

# **NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY**

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## Executive Summary

### Federal Agency Name

National Weather Service Program Office (NWSP0)

### Funding Opportunity Title

Pacific International Training Desk

### Announcement Type

Noncompetitive

### Funding Opportunity Number

NOAA-NWS-IA-31298

### Assistance Listing Number(s)

11.467

### Dates

. The application will only be submitted and received via Grants.gov. A full review of the application will begin as soon as it is received. Once the review committee reviews and accepts the proposal and any requested changes, funding can be awarded. There is no deadline for submittal or a start date as it is based upon when the application is received.

### Funding Opportunity Description

NOAA's National Weather Service, Office of International Affairs is soliciting a proposal for an enhanced Pacific International Training Desk (PITD) in association with the Weather Forecast Office (WFO) Honolulu and Guam which will serve as a training fellowship program for meteorologists and observers from the South West Pacific Regional Association of the WMO. The primary mission of the desk is to provide basic meteorology training for qualified individuals from National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHS) organizations in the Pacific Island Region. NOAA will review the proposal to ensure the applicant has the eligibility, expertise, and capability to continue operating the PITD for the region. There is a possibility that NOAA will have funding to consider enhanced operations for the PITD to further improve the training Desk to align with regional needs and priorities.

# Full Text of Announcement

## I. Funding Opportunity Description

### A. Program Objective

The Pacific International Training Desk (PITD) was established on the campus of the University of Hawaii (UH) in Honolulu, Hawaii in 2001 by the United States National Oceanic and Atmospheric Organization (NOAA)/National Weather Service (NWS) Office of International Activities (IA) and the Weather Forecast Office (WFO) Honolulu. PITD is one of NOAA's contributions to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) Voluntary Cooperation Program (VCP). The PITD began by offering two-month training internships to visiting students from Regional Association V (RAV) of the WMO in March 2001 and later expanded the training opportunity briefly to developing countries from WMO RA II nations in east and Southeast Asia, who were also members of the ESCAP/WMO Typhoon Committee.

The vision of the PITD is to provide one-on-one basic weather forecast training with an emphasis on the tropics. The training program is focused on basic operational forecasting to enable the student to prepare and disseminate locally-produced meteorological, hydrologic and climate products for their home countries.

### B. Program Priorities

NOAA/NWS IA would like to continue expanding the training of hydro-meteorologists from the Pacific Island States to improve their ability to predict the onset of severe weather events as well as to forecast daily weather in their areas. This training should be accomplished through the previously established Pacific Desk such that this program will continue to provide 1) foundational training through e-learning courses designed for weather forecasters, 2) standard training for forecasters at the Pacific Desk, including instructor-led training on-site at the NWS Weather Forecast Office in Honolulu, Hawaii, 3) roving workshops in the region, including Guam and 4) communications technology dissemination and training.

This need is acute in the Pacific because there are few highly trained forecasters and turnover among those few is high. Also, this huge region is subject to a wide variety of severe weather events—tsunamis, floods, landslides, etc.—each of which brings special challenges to the forecaster. The e-learning segment has two intended purposes - to ensure that students who attend the standard, on-site, instructor-led training have already achieved a basic competency level, and to function as a stand-alone learning experience that is practical and affordable for everyone in the Pacific. The purpose of the standard training is to allow participants to achieve competency in basic forecasting and will include the provision of a new laptop computer system equipped with websites, tools, and software needed for better forecasting. The purpose of the in-region, roving workshops is to provide specialized, location specific training to graduates of the standard training.

The purpose of the communications technology dissemination and training is to expand the reach of new communications technology that will be purchased under this and other programs. Communication throughout the Pacific is a chronic challenge caused by sparse populations separated by long distances. This can be particularly devastating during emergency situations such as extreme weather (e.g. tropical cyclones), or tsunamis. In recent years, technologies such as the Sponberg Chatty Beetle have been developed to reach even the most remote communities, providing forecasts and warnings and an invaluable means of communicating with emergency managers and other government entities and community leaders in the aftermath of such events. Sponberg Chatty Beetles have also been used to transmit daily weather observations from remote islands, providing valuable data to improve regional forecasts.

