Ocean Acidification Coastal Research: Uniting Investigations and Shipboard Experiments (OA CRUISE)

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NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Federal Agency Name(s): Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce

Funding Opportunity Title: Ocean Acidification Coastal Research: Uniting Investigations and Shipboard Experiments (OA CRUISE)

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: NOAA-OAR-OAP-2024-2008006

Federal Assistance Listings Number: 11.017, Ocean Acidification Program (OAP)

Dates: Full proposals must be received by 11:59 pm Eastern Daylight/Standard Time on September 18, 2023.

An Informational webinar will be held on June 27th at 3pm ET. Please register for the webinar here: https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/1340177561837681504

Funding Opportunity Description: NOAA's Ocean Acidification Program (OAP) is soliciting cruise project proposals to complement core observing activities on existing cruises as part of its upcoming coastal ocean acidification (OA) cruises targeting the US Coastal Large Marine Ecosystems. The proposed activities should provide for expanded OA observational and experimental capabilities of repeated oceanographic research cruises to better achieve the strategic aims of the program. Projects should be designed to expand the existing capabilities of the OAP supported research cruises conducted along the coastal US. Projects should be aimed towards fulfilling the OA Cruise Science Priority Guidance document (https://bit.ly/OAP_NOFO2023) Level 2 and Level 3 activities. Proposals should demonstrate how their proposed efforts in concert with the Level 1 core activities/measures would better address regionally relevant objectives in the NOAA Ocean, Coastal, and Great Lakes Research Plan: 2020-2029.

Subject to the availability of funding, OAP anticipates approximately $1,000,000 will be available to support approximately 5-10 projects total, with each project funded at the approximate level of $100,000 - $200,000 total. This document sets out requirements for submitting to this opportunity. For additional guidance and tips on how best to prepare an application, please contact the program manager listed below in section VII.

FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Program Objective

The NOAA Ocean Acidification Program (OAP) was established by the Federal Ocean Acidification Research and Monitoring (FOARAM) Act of 2009. Ocean acidification (OA) is the ongoing change in ocean chemistry in response to the ocean's uptake of increasing carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. The OAP coordinates OA research, monitoring, and other activities to improve our understanding of how the chemistry of the ocean is changing, what are the primary regional drivers of that change, what impacts these changes are having on marine organisms, and what risk these changes may pose to U.S. marine dependent communities and economies. As part of its responsibilities, the OAP provides grants for research projects that explore the effects on marine organisms, ecosystems, and the socioeconomic impacts that can lead to potential adaptive strategies within US waters.

OAP is soliciting proposals for field projects that complement the core activities of two OA cruises: the West Coast Ocean Acidification cruise (WCOA) anticipated for summer 2024 and the Gulf of Mexico Ecosystems and Carbon Cruise (GOMECC) anticipated for summer 2025. Projects should specifically address the requirements detailed in the OA Cruise Science Priority Guidance and be coordinated with other activities engaged on the cruise so as to optimally achieve the long-term monitoring goals of these repeated cruises to better understand changes in inorganic carbon dynamics due to anthropogenic carbon input and natural changes in the coastal and open ocean regions and identify and track marine biological metrics attributable to acidification conditions. Particular emphasis should be on those metrics that best inform our understanding of how regionally important fisheries may be impacted and/or how the marine biological carbon pump may be changing. Efforts should adhere to the community best-practices as these measures are necessary to determine patterns and evolution of status of OA conditions in coastal waters. Please note that the Level 1 requirements are being funded separately.

Each cruise is generally executed on a NOAA Global Class Research Vessel such as the NOAA Ship R/V Ronald H. Brown with an at-sea operational duration of approximately 40 days (see additional details for each cruise below under B. Program Priorities). The primary operations of these cruises consist of a series of sampling transects extending from near-shore and estuarine waters to deep stations beyond the shelf break for inter-comparison with GO-SHIP surveys. Along these transects, CTD/Niskin casts are performed to document the core biogeochemical properties at each station (approximately 100-150 stations total). Proposed projects should nest inside this operational configuration but may request special

augmentations as necessary assuming accommodations can be provided (e.g. a limited set of selected stations could be targeted for diel measurements). Ultimately, any accepted projects will need to work within the time, lab-space, water budgeting, and ship capability constraints as determined by the OAP field operations manager and cruise chief scientists.

