environmental data collection or analysis activities can begin on this project. For projects requiring a QAPP, NEIWPC/LCBP will not pay for any data collection or analysis activities started prior to development and receipt of a fully-approved QAPP. The QAPP development and approval process can be quite lengthy (up to 90 days, depending on the size of the project), so please make sure that an appropriate amount of time has been allocated to this step in the project budget and timeline. More information about the LCBP QAPP process can be found at this link: <http://www.lcbp.org/about-us/grants-rfps/grant-toolkit/qapp/>.
3. The successful applicant will prepare and submit brief quarterly reports documenting progress on each objective and task in the project (see attached Proposal Format Requirements). A final report fully documenting the project results will be required at project completion.
4. When approved, the final report will be edited for content and style in consultation with the successful respondent and may be published as part of the Lake Champlain Basin Program’s Technical Report Series, located here: <http://www.lcbp.org/media-center/publications-library/technical-reports/>. Some content of this report may also be used for future LCBP public outreach materials.
5. The successful applicant will complete the project according to the following schedule (subject to change):

Proposals Due to LCBP	October 3, 2019
Applicants Notified of Funding Decisions	February 2020
Detailed Project Workplan Due	March 2020
Project Start Date	May 2020
Project Deliverables and Final Report Due	March 30, 2022

6. All materials and work products, regardless of physical form or characteristics, produced as a result of this project shall be made available to LCBP, NEIWPC, and EPA or the Great Lakes Fishery Commission (GLFC) in a suitable file format. LCBP, NEIWPC, and EPA or GLFC shall have an unrestricted right to use any materials, software, maps, studies, reports, and other products or data generated using assistance funds or specified to be delivered. The contractor shall not obtain, attempt to obtain, or file for a patent, copyright, trademark or any other interest in any such materials, or work products without the expressed, written consent of LCBP and NEIWPC, and subject to any other approvals required by state or federal law. Reports and other deliverables will credit LCBP, NEIWPC, and EPA or the GLFC as funding partners for any work completed under the project contract.
7. GIS data produced under this project must adhere to the requirements of EPA's National Geospatial Data Policy (see <https://www.epa.gov/geospatial/epa-national-geospatial-data-policy>). Specifically, the selected contractor must provide documentation for all produced data, including source information for each digital data layer (i.e., scale and accuracy, map projection, coordinate system, etc.), and specific information about the data layer itself (i.e., method used, geographic extent of data layer, file format, date of creation, staff contact, description and definition of data fields and their contents, related files, if any, and description of data quality and quality assurance methods used). The EPA Metadata Editor (EME) was developed to simplify and standardize metadata development and is a recommended tool for streamlining production of required metadata. The EME and related training materials can be downloaded from <https://edg.epa.gov/EME/>. Specific technical guidance on geospatial deliverables and acceptable formats can be found at <https://www.epa.gov/geospatial/epa-region-2-gis-deliverables-guidance>. GIS data produced under this project will be submitted to LCBP as a deliverable.
8. NEIWPC requires its contractors to maintain workers compensation and liability insurance. Contractors must submit proof of adequate insurance coverage on an annual basis for the duration of the project. The Contractor shall, at its sole expense, obtain and maintain in force, and shall require any subcontractor or assignee to obtain and maintain in force, both for the benefit of the Commission, the following kinds and amounts of insurance:
 - o Workers' Compensation Insurance. The policy shall cover the obligations of the Contractor in accordance with the Workers' Compensations Law and Disability Benefits Law covering all operations under the Contract, whether performed by it, or by its subcontractor.
 - o Liability and Property Damage Insurance. Unless otherwise specified, each policy shall have limits not less than: \$2,000,000 combined (Bodily Injury & Property Damage); \$3,000,000 aggregate, single limit per occurrence.
9. Subawardees must comply with all requirements and responsibilities of this subaward and with all U.S. EPA General Terms and Conditions under the prime agreement as outlined at <http://www2.epa.gov/grants/grant-terms-and-conditions#General%20Terms%20and%20Conditions>. Subawardees are required to

submit a Subrecipient Risk Assessment Form with their proposal (see Appendix E). This form includes a requirement to attach an audit in some cases. If a Subawardee fails to submit or complete this form their proposal may be eliminated from consideration.

V. Eligibility

Eligible organizations include colleges, universities, nonprofit organizations, for-profit companies, and non-federal government agencies. The selected contractor will be responsible for the completion of all project tasks. Individuals and representatives from organizations that participated in the development or review of this RFP and its contents are ineligible to apply.