The grantee will work with the International Project Manager at NOAA/NWS IA to implement the PITD and discuss any new needs to further enhance the training for Pacific counterparts.

## **C. Program Authority**

33 U.S.C. §883d; 33 U.S.C. § 883e, 49 U.S.C. § 44720

## **II. Award Information**

### **A. Funding Availability**

Funding is contingent upon availability of Federal appropriations. It is anticipated that total funding for this program will be approximately \$3 million over 5 years, depending on final appropriations.

The Applicant is hereby given notice that funds are currently only available for the first three years of this program and future year activities will be dependent on the availability of additional funds. In no event will NOAA or the Department of Commerce be responsible for proposal preparation. Publication of this notice does not oblige NOAA to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds. If one incurs any costs prior to receiving an award agreement signed by an authorized NOAA official, one would do so solely at one's own risk of these costs not being included under the award.

Publication of this notice does not obligate any agency to any specific award or to obligate any part of the entire amount of funds available. Recipients and sub recipients are subject to all Federal laws and agency policies, regulations and procedures applicable to Federal financial assistance awards.

### **B. Project/Award Period**

The Full proposal may cover a project/award period up to 5 years and a multi-year award will be funded incrementally on an annual basis, but once awarded those awards will not compete for funding in subsequent years. Such an award requires a project description that can be easily divided into annual increments of meaningful work representing solid accomplishments.

The following is a description of multi-year awards. Multi-year awards are awards that have an award/project period of more than 12 months of activity. Multi-year awards are partially funded when the awards are approved, and are subsequently funded in increments. One of the purposes of multi-year awards is to reduce the administrative burden on both the applicant and the operating unit. Funding for each year's activity is contingent upon the availability of funds, satisfactory performance, and is at the sole discretion of the agency. Once approved, full applications are not required for the continuation out years. During the implementation phase of research projects funded under this announcement, regardless of the funding mechanism used, NWS Program Managers will analyze financial statements and progress reports for each continuing multi-year project, and will have dialogue with the Principal Investigators and Authorized Representatives of the recipient institution to discuss progress and expected timelines for the remaining award period. Program Managers will consider the length of time remaining for each project, the amount of funds available, the tasks to be completed in the upcoming fiscal year, the pace of activities, and any delayed progress relative to that originally proposed, before determining the amount of funds to allocate to continuing projects in any given fiscal year.

### **C. Type of Funding Instrument**

The preferred funding instrument is a cooperative agreement. A cooperative agreement implies that the Federal government will assist recipients in conducting the proposed activities. The application should be presented in a manner that demonstrates the applicant's ability to address the program objective in a collaborative manner with the Federal government. A cooperative agreement is appropriate when substantial Federal government involvement is anticipated. This means that the recipient can expect substantial agency collaboration, participation, or intervention in project performance. Substantial involvement exists when: responsibility for the management, control, direction, or performance of the project is shared by the assisting agency and the recipient; or the assisting agency has the right to intervene (including interruption or modification) in the conduct or performance of project activities.

## **III. Eligibility Information**

### **A. Eligible Applicants**

Eligible applicants are institutions of higher education, other non-profits, state, local, Indian Tribal Governments, commercial organizations, US Territories and Federal agencies that possess the statutory authority to accept funding for this type of research.

**B. Cost Share or Matching Requirement**

There is no cost-sharing associated with this agreement.

**C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility**

**IV. Application and Submission Information**

**A. Address to Request Application Package**

Content and Form of Application section provides this information.

**B. Content and Form of Application**

Proposals should total no more than 50 pages in length, single spaced, with one inch margins on 8 ½ x 11 inch paper. The proposal should use Times New Roman 12 point font. Federally-mandated forms, tables of content, PI and staff vitae, budget tables, and any letters of support are not included within the page count.