Guiding Documents:
In addition to the FOARAM and state legislation, several national and regional reports and products can provide background information on OA research and strategies and rationale for this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO):

1. NOAA Ocean, Coastal, and Great Lakes Research Plan: 2020-2029 https://oceanacidification.noaa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/ResearchPlan2020-2029_comp.pdf
2. OA Cruise Science Priority Guidance https://bit.ly/OAP_NOFO2023
3. Link to past WCOA cruise reports here: https://www.pmel.noaa.gov/co2/story/2021+West+Coast+Ocean+Acidification+Cruise
4. Link to past GOMECC cruise reports here https://www.aoml.noaa.gov/ocd/ocdweb/occ_oa.html

B. Program Priorities

Projects must achieve level 2 and/or level 3 activities as outlined in the OA Cruise Science Priority Guidance document. Additionally, projects may address at least one of the priorities listed below:

- Provide for expanded OA observational and experimental capabilities of repeated oceanographic research cruises to better achieve the strategic aims of the program.
- Address at least one priority research theme in the NOAA Ocean, Coastal, and Great Lakes Research Plan: 2020-2029.

WCOA Cruise Logistics:
WCOA is anticipated to be executed between May and September (ideally June-July) of 2024 for approximately 35 days, departing out of San Diego, CA and returning through Seattle, WA. This is subject to change pending appropriate vessel availability and may be executed in calendar year 2025 if necessary. The cruise will be led by chief scientists from NOAA's Pacific Marine Environmental Laboratory. The ship is anticipated to be equipped with atmospheric and oceanographic instruments, underway carbon sensors, dry and wet labs, deck space for laboratory vans, and winch and A-frame capability. A brief summary of the 2021 WCOA cruise is available here for reference: https://www.pmel.noaa.gov/co2/story/2021+West+Coast+Ocean+Acidification+Cruise

GOMECC Cruise Logistics:

GOMECC is anticipated to be executed between June and September of 2025 for approximately 40 days, departing and returning through Miami, FL. This is subject to change pending appropriate vessel availability. While unlikely, applicants should note that the GOMECC cruise may occur in the summer of 2024. The cruise will be led by chief scientists from NOAA's Atlantic Oceanographic and Meteorological Laboratory. The ship is anticipated to be equipped with atmospheric and oceanographic instruments, underway carbon sensors, dry and wet labs, deck space for laboratory vans, and winch and A-frame capability. Further information about recent GOMECC cruises can be found here for reference: https://www.aoml.noaa.gov/ocd/ocdweb/occ_oa.html

The Ocean Acidification Program (OAP) champions diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) by recruiting, retaining and preparing a diverse workforce, and proactively engaging and serving the diverse populations of coastal communities. OAP is committed to building inclusive research, communication and education programs that serve people with unique backgrounds, circumstances, needs, perspectives, and ways of thinking. We encourage applicants of all ages, races, ethnicities, national origins, gender identities, sexual orientations, disabilities, cultures, religions, citizenship types, marital statuses, education levels, job classifications, veteran status types, and socioeconomic status types to apply for this opportunity.

OAP works to establish a culture of professionalism and respect through violence prevention and response. All cruise participants will be required to undergo Sexual Assault and Sexual Harrassment (SASH) training and OAP will provide a dedicated SASH liaison on board each cruise. Please find more about NOAA's Workplace Violence Prevention and Response Program here: https://www.noaa.gov/workplace-violence-prevention-response-program. See section VI.B.12 below for the NOAA Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Prevention and Response Policy.

