

# FAQ

eeBLUE 21st CCLC Watershed STEM Education Partnership Grants Program: [Link to Evaluation Consultant position description](#)

## Scope

**Question:** It seems that the RFP requests a largely similar scope of services, evaluation questions, and timeline as was sought in the 2020-22 process. At the same time, the budget seems to be ~40% of what was available in 2020. Can you share how you are thinking differently about priorities or emphasis to align with this reduced budget? And/or what have you learned from the prior evaluation that could enable this level of greater efficiency than was anticipated four years ago?

**Answer:** We anticipate the evaluation consultant will be able to leverage a lot of the background work that has already been done, including existing instruments, which should reduce the time needed to conduct this evaluation. Given the smaller scale of funding available for this round of implementation (about 1/3 of that available in 2020–22) we will also be engaging fewer grantees and sites thereby reducing travel costs and time commitments. Lastly, we anticipate working with the evaluation consultant to narrow down a subset of evaluation questions from the areas of interest published in the RFP.

**Question:** What do you most hope to accomplish with this evaluation? What do you want to be able to say or show about the program by the end?

**Answer:** We would like the evaluation to produce a summary of the activities and key outputs and outcomes. In particular, we are interested in better understanding the different ways MWEs are implemented in out of school time, which may look different across Pathways due to prior experience implementing MWEs in out of school time and/or existing relationships with partners.

**Question:** How have past evaluations been received by staff? What do you feel have been strengths and weaknesses of past evaluations of this partnership?

**Answer:** Past evaluation work has done a good job of providing high-level summaries of the activities and key outputs and outcomes, to the satisfaction of program funders. This was clearly a strength. However, we would like the evaluator(s) responding to this RFP to help us leverage their findings toward developing more tools and resources to convey best practices for this work, both within the realm of environmental education implementation and partnership building,

that can benefit practitioners. For example, the last round of implementation and evaluation eventually contributed to the development of a [partnership tool](#) to support practitioners in creating and sustaining robust partnerships.

**Question: Would you be able to share the most recent logic model for the program that's referenced?**

Answer: The logic model, along with the instruments, can be found in the appendices to the full evaluation report, available on the [NOAA-21st CCLC Watershed STEM Education Partnership Grants program page](#).

## Grantees

**Question: Will the implementation projects to be evaluated vary substantially between the two types of grantees—Foundations and Extensions—in approach, timeline, scale, etc.?**

Answer: We expect the implementation to be similar, the main differences being the grantee's prior experience and/or working relationships with the 21stCCLC site partners which may include a difference in scale. There is potentially room for the evaluator to explore the extent to which established partnerships are able to achieve more or different outcomes, and what strategies enable that work.

**Question: Do you expect to be able to share information about the locations of the 40 grantees before July 9 to aid in planning, or would we need to wait for the public announcement?**

Answer: There will be 12 grantees reaching up to 40 21stCCLC sites. There will be an average of 5 sites served in each of the 7 [NOAA B-WET regions](#). However, we do not expect the evaluation to include observational data collection at all sites.

## Methodological

Question: I notice that a short timeline for PRA clearance (September 30); this would not be feasible for a full PRA process with an August 1 start date. Are there other considerations or information that play into this deadline? Are there PRA-approved study/instruments that you envision using before their approval expires? And/or are there grant reporting tools, falling outside of additional PRA requirements?

Answer: NOAA has a Fast Track PRA approval process for certain types of information collection; these are generally limited to things that are considered “customer satisfaction.” We were able to use this process with the last evaluation to generate some useful data. The turnaround time on Fast Track PRA clearance is 5–10 business days. That said, we recognize that even with the Fast Track process, the timeline is tight so we would be open to adjusting the timeline per the evaluation plan to which the parties agree. We also expect to rely on some observational data collection, which will not trigger PRA.

Question: The DoS tool/framework is no longer emphasized in the RFP and, based on the reporting, seems not to have been used in the 2020-22 evaluation. Can you share insights behind the transition away from that framework and/or if others have proven more fruitful for evaluating implementation practices?

Answer: In the last round of implementation, the US Dept. of Education removed the requirement to use the DOS tool and framework. In collaboration with our evaluation team during the last round of funding, we determined that our limited time and resources were better used for more MWEE-specific measures. We anticipate this to be the case in the next round as well.

Question: Could you share Appendix D from the 2022 report, which mentions more specifics about the instruments and methods used in the most recent evaluation?

Answer: The appendices can be found on the [NOAA-21st CCLC Watershed STEM Education Partnership Grants program page](#).