

Release date: September 20, 2017

## Lake Champlain Basin Program Announcement

### **Request for Technical Pre-Proposals to Implement *Opportunities for Action***

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 Pre-Proposals for services to further the mission of the Lake Champlain Basin Program and address the tasks outlined in our guiding document, *Opportunities for Action* (<http://plan.lcbp.org>). The total request for each project may range from \$25,000 to \$300,000.

The pre-proposal should be a two-page document to introduce the project, adhering to the format requirements below. After review of the submitted pre-proposals, a subset of applicants will be asked to submit a full proposal for funding consideration for projects to begin in early 2019 (see timeframe table in Section IV below). Pre-proposals not invited for full proposal consideration in this cycle may be revised and submitted for future funding opportunities. All awards are subject to available funding.

**LCBP seeks pre-proposals for projects that address any strategies outlined in *Opportunities for Action*.** LCBP is particularly interested in funding projects that address the following priorities:

1. Innovative pilot or demonstration projects that reduce nutrient loading to Lake Champlain
2. Research or implementation projects that use LCBP-funded or other publicly available datasets to create outputs leading to improved water quality in the Lake Champlain Basin
3. Projects that improve diversity of native aquatic and riparian species in the Lake Champlain Basin ([Opportunities for Action](#) Strategy II.B.1; pages 37-38)
4. Projects that research or control sources of contaminants in the Lake Champlain Basin ([Opportunities for Action](#) Strategy I.B.1; pages 28-29)

We anticipate these projects will be supported with funds awarded to the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Great Lakes Fishery Commission in support of the Lake Champlain Basin Program. This Request for Pre-Proposals is available from the Lake Champlain Basin Program website (<http://lcbp.org/>).

**PRE-PROPOSAL DEADLINE NOTICE:** Only electronic pre-proposals will be accepted and must be received by Kathy Jarvis ([grants@lcbp.org](mailto:grants@lcbp.org)) at the Lake Champlain Basin Program by 4:30pm on:

**November 8, 2017**

LATE OR INCOMPLETE PRE-PROPOSALS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.

If you are planning to apply, please notify Kathy Jarvis ([grants@lcbp.org](mailto:grants@lcbp.org)) by November 1, 2017. A subset of applicants will be asked to provide a full proposal in December, 2017. The full proposal will be due eight weeks after this notification. Please see the full announcement below for more information.

## Lake Champlain Basin Program

### Request for Technical Pre-Proposals to Implement *Opportunities for Action*

#### Overview of Lake Champlain Basin Program and NEIWPC

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 the U.S. EPA under the Clean Water Act. LCBP coordinates and funds efforts that benefit the Lake Champlain Basin's water quality, fisheries, economy, wetlands, wildlife, recreation, and cultural resources, and works in partnership with government agencies, private organizations, local communities, and individuals from New York, Vermont, and Québec. These efforts are guided by the comprehensive management plan *Opportunities for Action: An Evolving Plan for the Future of the Lake Champlain Basin*, recently updated in June 2017.

Since 1992, the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission (NEIWPC) 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. NEIWPC 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 clean water program goals.

#### I. New grant award process

The Lake Champlain Steering Committee has elected to develop a new process to identify technical projects that address priorities identified in *Opportunities for Action*, a long-term management plan for the Lake Champlain Basin. LCBP issues this request for two-page pre-proposals that address any strategy identified in *Opportunities for Action* and that contribute toward the LCBP mission. Pre-proposals will be evaluated through a competitive process; a subset of pre-proposal applicants will be asked to submit a ten-page full proposal, with a fully developed budget and anticipated project outputs and outcomes. Grant award recipients will be selected from the pool of full proposals and successful projects will begin in early 2019. The aim of this new process is to invite a wide range of innovative and effective projects that will address the complex challenges facing the Lake Champlain Basin.

Applicants may choose the most appropriate total request amount for their project. Requests ranging from \$25,000 to \$300,000 will be accepted. Please note that if an applicant is asked to submit a full proposal, the total request amount in the full proposal must be equal to or less than the total request in the pre-proposal unless written consent is obtained from LCBP. If your project request is less than \$25,000, you may respond to our Local Implementation Grants Request for Proposals. Please visit <http://lcbp.org/grants> or contact LCBP for information on other grant opportunities.

LCBP will host informational public meetings to address questions about this new process and other technical requests for proposals at these locations and times:

Vermont meeting:  
Monday, September 25, 2017  
2:30 – 3:30pm  
University of Vermont  
Aiken Center, Room 311

New York meeting:  
Tuesday, September 26, 2017  
2:30 – 3:30 pm  
SUNY Plattsburgh  
Angell College Center, Alumni Conference Room

Questions and answers regarding this request will be hosted at the following website:  
<http://www.lcbp.org/about-us/grants-rfps/request-for-proposals-rfps/pre-proposal-faqs/>

Please feel free to contact Matthew Vaughan, LCBP Technical Coordinator ([mvaughan@lcbp.org](mailto:mvaughan@lcbp.org)) with any questions.