C. Program Authority

The Ocean Acidification Program was established by the Federal Ocean Acidification Research and Monitoring (FOARAM) Act Act 33 U.S.C. 3701-3708

II. Award Information

A. Funding Availability

Subject to the availability of funding, this announcement describes how eligible applicants should apply for the funding opportunity, "Coastal Ocean Acidification Cruise Supplemental Projects". It is anticipated that approximately $1,000,000 total will be

available to support approximately 5-10 projects total, with each project funded at the approximate level of $100,000 - $200,000. Each project should not exceed three years in duration.

There is no guarantee that funds will be available to make awards, or that any application will be selected for funding. If an applicant incurs any costs prior to receiving an award agreement signed by an authorized NOAA official, it does so at its own risk of not being selected or of these costs not being included in a subsequent award. NOAA and DOC will not be responsible for any incurred project costs if this program fails to receive full funding.

B. Project/Award Period

Projects are anticipated to begin January 1, 2024. It is anticipated that each project will include pre-cruise planning, cruise execution, and post-cruise data analysis and archival.

Subsequent funding is contingent on the availability of out-year appropriations and performance under the current award. Pre-award spending may be authorized 90 days prior to the start date of the award with approval from the program manager and the NOAA grants officer.

C. Type of Funding Instrument

Successful proposals will be funded through a cooperative agreement, therefore NOAA will be substantially involved by, for example, coordinating partners and teams to accomplish the work; assisting with technical aspects of the project; and/or coordinating access to Federal operational entities, data or facilities needed to support the work. Funding for contractual arrangements for services or products for delivery to NOAA is not available under this notice.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants for this competition are institutions of higher education, nonprofit and for-profit organizations, and federal, state, local, and tribal governments. Foreign institutions may not be the primary recipient of awards under this announcement. Applications from non-Federal and Federal applicants will be competed against each other. Proposals selected for funding from non-Federal applicants will be funded through a cooperative agreement as described above in section II. C. of this notice. Proposals selected for funding from NOAA scientists shall be distributed by an intra-agency fund transfer. Proposals selected for funding from a non-NOAA Federal agency will be funded through an

inter-agency transfer. PLEASE NOTE: Before non-NOAA Federal applicants may be funded, they must demonstrate that they have legal authority to receive funds from another Federal agency in excess of their appropriation. Because this announcement is not proposing to procure goods or services from applicants, the Economy Act (31 USC 1535) is not an appropriate legal basis.

If an applicant has a partner(s) who would receive funds, the lead grantee will be expected to use subawards or subcontracts or other appropriate mechanisms to provide funds to the partner(s). If a partner is a NOAA office or laboratory, the US Government may transfer funds internally.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

There is no requirement for cost sharing.

The OAP appreciates that applicants may seek additional support (in-kind or cash) for projects. While a cost share of funding is not required, applicants are requested to provide a description of complementary funding and in-kind contributions from project partners if applicable.

C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility

The OAP Cruise lisaon and technical point of contact listed below will evaluate if a project is feasible given the limitations of the cruise vessel (ie: berthing space, water budget, vessel capacity etc.). Only projects deemed feasible will be eligible to be forwarded for review. Please reach out to the technical point of contact in advance of submission if you have questions about whether your project will be eligible.

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Address to Request Application Package

Application packages are available online and can be downloaded from www.grants.gov under opportunity NOAA-OAR-OAP-2024-2008006. If an eligible applicant does not have access to the internet, please contact the agency contacts listed in Section VII for submission instructions.

B. Content and Form of Application

This section provides an overview of the Required Proposal Elements (and where to locate them). Applications must adhere to the provisions under "Required Proposal Elements" below. Failure to adhere to these provisions may result in a delay in award

processing or rejection of the application, based on the extent of the noncompliance.

All required proposal elements should be single spaced in 12-point font with 1-inch margins.

The submitting applicant should redact all Personally Identifiable Information (PII) in the application materials prior to final submission to grants.gov. PII that should be redacted from the application includes but is not limited to social security number, date of birth, student identification number (from transcripts) or other information which if lost, compromised, or disclosed without authorization, could result in harm, embarrassment, inconvenience, or unfairness to an individual.