Multi-year proposals up to a maximum of five years will be considered; however, funding beyond the first year will be dependent upon satisfactory performance and the availability of funds. The application elements listed below are required before an award can be made. The application elements are as follows:

1. Title Page. The title page must be officially authorized by the institutional representative. The PI and institutional representative should be identified by full name, title, organization, telephone number, and email address. It is requested that the title page clearly indicate which project areas are being addressed and the total amount of requested Federal funds be listed for each budget period.

2. Abstract Page - An abstract should be included and contain an introduction of the problem, rationale, and a brief summary of work to be completed. The abstract should appear on a separate page, headed with the proposal title, institution's investigators, total proposed cost, and budget period.

3. Results from Prior Training and/or Research - The results of relevant project should be described, including their relation to the current proposed work. Reference to each prior award should include the title, agency, award number, PIs, period of award, and total award. The section should be a brief summary and should not exceed five pages total.

4. Project description - The proposed project must be completely described, including identification of the problem; scientific and training objectives; proposed methodology; relevance to the priorities of operational hydrometeorology; operational applicability; scientific merit; proposed technology transfer; past collaborations with international operational hydrometeorologists, cost-effectiveness of training materials and approaches; and the program priorities listed above. Benefits of the proposed project to the general public and the broader scientific and educational community must be discussed. A year-by-year general summary of proposed work must be included. Specific plans for capacity development must be included.

5. Budget and Proposed Budget Justification - Applicants must submit a Standard Form (SF) 424, Application for Federal Assistance, including a detailed budget using the SF 424A, Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs. (The forms are available on grants.gov.) Applicants should pay careful attention to show the yearly budget breakout on the SF424A for multi-year proposals. In addition, the body of the proposal should include a separate table showing the total annual budgets (if multi-year) corresponding with the project description. Additional text to justify expenses should be included as necessary.

6. Vitae. An abbreviated curriculum vitae must be included for each investigator identified with each proposal. Reference lists should be limited to all publications in the last five years with up to five other relevant papers.

7. Current and Pending Support. For each investigator, submit a list which includes project title, supporting agency with grant number, investigator months, dollar value, and duration. Requested values should be listed for pending support.

This announcement is not seeking proposals that generate environmental data. Therefore, a Data Management Plan is not required as part of the Proposal.

### **C. Unique entity identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)**

Each applicant (unless the applicant is an individual or Federal awarding agency that is excepted from those requirements under 2 CFR 25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception approved by the Federal awarding agency under 2 CFR 25.110(d)) is required to: (i) Be registered in SAM before submitting its application; (ii) Provide a valid unique entity identifier (UEI) in its application; and (iii) Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency. NOAA may not make a Federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time NOAA is ready to make a Federal award, NOAA may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another applicant.

#### **D. Submission Dates and Times**

Applications will only be accepted via Grants.gov. There is no deadline for submittal, and the review of the application will begin as soon as it is received. Project start date will be determined once the application has been reviewed and approved by the Review Committee.

#### **E. Intergovernmental Review**

Applications under this program are not subject to Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs.

#### **F. Funding Restrictions**

Indirect Costs should be limited to no more than 10% of direct project costs.

NOAA will not consider expenses associated with fees, fund-raising activities, travel for activities not directly related to project implementation, travel or salaries for Federal employees, or profit as allowable costs in the proposed budget. The total costs of a project consist of all allowable costs incurred in accomplishing project activities during the project period. Project costs can only include support for activities conducted between the effective start date and end date of the award, and cannot include activities undertaken either before or after the agreed upon dates. Applicants will not be reimbursed for time expended or costs incurred in developing a project or in preparing an application, or in any discussions or negotiations with the agency prior to the award. Funding beyond the first year may be dependent upon satisfactory performance and continued availability of funds. NOAA is not responsible for proposal preparation costs.