## II. Priorities for funding

LCBP seeks pre-proposals for projects that address strategies outlined in *Opportunities for Action* (<http://plan.lcbp.org>). For this funding year, the Lake Champlain Steering Committee has identified the priorities for funding listed below. Projects that address these priorities will receive bonus points in the review process.

1. **Innovative pilot or demonstration projects that reduce nutrient loading to Lake Champlain**
  - a. Nutrient pollution is a primary concern for Lake Champlain and its tributaries. Projects that successfully address this priority area may range from innovative planning to installation of management practices demonstrated to be successful elsewhere that have not yet been widely explored in the Lake Champlain Basin. For more information, please see page 26 of [Opportunities for Action](#).
2. **Research or implementation projects that use LCBP-funded or other publicly available datasets to create outputs that lead to improved water quality in the Lake Champlain Basin**
  - a. There are numerous opportunities to better understand the challenges we face using datasets that have already been collected. Examples of existing datasets include but are not limited to LiDAR data, Lake Champlain Long-term Monitoring Program data, and land use/land cover data. LCBP maintains a list of datasets available (<http://www.lcbp.org/water-environment/data-monitoring/>) and hosts data from projects that were funded by LCBP (<http://www.lcbp.org/media-center/publications-library/publications-database/>). For more information, please see page 26 of [Opportunities for Action](#).
  - b. In addition to datasets listed above, LCBP is currently supporting the development of an updated 1-meter resolution land cover raster for the entire US portion of the Lake Champlain Basin. We anticipate that this data will be available in 2018. Please contact Matthew Vaughan at LCBP for more information about this dataset.
3. **Projects that improve diversity of native aquatic and riparian species in the Lake Champlain Basin (*Opportunities for Action* Strategy II.B.1)**

- a. Native aquatic and riparian species and their habitats are vital to the Lake Champlain Basin ecosystem. This strategy and corresponding task areas are identified on pages 37-38 of [Opportunities for Action](#).

**4. Projects that research or control sources of contaminants in the Lake Champlain Basin. (Opportunities for Action Strategy I.B.1)**

- a. Contaminants from a variety of sources are of emerging concern in the Lake Champlain Basin. This strategy and corresponding task areas are identified on pages 28-29 of [Opportunities for Action](#).

**III. 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, though subcontracted work may be permitted by the LCBP Project Officer upon written request.

**IV. Timeframe for projects**

The successful applicants will complete the project according to the following schedule. Please note that this schedule is **subject to change**:

Pre-proposals due to LCBP	4:30 PM EST, November 8, 2017
Subset of applicants invited to submit full proposals	December 2017
Full proposals due to LCBP	February 2018 (date TBD – eight weeks after notice)
Applicants notified of funding decisions	April 2018
Detailed project workplan due	October 2018
Project start date	January 2019
Project deliverables and final report due	One to two years after start date, though longer-term projects may be possible with appropriate justification.

**V. Summary of Other Requirements for Selected Projects**

Upon selection of full proposals for funding, successful applicants should be aware of these additional requirements for all LCBP-funded projects:

1. Following initial notification of the award, a workplan must be approved by LCBP before a contract agreement can be executed and the work begun. Compensation cannot begin until the workplan is approved and a contract is executed. The workplan will detail the logistical elements of the project, including deliverables and project timeline. Information about the LCBP grant process, workplan development guidelines, and reporting requirements can be found on the LCBP website at: <http://www.lcbp.org/about-us/grants-rfps/grant-toolkit/>. The successful applicant will enter into a contract with NEIWPC in order to complete the work and will be compensated upon completion of workplan deliverables.

2. If a project includes collection of any primary or secondary data or involves a modeling effort, it will require a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP). Once the grant agreement has been executed, the contractor must develop a QAPP to be approved before the beginning of any data collection or secondary data analyses. More information about LCBP Quality Assurance Plans can be found at: <http://www.lcbp.org/about-us/grants-rfps/grant-toolkit/qapp/>. A QAPP generally takes four weeks for approval following submission.
3. The successful applicant will prepare brief quarterly reports documenting progress on each objective and task in the project. A final report fully documenting the project's 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 LCBP'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. 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 appropriate funding agencies in a suitable file format. LCBP, NEIWPC, US Environmental Protection Agency, and Great Lakes Fishery Commission 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, US Environmental Protection Agency, Great Lakes Fishery Commission, and NEIWPC as funding partners for any work completed under the project contract.
6. GIS data produced under this project must adhere to the requirements of EPA's National Geospatial Data Policy (see [http://www.epa.gov/geospatial/docs/National\\_Geospatial\\_Data\\_Policy.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/geospatial/docs/National_Geospatial_Data_Policy.pdf)). Specifically, the selected contractor must provide documentation for all produced data, including source information for each digital data layer and specific information about the data layer itself, (e.g., 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 and NEIWPC as a final deliverable.
7. LCBP and NEIWPC require its contractors to maintain workers compensation and liability insurance. More details will be provided to the successful applicant at the time of contracting.