Required Proposal Elements: A full proposal application must include the following elements:

1. Project Narrative. The Project Narrative must include the following documents:
a. Project Description: Should include all elements below and the total number of pages should not exceed 7. Excess pages will not be included in the review.
- Cover page (1 page): Project title and names, titles, affiliations, and contact information (email and phone) of co-PIs. Budget overview - Total cost and annual breakdown of requested funding by partner. NOTE: All personal identifying information in the project description should be limited to the cover page only.
- Project abstract (½ page, approximately 250 words): Provide a concise summary of the proposed project. Include the name of the cruise (e.g. WCOA or GOMECC) the proposed project would supplement.
- Project background (suggested ½ page): Explain the specific problem(s) this project seeks to address and justify its importance as well as its relevance to the level 2 and level 3 activities listed in the OA Cruise Science Priority Guidance.
- Project objectives (suggested ½ page): Provide a list of clearly defined objectives. For each objective, provide a concise statement explaining how it is aligned with the goals and priorities of this funding opportunity. How will these objectives, in concert with the other cruise data, advance broader regional objectives as detailed in the NOAA Ocean, Coastal, and Great Lakes Acidification Research Plan and better inform our assessment of regional vulnerability to acidification?
- Project details (suggested 2 ½ pages): Provide an explanation of the methods you will use to address your project objectives. Provide details on what is required to complete the proposed project, including but not limited to: berth space, ship capabilities, laboratory bench space, dedicated ship maneuvers, small boat operations, freezer space, HAZMAT storage or disposal, A-frame or winch needs, equipment deployment, and/or the amount of

water needed from each CTD cast.

- Anticipated milestones and deliverables (suggested 1 page): What are the expected milestones and deliverables related to the creation of scientific knowledge? Please provide a timeline for accomplishing the proposed milestones and deliverables, which covers the entire duration of the project, including the release of deliverables.

- Outreach plan (suggested ½ page): Describe how you will be able to engage with or support any cruise outreach efforts spearheaded by NOAA OAP. OAP strives to have dedicated outreach personnel onboard for the duration of the cruise. Please note if you will be able to work with them to achieve cruise outreach goals, including photography, videography, interviews, and project summaries for a public audience. Also note if you have additional outreach opportunities which you would like to pursue as part of this project.

- Diversity statement (suggested ½ page): OAP recognizes that they have a particular and unique opportunity to support NOAA's commitment to diversity and inclusion by taking an intentional step that encourages applicants to consider diversity and inclusion as part of their scientific projects. In this section, describe how well the proposed activity broadens the participation of underrepresented groups (e.g., race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, geography, etc.) and how these groups are given a voice in the community of practice. Examples could include (but are not limited to) the full participation of women, persons with disabilities, and underrepresented minorities in conducting this work or benefitting from its outcomes. Applicants are encouraged to review the resources and best practices compiled by NSGO related to diversity, equity and inclusion: https://seagrant.noaa.gov/insideseagrant/Implementation/Network-Visioning/DiversityInclusion

b. Project supplemental materials (all components are required except the letters of support, please attach in the 'Other attachments' section in Grants.gov)

- Works cited (no page limit): All in-text citations should be listed here.

- Curriculum vitae (CV) for each co-PI: Each person's CV should not be longer than 2 pages. Excess pages will not be included in the review.

- Current and pending support: Describe any current or pending sources of support if applicable.

- Letters of support: Letters of support are optional and should be included here.

c. Required Environmental Compliance materials. This includes all of the information referenced in Section VI.B (NEPA) below as well as existing permits (actual copies of the permits) or a plan for securing permits for field work. If permits have not yet been secured, please provide a clear timeline for securing these permits. The timeline should clearly indicate: 1) relevant permitting authorities, 2) information required to secure a permit, 3) when permit applications will be submitted and 4) how long permitting generally takes (estimate only). Answers to the NOAA NEPA questionnaire are not required for this solicitation.