#### **G. Other Submission Requirements**

Applicant organizations must complete and maintain three registrations to be eligible to apply for or receive an award. These registrations include SAM.gov, Grants.gov, and eRA Commons. All registrations must be completed prior to the application being submitted. The complete registration process for all three systems can take 4 to 6 weeks, so applicants should begin this activity as soon as possible. If an eligible applicant does not have access to the internet, please contact the Agency Contacts listed in Section VII for submission instructions.

Prior to registering with eRA Commons, applicant organizations must first obtain a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) from SAM.gov, if needed (refer to Section IV. Applications and Submission Information, Section C). Organizations can register with eRA Commons in tandem with completing their full SAM and Grants.gov registrations; however, all registrations must be in place by time of application submission. eRA Commons requires organizations to identify at least one Signing Official (SO) and at least one Program Director/Principal Investigator (PD/PI) account in order to submit an application.

The first PD/PI listed on the application must include their eRA Commons ID in the "Credential, e.g. agency login" Applicant Identifier field on the SF424 form. Failure to register in the Commons and to include a valid PD/PI Commons ID in the Applicant Identifier field will prevent the successful submission of an electronic application.

#### **H. Address for Submitting Proposals**

Hardcopy proposals will not be accepted. Any questions regarding the application should be submitted to:

Andrew Horan  
International Project Manager  
NOAA/NWS Office of International Affairs  
Andrew.Horan@noaa.gov

## V. Application Review Information

<b>1. Importance/relevance and applicability of proposed projects to the program goals</b>	<b>Maximum Points:</b>
<b>2. Technical/scientific merit</b>	<b>Maximum Points:</b>
<b>3. Overall qualifications of applicants</b>	<b>Maximum Points:</b>
<b>4. Project costs</b>	<b>Maximum Points:</b>
<b>5. Outreach and Education</b>	<b>Maximum Points:</b>

## Evaluation Criteria

### Review and Selection Process

Once a full application has been received by NOAA, an initial administrative review is conducted to determine compliance with requirements and completeness of the application. All proposals will be evaluated and scored individually in accordance with the above evaluation criteria by independent peer mail review and/or by independent peer panel review. Both Federal and non-Federal experts may be used in this process, and scores will use the following Go-No Go Format for each of the criteria.

3=Unacceptable, 2=Acceptable, 1=Superior

The peer panel will comprise 3 individuals, with each individual having expertise in the subject area. All proposals will be evaluated and scored individually. The Program Manager will neither vote or score proposals as part of the independent peer panel nor participate in discussion of the merits of the proposal.

Recommendations for funding are then forwarded to the selecting official, the International Project Manager for IA, for the final funding decision. In making the final selections, the Director will award in rank order unless the proposal is justified to be selected out of rank order based on the selection factors listed below in C.

Investigators may be asked to modify objectives, work plans or budgets, and provide supplemental information required by the agency prior to the award. When a decision has been made (whether an award or declination), verbatim anonymous copies of reviews and summaries of review panel deliberations, if any, will be made available to the applicant.

### Selection Factors

N/A

### Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

Subject to the availability of funds, the review of the proposal can commence as soon as it is received. The start date will commence as soon as proposal is reviewed and deemed acceptable by the review committee.

## VI. Award Administration Information

### A. Award Notices

**PRE-AWARD COSTS.** Per 2 CFR 200.458, NOAA authorizes award recipients to expend pre-award costs up to 90 days before the period of performance start date at the applicant's own risk without approval from NOAA and in accordance with the applicant's internal policies and procedures. Such costs are allowable only to the extent that they would have been allowable if incurred after the date of the Federal award. This does not include direct proposal costs (as defined at 2 CFR 200.460). In no event will NOAA or the Department of Commerce be responsible for direct proposal preparation costs. Pre-award costs will be a portion of, not in addition to, the approved total budget of the award. Pre-award costs expended more than 90 days prior to the period of performance start date require approval from the Grants Officer. This does not change the period of performance start date.

**GRANTS OFFICER SIGNATURE.** Proposals submitted in response to this solicitation are not considered awards until the Grants Officer has signed the grant agreement. Only Grants Officers can bind the Government to the expenditure of funds. The Grants Officer's digital signature constitutes an obligation of funds by the federal government and formal approval of the award.

