



**Request for Proposals:
Funding to Develop or Enhance
Wastewater Surveillance Capability and Capacity
in Environmental Health Laboratories**

**RFP Issued: Monday, April 5, 2021
Responses Due: Wednesday, May 5, 2021**

www.aphl.org

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Silver Spring, MD 20910**

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Contents

Introduction	3
Eligibility	3
Anticipated RFP Schedule	3
Response Submittal	4
Project Award.....	4
Scope of Work.....	4
Proposal Requirements.....	5
Evaluation Process	5
<i>Initial Review</i>	5
<i>Evaluation Process</i>	5
<i>Evaluation Team</i>	5
<i>Conflict of Interest</i>	5
Evaluation Criteria.....	6
Post-Evaluation Procedures	6
Conditions of Award Acceptance	6
General Considerations.....	6
Questions	7
APHL Environmental Health (EH) Program Contact Information	7
Appendix A: Proposal Scorecard (APPLICANTS NEED NOT COMPLETE)	8
Appendix B: APHL Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement (APPLICANTS NEED NOT COMPLETE).....	9

Introduction

APHL is a non-profit membership organization that works to safeguard the public's health by strengthening laboratory systems in the United States and globally. APHL is organized under the laws of the District of Columbia, with its headquarters office in Silver Spring, MD. APHL's members include state and local laboratories, state environmental and agricultural laboratories, and other governmental laboratories that conduct public health testing. APHL is recognized as tax exempt in the United States under Section 501(c)(3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code. Its work on behalf of public health laboratories spans more than 60 years.

APHL, with funding support from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is pleased to offer funds to one to two (1-2) state, local or territorial APHL member laboratories to initiate or enhance wastewater surveillance projects in the selected applicant's jurisdiction.

Background

Wastewater surveillance is a valuable tool that laboratories can use to detect SARS-CoV-2 and other emerging and unknown pathogens to help inform their jurisdiction's outbreak response. APHL, alongside our CDC partners, recognizes that investment in wastewater surveillance capability and capacity strengthens the national environmental health laboratory network and supports their involvement in the National Wastewater Surveillance System. This funding opportunity provides resources to member laboratories to advance wastewater surveillance efforts through direct procurement or sub-awards.

Eligibility

State, local, or territorial laboratories are eligible to submit proposals. Interested parties must submit a proposal to APHL that provides all the information specified in the *Proposal Requirements* section below. To be considered, complete proposals must be submitted no later than the Proposed Due Date specified in the *Anticipated RFP Schedule* section below. Applicants will find proposal submission information in the *Response Submittal* section below.

Anticipated RFP Schedule

Applications are to be emailed to eh@aphl.org by **Wednesday May 5, 2021, 5:00 PM ET**. APHL anticipates the following schedule for the entire competitive bidding process:

Monday, April 5, 2021	RFP Issued to aphl.org/rfp (APHL Procurement Site)
Wednesday, May 5, 2021	Complete proposals due to eh@aphl.org by 5:00 PM ET
Monday, May 12, 2021	Proposal Review and Follow-Up Completed
Wednesday, May 18, 2021	APHL will notify candidate(s) of selection decision
Wednesday, May 18, 2021	Selected applicant(s) posted to aphl.org/rfp
Tuesday, June 15, 2021	Submit proof of purchase and reimbursement request to APHL

APHL will communicate any modification to this schedule on www.aphl.org/rfp, APHL's procurement site.

Response Submittal

APHL must receive complete responses by no later than **5:00 pm ET on Wednesday, May 5 2021**. Applicants must send responses via email to eh@aphl.org with a copy to Erin Morin, Associate Specialist, Environmental Health (erin.morin@aphl.org; 240-485-3830).

Email subject lines must include: *'WWSRFP Submission'*.

APHL will send an email to each applicant acknowledging the receipt of their application. Any applicant who does not receive an email acknowledgement within 48 hours of the Final Response Deadline should email the RFP points of contact above to confirm receipt.

Project Award

APHL will fund equipment and supplies procurement through awards to one or two state, local, or territorial sAPHL member laboratories. All purchases made using this funding should help build new or enhance existing wastewater surveillance capability and capacity in the laboratory (See Scope of Work below for details). Anticipated value of this award is a maximum of \$30,000 for one laboratory or allocated to two laboratories in accordance to their budget needs.

Award notifications will be sent via email and awardees will receive funding through a contractual agreement with APHL.