d. Data Management Plan (not to exceed 2 pages): All applications must include a Data Management Plan that is compliant with NOAA's Public Access to Research Results Plan (https://www.ngdc.noaa.gov/parr.html). The Data Management Plan should include descriptions of the types of metadata and data expected to be created during the course of the project, plans for disseminating the metadata and data to the broader community, and plans for long-term archiving of the metadata and data. The National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI) serves as the data management focal point for the NOAA Ocean Acidification Program (https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/products/ocean-carbon-acidification-data-system), and all data resulting from proposals selected for funding must be archived and accessible through NCEI. Post-cruise data reduction, quality control, and coordination/sharing with other cruise participants should be performed within 12 months of cruise execution, with submission to NCEI OCADS no later than 2 years from collection in accordance with NOAA data management standards.

2. Budget Narrative: In order to allow reviewers to fully evaluate the appropriateness of costs, all applications must include a detailed budget narrative to support all proposed budget categories for each fiscal year. An applicant requesting funds for indirect costs in its proposal budget that has a current Federally approved rate should submit documentation of the indirect cost rate agreement as an attachment to its application submission. An applicant without a Federally approved rate should refer to Section IV.B. of this Announcement regarding options.

3. Standard forms: In addition to the documents required above, standard Federal Forms and Assurances are required for the overall application and can be found with the application package on Grants.gov (links found below). These include:

a. SF-424 Form (Grants.gov, OMB Control No. 4040-0004) This form, titled "Application for Federal Assistance," must identify the entire funding period, as well as the federal funding amount being requested by the applicant and the non-federal matching fund amount. The form must be completed with the institution's accurate EIN and DUNS and Point of Contact, and signed by the institution's authorized representative or designee.

b. SF-424A Form (Grants.gov, OMB Control No. 4040-0006): This form, titled "Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs," should describe the entire funding period in federal and non-federal dollars, for the entire application. Fill out Section B of this SF-424A form to show the overall budget breakdown by object class by year. Each federal and match year should have its own column. If there is insufficient space, an additional SF-424A Form, Extra Section B should be used (see below).

c. SF-424B Assurances (Grants.gov, OMB Control No. 4040-0007): The form, titled "Assurances – Non-Construction Programs," should be completed and signed by the institution's authorized representative or designee.

d. CD-511 (Grants.gov, US Department of Commerce): The form, titled "Certification Regarding Lobbying," should be completed and signed by the institution's authorized

representative or designee. In some instances, the SF-LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities form may also be required. See the instructions on the CD-511 for further information.

e. SF-LLL (Grants.gov, OMB Control No. 0348-0046) if applicable: The form, titled "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," should be completed and signed by the institution's authorized representative or designee, if appropriate.

C. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)

Excerpt 2 CFR 200 Appendix I.D.3: 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 UEI 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.

In order to submit an application through Grants.gov, an applicant must register for a Grants.gov user ID and password. Note that this process can take between three to five business days or as long as four weeks if all steps are not completed correctly. To avoid delays, applicants are strongly encouraged to start early and not wait until the approaching application deadline before registering, logging in, reviewing the application instructions, and applying. Information about the Grants.gov registration process for organizations can be found at http://grants.gov/applicants/organization_registration.jsp.

Please note that organizations already registered with Grants.gov do not need to re-register; however, all registered organizations must keep their Grants.gov password and SAM database (which now incorporates CCR) registration up-to-date or their applications will not be accepted by Grants.gov. Note that your CCR username will not work in SAM. You must create a new SAM user account to renew or update your registration. Registration on SAM is a requirement. To obtain additional information and to verify that all required registrations are current, please visit www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM.

If you experience a Grants.gov systems issue (technical problems or glitches with the Grants.gov website) that you believe threatens your ability to complete a submission before the application deadline, please do all of the following:

*Print any error message received
*Call the Grants.gov Contact Center at 1-800-518-4726 for immediate assistance
*Contact NOAA using the contact information in section VIII. of this NOFO prior to the close of the competition
*Ensure that you obtain a case number regarding your communications with Grants.gov

In the event of a confirmed systems issue, NOAA reserves the right to accept an application in an alternate format prior to the application deadline. Problems with an applicant organization's computer system or equipment are not considered systems issues. Similarly, an applicant's failure to do the following are not considered systems issues:
*Complete the required registration
*Ensure that a registered Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) submits the application

D. Submission Dates and Times

Full proposal applications must be submitted to Grants.gov by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on September 18, 2023. Applicants should be aware that OAP staff will only be available to answer questions until 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time. Please note: validation or rejection of an application by Grants.gov may take up to two business days after submission.