**LIMITATION OF LIABILITY.** Funding for programs listed in this notice is contingent upon the availability of funds. Applicants are hereby given notice that funds may not have been appropriated yet for the programs listed in this notice. Publication of this announcement does not oblige NOAA to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds.

### B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

**UNIFORM ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS, COST PRINCIPLES, AND AUDIT REQUIREMENTS.**

Through 2 C.F.R. § 1327.101, the Department of Commerce adopted Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards at 2 C.F.R. Part 200, which applies to awards in this program. Refer to <http://go.usa.gov/SBYh> and <http://go.usa.gov/SBq4>.

**RESEARCH TERMS AND CONDITIONS.** For awards designated on the CD-450 as Research, the Commerce Terms, and the Federal-wide Research Terms and Conditions (Research Terms) as implemented by the Department of Commerce, currently, at <https://www.nsf.gov/awards/managing/rtc.jsp>, both apply to the award. The Commerce Terms and the Research Terms are generally intended to harmonize with each other; however, where the Commerce Terms and the Research Terms differ in a Research award, the Research Terms prevail, unless otherwise indicated in a specific award condition.

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE PRE-AWARD NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR GRANTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.**

The Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements contained in the Federal Register notice of December 30, 2014 (79 FR 78390) are applicable to this solicitation and may be accessed online at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2014-12-30/pdf/2014-30297.pdf>.

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE (DOC) TERMS AND CONDITIONS.** Successful applicants who accept a NOAA award under this solicitation will be bound by the DOC Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions. This document will be provided in the award package in eRA at <http://www.ago.noaa.gov> and at <https://www.commerce.gov/oam/policy/financial-assistance-policy>.

**BUREAU TERMS AND CONDITIONS.** Successful applicants who accept an award under this solicitation will be bound by bureau-specific standard terms and conditions. These terms and conditions will be provided in the award package in NOAA's Grants Online system. For NOAA awards only, the Administrative Standard Award Conditions for National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Financial Assistance Awards U.S. Department of Commerce are applicable to this solicitation and may be accessed online at <https://www.noaa.gov/organization/acquisition-grants/financial-assistance>

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT.** Department of Commerce regulations implementing the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. Sec. 552, are found at 15 C.F.R. Part 4, Public Information. These regulations set forth rules for the Department regarding making requested materials, information, and records publicly available under the FOIA. Applications submitted in response to this Notice of Funding Opportunity may be subject to requests for release under the Act. In the event that an application contains information or data that the applicant deems to be confidential commercial information that should be exempt from disclosure under FOIA, that information should be identified, bracketed, and marked as Privileged, Confidential, Commercial or Financial Information. In accordance with 15 CFR § 4.9, the Department of Commerce will protect from disclosure confidential business information contained in financial assistance applications and other documentation provided by applicants to the extent permitted by law.

**EXECUTIVE ORDER 14173: ENDING ILLEGAL DISCRIMINATION AND RESTORING MERIT-BASED**

**OPPORTUNITY.** This award term implements Executive Order 14173, 90 FR 8633 (Jan. 21, 2025), Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity. By accepting this U.S. Department of Commerce financial assistance award, the recipient:

- (1) agrees that compliance in all respects with all applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws is material to the governments payment decisions for purposes of section 3729(b)(4) of Title 31 United States Code; and
- (2) certifies to the Department that it does not operate any programs promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion that violate any applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws.