Scope of Work

Award funding can be used for expanding capability and capacity for wastewater surveillance, including but not limited to:

- Equipment (may vary based on method):
 - Wastewater-specific equipment (waterbath, sonicator)
 - Large sample volume equipment
 - Automated extraction kits
 - Auto-samplers
 - Centrifuges
 - Magnetic stirrer
 - Vacuum manifold
 - Filter funnel
 - Bead basher
 - PCR instruments (including digital)
- Supplies (may vary based on method):
 - Polyethylene Glycol 8000
 - Electronegative filters
 - Pipette tips
 - Extraction fluid
 - RNase-free microcentrifuge tubes
- Certified Reference Materials (CRMs)
- Instrument service agreements
- Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS) interface(s)

Please note that award funding **cannot** be used to support staff salaries.

Proposal Requirements

Applicants should limit the proposal to a maximum of **five pages, double-spaced**. Supporting documents included as appendices do not count towards the five-page count. The applicant must include the following in their response:

- 1) Description of the laboratory's need for this funding.
- 2) Description of the laboratory's current wastewater surveillance capacity and capability (if applicable).
- 3) Description of the proposed wastewater surveillance project(s), including the following:
 - a. Project timeline
 - b. Description of the appropriate staff and their role(s) in the proposed wastewater surveillance project(s).
 - c. Address any potential logistical barriers to spending this award by June 30, 2021 and plans for overcoming them.
- 4) Budget and Justification
 - a. Please create a detailed budget and justification for each item requested in the proposal.
- 5) Appendices/Supporting Documentation (Optional)
 - a. Quotes from vendors referencing proposed purchases.

Evaluation Process

Initial Review

APHL staff members, comprised on the Evaluation Team detailed below, will conduct an initial review of all proposals for completeness. APHL will not consider any incomplete applications received by the proposal due date specified in the *Anticipated RFP Schedule* section above.

Evaluation Process

APHL will conduct reviews of identity-redacted proposals via a combination of teleconference and email communications between the evaluation team described below. APHL's Environmental Health Director will coordinate the review process and evaluation sessions. The reviewers may request follow-up interviews with all or some of the applicants, and following these interviews, may request supplemental information on an applicant's proposal. These interviews and any supplemental information will clarify an applicant's capacity or experience in one or more of the evaluation criteria, or will help to explain other information contained in an applicant's proposal.

Evaluation Team

APHL will assemble an evaluation team to evaluate competitive proposals and assess their relative qualities based on the *Evaluation Criteria* outlined below. The evaluation team will consist of three members: one CDC/National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases (NCEZID) staff and two APHL staff. Once potential reviewers are identified, APHL's Environmental Health Director will have final approval over the review team's composition.

Conflict of Interest

APHL will ask all potential reviewers to complete and sign APHL's Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement to disclose any real or perceived conflict of interest prior to the start of the evaluation process. Reviewers will have to affirm that they have no conflict of interest that would preclude an unbiased and objective review of the proposals received. APHL will not select reviewers with a perceived or potential conflict of interest.

Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation team will use the following criteria as a general overall framework to evaluate proposals:

- **Proposal Sufficiency** – The proposed solution meets the needs and criteria set forth in the RFP, including all proposal requirements.
- **Budget and Justification** – The proposed budget is reasonable and realistic and gives clear justification for all budget line items, including in-kind support.

Each evaluation team member will evaluate proposals against the eight questions or criteria found in [Appendix A: Proposal Scorecard](#). Reviewers will assign a numeric score from zero (0) (indicating a ‘poor’ response) to four (4) (indicating an ‘outstanding’ response) to reflect that reviewer’s assessment of the responsiveness of a proposal to each question or criterion.

The evaluators will use the following categorizations to assign scores:

- *Poor* (0 Points) – The respondent’s proposal neither provides a reasonable proposed approach and/or budget justification nor meets the baseline requirements set out in this RFP.
- *Fair* (1 Point) – The respondent’s proposal provides a reasonable proposed approach and/or budget justification but does not meet the baseline requirements set out in this RFP.
- *Good* (2 Points) – The respondent’s proposal provides a solid proposed approach and/or budget justification and meets the baseline requirements set out in this RFP.
- *Excellent* (3 Points) – The respondent’s proposal provides a very good proposed approach and/or budget justification and meets the baseline requirements set out in this RFP.
- *Outstanding* (4 Points) – The respondent’s proposal provides an exceptional proposed approach and/or budget justification and greatly meets the baseline requirements set out in this RFP.

Post-Evaluation Procedures

APHL staff will notify the selected applicants within ten (10) business days of the completion of the evaluation, and will post the recipients to [APHL’s procurement website](#) the same day the award notification is sent. Unsuccessful applicants will receive an email notification of these results within 30 days of the date the selected awardees are posted. All applicants will be entitled to utilize APHL’s RFP Appeals Process to formulate a protest regarding alleged irregularities or improprieties during the procurement process. Specific details of this policy are located on the [procurement website](#).

Conditions of Award Acceptance

The eligible applicant must be able to contract directly with APHL or have an existing relationship with a third-party organization that can contract directly with APHL on behalf of the applicant.