One organization may submit a proposal as the primary applicant for each of the two categories described in this RFP, but may not submit more than one proposal to either category. Applicants should submit a separate proposal for each category; the appropriate category should be clearly identified on the title page of the proposal. Proposals to one category should not rely on support from the other category to be successful.

VI. Proposal Evaluation and Selection Criteria

Proposals received in response to this RFP will undergo an external peer review, and will be judged according to the following criteria:

Both Categories:

- Technical merit and applicability of the proposed product toward the priority objectives identified in this RFP (20 pts).
- Demonstrated ability to accomplish the deliverables outlined in Section II on time and within budget (10 pts).
- Clarity, conciseness, and adherence to the proposal guidelines (10 pts).
- Appropriateness of task-based budget and budget justification, describing how the funds awarded will be used to produce the set of deliverables described in Section II (10 pts).

Category A projects:

1. Demonstrated need for this project in the watershed in which it will be installed (e.g. site identified as high priority in a management plan). Describe, if applicable, how the project leverages other work partnerships and if it is identified in additional management plans (20 pts).
2. Demonstrated experience installing the proposed BMP or series of BMPs (10 pts).
3. Anticipated pollution reduction from the BMP(s) over the lifetime of the BMP and maintenance plan to maintain pollution reduction efficacy (10 pts).
4. If the project includes partner participation, please describe a plan for how the applicant will obtain any required permits and receive support from necessary partners (10 pts).

Category B projects:

1. Demonstrated need for the watershed, municipality, or geographic area targeted by the project (30 pts).

2. Ability of the applicant or team to develop an engineered design for the project, or to develop a prioritized implementation plan for the area of interest (20 pts).

VII. Available Funds and Match Requirements

We anticipate a total of \$500,000 will be available to be awarded to projects in both categories. The Lake Champlain Steering Committee will ultimately decide the final distribution of funds across the two categories. Proposals with budgets that exceed the maximum amount identified for the category in which they were submitted will not be considered. Applicants may budget costs that are associated with the project as direct expenses, including personnel costs, travel, project supplies, meeting expenses, and subcontracts. Some allocation of project funds for indirect costs also is acceptable (see below). No in-kind or cash match is required, though match will be considered favorably during budget review.

VIII. Appropriate Use of Funds

- 1) LCBP grant funds **cannot be used** to produce for-profit products or to cover costs associated with regulatory compliance or direct fundraising efforts. LCBP grant funds also cannot be used for land purchases, endowment funds, or lobbying or legislative advocacy of any kind.
- 2) Grant applicants are required to follow the small purchase method which is a relatively simple and informal method (procurement procedure) for purchasing supplies, equipment, and services that cost more than \$10,000 and less than \$250,000. This procurement procedure is applicable to proposals submitted in response to this RFP if the primary applicant is not a for-profit organization. The purpose is to ensure fair and open competition for purchases supported by LCBP/federal funding. If the applicant plans to use LCBP funding to obtain supplies, equipment or contractual services to complete its proposed workplan, then it must follow federal procurement regulations:
 - Procurement of supplies and services that do not exceed \$10,000 may be made without soliciting competitive quotes if the price is considered reasonable.
 - Procurement of supplies, equipment and services that are greater than \$10,000 and do not cost more than \$250,000 require that the recipient obtain multiple price quotes through a documented competitive process. Good faith efforts to obtain services from disadvantaged business enterprises should also be made, including contacting the small business administration and minority business development agency to inform them about the opportunity for businesses to submit price quotes as part of the competitive process. At least three price quotes for the contract work must be secured. The selected item or service does not need to be the lowest cost if it does not meet your requirements or you can otherwise demonstrate that the higher price offers the “best value.” Justification must be provided for the outcome of the bid process. This process may take place prior to the submission of a proposal for LCBP funds.
- 3) Grant award funding may not be used for the purchase of food or beverage.

Direct and Indirect Costs:

LCBP and NEIWPC encourage groups to budget costs that are associated with the project as direct expenses, including personnel costs, travel, project supplies, mailings, phone costs, office supplies, etc. Use of some grant funds for indirect costs is also allowable, subject to both the provisions of OMB Circular A-87 and LCBP approval. If you need further guidance, contact the LCBP or refer to [OMB Circular A-87 \(Revised\)](#). **Sections D, E, and F of Attachment A** provide an overview of direct and indirect costs. **For projects in response to this RFP, the indirect budget should not exceed 10% of the direct project budget, and indirect offered as match should similarly not exceed 10% of direct match contributed, unless a higher federally negotiated indirect rate is in place, and proof of that negotiated rate is provided.** The LCBP Indirect Policy can be found here: <http://www.lcbp.org/about-us/grants-rfps/grant-toolkit/>

IX. Notification of Awards

Award notification to applicants is expected in February 2020. The award recipient may be asked to submit a revised workplan, timeline, and budget at this time. Project work cannot begin until a contract is signed by both parties. LCBP and NEIWPC will not pay for expenses incurred prior to the contract start date. Payment for costs incurred will be on a reimbursement basis per the contract payment schedule and contingent upon completion of quarterly progress reports and project deliverables.