**SCIENCE INTEGRITY.** 1. Maintaining Integrity. The non-Federal entity shall maintain the scientific integrity of research performed pursuant to this grant or financial assistance award including the prevention, detection, and remediation of any allegations regarding the violation of scientific integrity or scientific and research misconduct, and the conduct of inquiries, investigations, and adjudications of allegations of violations of scientific integrity or scientific and research misconduct. All the requirements of this provision flow down to subrecipients. 2. Peer Review. The peer review of the results of scientific activities under a NOAA grant, financial assistance award or cooperative agreement shall be accomplished to ensure consistency with NOAA standards on quality, relevance, scientific integrity, reproducibility, transparency, and performance. NOAA will ensure that peer review of "influential scientific information" or "highly influential scientific assessments" is conducted in accordance with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Final Information Quality Bulletin for Peer Review and NOAA policies on peer review, such as the Information Quality Guidelines. 3. In performing or presenting the results of scientific activities under the NOAA grant, financial assistance award, or cooperative agreement and in responding to allegations regarding the violation of scientific integrity or scientific and research misconduct, the non-Federal entity and all subrecipients shall comply with the provisions herein and NOAA Administrative Order (NAO) 202-735D, Scientific Integrity, and its Procedural Handbook, including any amendments thereto. That Order can be found at <https://www.noaa.gov/organization/administration/nao-202-735d-2-scientific-integrity>. 4. Primary Responsibility. The non-Federal entity shall have the primary responsibility to prevent, detect, and investigate allegations of a violation of scientific integrity or scientific and research misconduct. Unless otherwise instructed by the grants officer, the non-Federal entity shall promptly conduct an initial inquiry into any allegation of such misconduct and may rely on its internal policies and procedures, as appropriate, to do so. 5. By executing this grant, financial assistance award, or cooperative agreement the non-Federal entity provides its assurance that it has established an administrative process for performing an inquiry, investigating, and reporting allegations of a violation of scientific integrity or scientific and research misconduct; and that it will comply with its own administrative process for performing an inquiry, investigation, and reporting of such misconduct. 6. The non-Federal entity shall insert this provision in all subawards at all tiers under this grant, financial assistance award, or cooperative agreement.

**REVIEW OF RISK.** After applications are proposed for funding by the Selecting Official, the Grants Office will perform administrative reviews, including an assessment of risk posed by the applicant under 2 C.F.R. 200.206. These may include assessments of the financial stability of an applicant and the quality of the applicant's management systems, history of performance, and the applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on non-Federal entities. Special conditions that address any risks determined to exist may be applied. Applicants may submit comments about any information concerning organizational performance listed in the Responsibility/Qualification section of SAM.gov for consideration by the awarding agency.

**REVIEWS AND EVALUATION.** The applicant acknowledges and understands that information and data contained in applications for financial assistance, as well as information and data contained in financial, performance and other reports submitted by applicants, may be used by the Department of Commerce in conducting reviews and evaluations of its financial assistance programs. For this purpose, applicant information and data may be accessed, reviewed and evaluated by Department of Commerce employees, other Federal employees, and also by Federal agents and contractors, and/or by non-Federal personnel, all of whom enter into appropriate conflict of interest and confidentiality agreements covering the use of such information. As may be provided in the terms and conditions of a specific financial assistance award, applicants are expected to support program reviews and evaluations by submitting required financial and performance information and data in an accurate and timely manner, and by cooperating with the Department of Commerce and external program evaluators. In accordance with §200.303(e), applicants are reminded that they must take reasonable measures to safeguard protected personally identifiable information and other confidential or sensitive personal or business information created or obtained in connection with a Department of Commerce financial assistance award.

## C. Reporting

In accordance with 2 CFR 200.328-9 and the terms and conditions of the award, financial reports are to be submitted bi-annually and performance (technical) reports are to be submitted bi-annually. Reports are submitted electronically through eRA.

The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act, 31 U.S.C. 6101 note, includes a requirement for awardees of applicable Federal grants to report information about first-tier subawards and executive compensation under Federal assistance awards. All awardees of applicable grants and cooperative agreements are required to report to the FFATA Subaward Reporting System (FSRS) available at <https://www.fsr.gov/> on all subawards over \$30,000. Refer to 2 CFR Part 170.

## **VII. Agency Contacts**

Technical Information: Andrew Horan, NWS IA

International Project Manager, 301-427-9047

Email: Andrew.Horan@noaa.gov

## **VIII. Other Information**