General Considerations

This RFP is neither an agreement nor an offer to enter into an agreement with any respondent. Once application evaluation is complete, APHL may choose to enter into a definitive contract with the selected applicant or may decline to do so.

APHL must ensure that the selected respondent is neither suspended nor barred from receiving federal funds and that the respondent meets any other funding eligibility requirement imposed by the Cooperative Agreement. APHL’s determination of whether the respondent is eligible to receive

Cooperative Agreement funding will be definitive and may not be appealed. If APHL determines that the selected respondent is ineligible to receive Cooperative Agreement funding, APHL will nullify the contract or will cease negotiation of contract terms.

Each respondent will bear its own costs associated with or relating to the preparation and submission of its application. These costs and expenses will remain with the respondent, and APHL will not be liable for these or for any other costs or other expenses incurred by a respondent in preparation or submission of its application, regardless of the conduct or outcome of the response period or the selection process.

Questions

Please direct all questions regarding this RFP or its requirements to Erin Morin, Associate Specialist, Environmental Health (erin.morin@aphl.org; 240-485-3830).

APHL Environmental Health (EH) Program Contact Information

Julianne Nassif, MS

Director

Environmental Health

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Appendix A: Proposal Scorecard

Scoring: Poor = 0, Fair = 1, Good = 2, Excellent = 3, Outstanding = 4

Category:	Criteria:	Score:	Reviewer Comments:
Proposal Sufficiency Does the proposal include all of the necessary elements and demonstrate an understanding of project needs?	Does the proposal meet the overall objectives of the project?		
	Did the applicant follow the proposal requirements, i.e. page count and include required information?		
	Is the information in the proposal presented in a clear and well-organized manner?		
	Section Total:		
Budget and Justification Does the applicant's proposal demonstrate a reasonable budget and justification?	Does the proposal include budget justification for all line items, including any in-kind support?		
	Is the applicant's budget and justification reasonable and realistic?		
	Section Total:		
Organizational Capacity Does the applicant have the appropriate staff to implement the proposed program?	Did the applicant outline an appropriate team to work on this project?		
	Does the applicant's laboratory have the organizational capacity to complete this project?		
	Section Total:		
	Does the applicant have a development process in place to achieve the project goals according to schedule?		
Section Total:			

Appendix B: APHL CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE STATEMENT (APPLICANTS NEED NOT COMPLETE)

Association of Public Health Laboratories Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement

Applicability: Disclosure of the following information is required of all Officers, Directors, committee members, staff members and other volunteers who have been designated and who have accepted responsibility to act on behalf of APHL ("APHL Personnel"). Please answer the following questions and, where indicated, include the same information for your immediate family members (your parents, your spouse or partner, your children and your spouse/partner's parents).

1. Please list the name, address, phone number, email address and type of business of your current employer. If you are self-employed, please note that below and provide us with the address, phone number, email address and type of business you operate.

Do you, or does any family member, currently serve as an officer, director, committee member, or other volunteer (or work as an employee of or a paid consultant to) any organization serving the interest of laboratory science or public health laboratories other than APHL or your state or local laboratory?

Yes No

If yes, please list the organization(s) and provide detail on your or your family member's interest or position in the organization(s).

Do you, or any family member, have an existing or potential interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any third party providing goods or services to APHL, or with which APHL is currently negotiating?

Yes No

If the answer is yes, please provide the name of the organization below and describe in detail the nature of the position held.

4. Please note any other financial or business interest you may have with any organization serving the interests of public health laboratories.

If you have none, please check this box:

Do you, or does any family member, have any other interest or affiliation that is likely to compromise your ability to provide unbiased and undivided loyalty to APHL, or that could come in conflict with your official duties as an Officer, Director, committee member, staff member or other volunteer who has been designated and who has accepted responsibility to act on behalf of APHL?

Yes **No**

If you answered yes, please describe in detail below the nature of each such interest or affiliation.

6. If you are currently aware of any actual or possible conflict of interest that might otherwise hamper your ability to serve APHL to your best ability and with the highest degree of care, loyalty and obedience – including any potential conflict you or a family member may have with one or more of the RFP applicants – please describe them in detail below.