X. Period of Performance

Work is expected to begin in early **May, 2020** and is to be completed no later than **March 30, 2022** (see specific deliverable deadlines in Section II above).

XI. Schedule and Requirements for Proposal Submission

1. Please follow the format outlined in the attached Technical Proposal Format Requirements.
2. Word-compatible electronic submissions ONLY will be accepted and must be received via email no later than **October 3rd, 2019** to grants@lcbp.org. **Please include “Enhanced Grant Proposal” and include the Category (A or B) in your subject header.**

XI. Contact Information

Direct all electronic proposals (via email) to:

Kathy Jarvis

Lake Champlain Basin Program Office Manager

802-372-3213

grants@lcbp.org

Technical Proposal Format Requirements

Proposals should adhere to the following format and should not exceed a 10-page maximum length (font size 12), NOT including budget information, references cited, or investigator resumes.

TITLE: Concise and descriptive.

POINT OF CONTACT: Name, position, organization, address, telephone, fax and email of the person who will be the point of contact.

AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE: Name, position, organization address, telephone, fax and email of the person who is authorized to sign the contract.

TRACKING INFORMATION: Federal Tax Identification Number, DUNS Number, and Certified Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE): (Yes or No)

ABSTRACT: Brief description of proposed work.

INTRODUCTION: Overview of the project and what it will accomplish in relation to the goals of this RFP.

OBJECTIVES AND TASKS: List the project objectives and describe in detail the tasks that will be performed, including methods and approaches.

DELIVERABLES: Detailed description of the planned products from each task of the project. Quarterly progress reports and a final report are required deliverables.

SCHEDULE: Timeline showing anticipated dates for completion of all tasks and deliverables. Quarterly progress reports are due on the 10th day of January, April, July, and October. Work is to be completed within the specified performance period in the RFP. Note that payments will be made for completed tasks only. If your project includes a large objective that requires multiple payments, it should be broken into multiple tasks with appropriate corresponding timeframe and budget.

BUDGET TABLE AND DETAILED BUDGET JUSTIFICATION: Complete details for all costs by major budget categories (i.e. personnel, supplies, professional services), linking costs to specific tasks. Note that payments will be made based on this task schedule and can only be made for completed tasks. Budget justification should show costs to be covered by the LCBP award and other sources (if applicable), as well as any match amounts and totals. This section is not included in the 10-page maximum total for the proposal. See example provided below. Task-based budget templates are available below and on the LCBP website:

<http://www.lcbp.org/about-us/grants-rfps/grant-toolkit/>

Project Budget: Line Item by Task

<i>Line Item</i>	Task 1	Task 2	Task 3	Task 4	Task 5 (add or remove columns as needed)	Line Item Totals for All Tasks	Proposed Match* (if any)	<i>Line Item Totals + Proposed Match</i>
Personnel	\$500	\$1,200	\$800	\$495	\$1,000	\$3,995	\$3,000	\$6,995
Fringe	\$150	\$360	\$240	\$149	\$300	\$1,199	\$1,030	\$2,229
Travel	\$0	\$100	\$300	\$100	\$0	\$500	\$400	\$900
Supplies	\$0	\$200	\$0	\$2,000	\$500	\$2,700	\$1,200	\$3,900
Professional Services	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,500	\$0	\$2,500	\$1,000	\$3,500
Total Direct	\$650	\$1,860	\$1,340	\$5,244	\$1,800	\$10,894	\$6,630	\$17,524
Indirect	\$80	\$233	\$168	\$655	\$225	\$1,361	\$0	\$1,361
TOTAL BUDGET	\$730	\$2,093	\$1,508	\$5,899	\$2,025	\$12,255	\$6,630	\$18,885
						TOTALS MUST BE LCBP FUNDS ONLY	PROPOSED MATCH IN THIS COLUMN ONLY	

*Additional Federal funds supporting this project include \$500 from an EPA grant.

TECHNICAL REFERENCES CITED: List all references used for the proposal. This section is not included in the 10-page maximum total for the proposal.

CURRICULUM VITAE/RESUME OF PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS: Include up to 3-5 references for prior work pertinent to the proposed project. Please limit to one page per investigator. This section is not included in the 10-page maximum total for the proposal.