An Informational webinar will be held on June 27th at 3pm ET. Please register for the webinar here:

https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/1340177561837681504

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar. If you are unable to attend the webinar it will be recorded and the video will be posted to the OAP website.

E. Intergovernmental Review

Applications under this program are not subject to Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs." It has been determined that this notice is not significant for purposes of Executive Order 12866. Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553(a) (2), an opportunity for public notice and comment is not required for this notice relating to grants, benefits and contracts. Because this notice is exempt from the notice and comment provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act, a Regulatory Flexibility Analysis is not required, and none has been prepared. It has been determined that this notice does not contain policies with Federalism implications as that term is defined in Executive Order 13132.

F. Funding Restrictions

See Section III. A. Eligible Applicants for restrictions on the use of funds related to federal agencies, labs, and personnel.

G. Other Submission Requirements

Proposals must be submitted through Grants.gov.
If an eligible applicant does not have access to the internet, please contact the Agency Contacts listed in Section VII for submission instructions.

V. Application Review Information

A. Evaluation Criteria

1. Importance/relevance and applicability of proposed projects to the program goals (35 percent). This criterion ascertains whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and/or relevance to NOAA, federal, regional, state, or local activities. This includes the appropriateness of the proposed effort for the associated regional cruise. This also includes how well the effort addresses elements listed in the OA Cruise Science Priority Guidance.

2. Technical/scientific merit (35 percent). This criterion assesses whether the approach is technically sound and/or innovative, if the methods are appropriate and will be piloted/demonstrated prior to the execution of the cruise, and whether there are clear project goals, objectives, and data management considerations.

3. Overall qualifications of applicants (10 percent). This criterion ascertains whether the applicant possesses the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project.

4. Project costs (15 percent). This criterion evaluates the budget to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time frame.

5. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (5 percent). This criterion assesses how well the proposed activity broadens the participation of underrepresented groups (e.g., gender, ethnicity, disability, geographic, etc) in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

B. Review and Selection Process

Once a full proposal application has been received by NOAA, an initial administrative review is conducted to determine compliance with requirements and completeness of the

application. Applications that are missing required elements listed in Section IV. B. 2. Full Proposal Application Requirements or applications coming from ineligible applicants may be rejected without further review at the discretion of the competition manager.

Applications that pass the administrative review will be reviewed by technical experts drawn from disciplines that are relevant to the applications. Each proposal will receive at least three written reviews assessing its merits with regard to the evaluation criteria. A rank order list will be created from the average scores from the written reviews.

The proposals will be reviewed by the program manager to assess the environmental compliance of the proposed actions. The program manager, NEPA staff lead, or grants specialist may contact the applicants to discuss questions about the environmental effects, merit, or administrative correctness of the application, and may delay approval of the application, or impose conditions on the award preventing funding or execution of certain activities, until all questions are satisfactorily answered.

A final feasibility review by OAP field operations manager in conjunction with the chief scientists of each cruise will occur to confirm that the proposed effort can be achieved on a given cruise within the context of all highly ranked proposals given berth space, water budget limitations and other vessel restrictions. The results of this review will be presented to the selecting official to inform their decision.

C. Selection Factors

The Selecting Official shall award in the rank order unless the proposal is justified to be selected out of rank order based on one or more of the following factors:

1. Availability of funding.
2. Feasibility of the project within cruise resource limitations (e.g. ship capabilities, berth space, and water budget).
3. Balance/distribution of funds:
    a. geographically
    b. by research priority
    c. by type of institution
    d. by type of partners
    e. by project types
4. Duplication of other projects funded or considered for funding by NOAA/federal agencies.
5. Program priorities and policy factors.
6. Applicant’s prior award performance.
7. Partnerships with/participation of targeted groups.