7. Do you agree that so long as you are an Officer, Director, committee member, staff or other volunteer who has been designated and who has accepted responsibility to act on behalf of APHL

you will immediately disclose to the other Directors and/or Officers or, for staff members, the Executive Director and/or General Counsel the nature of any interest or affiliation which you

Yes

No

YOU MUST READ THIS SECTION AND THEN SIGN BELOW

I acknowledge that I have received and read APHL's Fiduciary Responsibility and Conflict of Interest Policy (the Policy). I have listed all my relevant fiduciary responsibilities and affiliations, and I have identified any actual or potential conflict of interest on this Disclosure Statement and I agree to abide by the Policy. I understand that it is my responsibility to inform APHL in writing of any change in circumstances relating to the Policy and this Disclosure Statement.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

APHL Fiduciary Responsibility and Conflict of Interest Policy

1. Policy Statement and Purpose

The members of the APHL Board of Directors understand the importance of serving APHL to the best of their ability and with the highest degree of obedience, loyalty and care. Accordingly, the Board adopts the following policy for APHL Officers and Directors, all staff, committee members, and other volunteers who have been designated and who have accepted responsibility to act on behalf of APHL ("APHL Personnel").

2. Individual Duty and Annual Disclosure

APHL Personnel will avoid any conflict of interest with APHL. APHL Personnel will not profit personally from their affiliation with APHL, or favor the interests of themselves, relatives, friends or other affiliated organizations over the interests of APHL. As used in this Policy, "Conflict of interest" includes any actual, apparent, and potential conflict of interest.

Upon commencing service with APHL, each APHL Personnel will file with the Board an annual statement disclosing all material business, financial, and organizational interests and affiliations they or persons close to them have which could be construed as related to the interests of APHL or the profession of public health laboratory science. Each APHL Personnel has an obligation to make an additional disclosure if a conflict of interest arises in the course of the individual's service to APHL, whether arising out of his/her employment, consulting, investments, or any other activity. These disclosures will be documented promptly in writing and recorded in the Board minutes and corporate records.

3. Procedure

Whenever APHL considers a matter, which presents an actual, apparent, or potential conflict of interest for APHL Personnel, the interested individual will fully disclose his/her interest in the matter, including the nature, type, and extent of the transaction or situation and the interest of the individual or that individual's relatives, friends or other affiliated organizations. The Board, after consultation with counsel as appropriate, will determine whether an actual and material conflict exists and, if so, what is the appropriate course of action under this policy and the Board vote will be recorded in the minutes.

Any Board member having a conflict of interest must either (i) voluntarily abstain from and be disqualified from participation in all deliberation and voting on all Board actions relating to the situation or matter that gives rise to the conflict of interest, or (ii) ask the Board to determine whether an apparent or potential conflict of interest is considered by the Board to be an actual and material conflict. In the event that the Board member in question requests that the Board evaluate the apparent or potential conflict, that Board member will abstain and be disqualified from participating in (and voting on) the determination of whether the issue presents an actual and material conflict. If the Board determines that an actual and material conflict exists, the Board member in question will abstain from all voting on, and will be disqualified from participation in all deliberation concerning all Board actions relating to the conflict of interest. The vote will be recorded in the minutes.

These procedures will neither prevent the interested individual from briefly stating his/her position on the matter, nor preclude him/her from answering pertinent questions of Board members, since his/her knowledge may be of assistance to the Board's deliberations.

APHL Personnel must be cautious and protective of the assets of APHL and insure that they are used in the pursuit of the mission of APHL. The association's policy requires APHL Personnel to avoid

transactions in which APHL personnel may have a significant financial interest in any property which APHL purchases, or a direct or indirect interest in a supplier, contractor, consultant, or other entity with which APHL does business. The Board, after consultation with counsel as appropriate, will determine whether an actual and material conflict exists and, if so, determine whether the transaction is nonetheless favorable to APHL before considering whether to approve it.

4. Other Duties and Obligations

Whenever any APHL Personnel discovers an opportunity for business advantage which is relevant to the activities of APHL, the opportunity belongs to APHL and the individual must present this opportunity to the Board. Only once the Board determines not to pursue the matter and relinquishes the opportunity may the individual consider it a matter of possible personal benefit.

APHL Personnel may not accept favors or gifts exceeding \$75.00 from anyone who does business with APHL.

All APHL Personnel will keep confidential those APHL matters designated confidential. APHL Personnel are prohibited from disclosing information about APHL to those who do not have a need to know or whose interest may be adverse to APHL, either inside or outside APHL, and are prohibited from using in any way such information for personal advantage to the detriment of APHL.

All APHL Personnel who participate in APHL activities, including committee activities and international consultation activities, must be adequately prepared to fully participate as their position descriptions require and will do so in accordance with the applicable laws and regulations of their respective state or territory and APHL's Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, and corporate policies. The APHL Board will read and understand the association's Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, corporate policies and financial statements, and routinely verify that all state, federal, and local tax payments, registrations and reports have been filed in a timely and accurate manner.

Board members will never exercise authority on behalf of APHL except when acting in meetings with the full Board or the Executive Committee or as authorized by the Board. If any member of the Board has significant doubts about a course of action of the Board, he or she must clearly raise the concern with the Executive Director and the Board and, when appropriate, seek independent expert advice.