8. The following procurement procedure is applicable to proposals submitted in response to this request if the primary applicant is not a for-profit organization. The purpose is to ensure fair and open competition for purchases supported by the 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 \$3,500 may be made without soliciting competitive quotes if the price is considered reasonable.
  - Procurement of supplies, equipment and services that are greater than \$3,500 and do not exceed \$150,000 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 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.

## VI. Pre-Proposal Evaluation and Selection Criteria

Submitted pre-proposals will be judged according to the following criteria:

1. Impact: Potential to advance goals of *Opportunities for Action* and the mission of LCBP.
2. Technical feasibility: Extent to which the project can be executed, and the appropriateness of the methods.
4. Budget: Efficiency of proposed request and budget for the scope and outputs of the project. Proposed funding match (if any) will increase score in this criterion.
5. Likelihood of success: Assessment of risk versus benefit for the project.
6. Additional points will be given to projects that address the priorities listed in Section II.

## VII. Available Funds and Match Requirements

This request for pre-proposals is in anticipation of LCBP fund appropriations for the fiscal year beginning October 1, 2018. Funds are anticipated to be available for projects to begin in early 2019. All awards are subject to available funding and LCBP is not obligated to issue any funds under this request.

Applicants may budget costs that are associated with the project as direct expenses, including personnel costs, travel, project supplies, meeting expenses, and subcontracts (subcontracts must be approved in writing by LCBP). Some allocation of project funds for indirect costs also is acceptable. However, **the indirect budget must not exceed 21% of the direct project request for LCBP funding.** No in-kind or cash match is required, though match may be considered favorably during pre-proposal and full proposal review.

### VIII. Period of Performance

Work is expected to begin no earlier than **January, 2019** and should be completed within two years after the start date. Funding may be available for longer-term projects if justified for project outputs and outcomes.

### IX. Schedule and Requirements for Pre-Proposal Submission

1. Please follow the format outlined in the attached Technical Pre-Proposal Format Requirements.
2. Only editable electronic copies will be accepted and must be received via email in Microsoft Word or Word-compatible format by 4:30pm on **November 8, 2017** to Kathy Jarvis ([grants@lcbp.org](mailto:grants@lcbp.org)). A PDF may also be provided.

### X. Contact Information

Prior to pre-proposal submission, please direct all inquiries to:

#### **Matthew Vaughan**

NEIWPC Environmental Analyst;  
Lake Champlain Basin Program Technical Coordinator  
54 West Shore Rd, Grand Isle, VT 05458  
802-372-0216  
[mvaughan@lcbp.org](mailto:mvaughan@lcbp.org)

### **Pre-Proposal Format Requirements**

Pre-proposals should adhere to the following format and should not exceed a **2-page maximum length** (font size 12). Additional pages may be used for a list of cited references and letters of support only.

**TITLE:** Please include a concise and descriptive title.

**ONE SENTENCE ABSTRACT:** This very brief description of your project should be understandable to a non-technical audience.

**POINT OF CONTACT:** Name, position, organization, address, telephone, email of the person who will be the point of contact, and brief summary of project team qualifications. The listed organization should be the group that will ultimately enter a contractual agreement with NEIWPC if the project is successful (see Eligibility requirements in Section III above).

### **DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT SCOPE, OUTPUTS, OUTCOMES, METHODS, AND**

**TIMEFRAME:** Use this space as you see fit to briefly describe your project and explain how it will contribute toward LCBP's mission and goals outlined in *Opportunities for Action*. Please note the following definitions: An **output** is an activity or product generated as a result of a task, e.g., treatment of six acres of run-off area, holding four public meetings, or generating an educational document. An **outcome** is a result or effect of all activities, e.g., reduced phosphorus loading to Lake Champlain through the Winooski River, or the public is better informed on aquatic invasive species. Please also list any anticipated partnerships. Letters of support and for landowner permission may be provided with the pre-proposal or later at the full



proposal stage.

**TOTAL REQUEST AMOUNT:** List in US dollars. Other anticipated sources and amounts of funding may also be included. Please note that if your pre-proposal is selected for a full proposal, the total funding request in the full proposal cannot be greater than the total request in the pre-proposal without written permission from LCBP.

**BRIEF BUDGET EXPLANATION:** Briefly explain the major components of the budget. List the percentage of the budget that may be spent on the following elements: field work, modeling, analysis, implementation, reporting, indirect costs, and any other major category (specify). More details and full budget explanation will be required at the full proposal stage. Relative percentages of budget components may change in the full proposal as necessary.

**TECHNICAL REFERENCES CITED:** List all technical references used for the pre-proposal (not included in the 2-page maximum total for the pre-proposal).