8. Adequacy of information necessary for NOAA staff to make a NEPA determination and draft necessary documentation before recommendations for funding are made to the Grants Officer

D. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

Proposals will be reviewed in the fall of 2023. Applicants will be notified no later than December 2023 for a start date of January 1, 2024.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

Successful applicants will receive notification when the application has been recommended for funding to the NOAA Grants Management Division. This notification is not an authorization to begin performance of the project. Official notification of funding, signed by the NOAA grants officer, is the authorizing document that allows the project to begin. Notification will be issued to the authorizing official and the PI of the project either electronically or in hard copy. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified that their proposal was not selected. Anonymous copies of reviews and summaries of review panel deliberations, if any, will be made available to all applicants, regardless of whether they were selected to be funded.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

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 https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2014-12-30/pdf/2014-30297.pdf.

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 apply to awards in this program. Refer to http://go.usa.gov/SBYh and http://go.usa.gov/SBg4.

Department of Commerce Terms and Conditions - Successful applicants who accept a NOAA award under this solicitation will be bound by Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions. This document will be provided in the award package in NOAA’s Grants Online system at

https://grantsonline.rdc.noaa.gov/flows/home/Login/LoginController.jpf and is also available at http://www.ago.noaa.gov/grants/external_links.html

Limitation of Liability - Funding for programs listed in this notice is contingent upon the availability of appropriations. Applicants are hereby given notice that funds may not have been appropriated yet for the programs listed in this notice. In no event will NOAA or the Department of Commerce be responsible for proposal preparation costs. Publication of this announcement does not oblige NOAA to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds.

Unpaid or Delinquent Tax Liability - In accordance with Section 523 of Division B and Sections 744 and 745 of Division E of the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015 (Pub. L. 113-235) or a future public law, an authorized representative of the selected applicant(s) will be required to provide certain pre-award representations regarding federal felony and federal criminal tax convictions, unpaid federal tax assessments, and delinquent federal tax returns. The form must be completed and submitted with grant applications for: (a) all for-profit and non-profit organization applicants (Part I, and if required, Part II); and (b) all non-federal entity applicants anticipating receipt of $5 million or more in the current federal fiscal year appropriated funding (Part II only). The form can be found at https://www.osec.doc.gov/oam/grants_management/policy/documents/FAM%202015-01.pdf.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) - NOAA must analyze the potential environmental impacts, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), for applicant projects or proposals which are seeking NOAA federal funding opportunities. Detailed information on NOAA compliance with NEPA can be found at the following NOAA NEPA website: http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/, including our NOAA Administrative Order 216-6A for NEPA, https://www.noaa.gov/sites/default/files/atoms/files/NAO_216-6A.pdf, and the Council on Environmental Quality implementation regulations, http://energy.gov/sites/prod/files/NEPA-40CFR1500_1508.pdf. Consequently, as part of an applicant's package, and under their description of their program activities, applicants are required to provide detailed information on the activities to be conducted, locations, sites, species and habitat to be affected, possible construction activities, and any environmental concerns that may exist (e.g., the use and disposal of hazardous or toxic chemicals, introduction of non- indigenous species, impacts to endangered and threatened species, aquaculture projects, and impacts to coral reef systems). In addition to providing specific information that will serve as the basis for any required impact analyses, applicants may also be requested to assist NOAA in drafting an environmental assessment, if NOAA determines

an assessment is required. Applicants will also be required to cooperate with NOAA in identifying feasible measures to reduce or avoid any identified adverse environmental impacts of their proposal. Failure to do so shall be grounds for not selecting an application. In some cases if additional information is required after an application is selected, funds can be withheld by the Grants Officer under a special award condition requiring the recipient to submit additional environmental compliance information sufficient to enable NOAA to make an assessment on any impacts that a project may have on the environment.

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. 200.205. 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 to the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS) about any information included in the system about their organization for consideration by the awarding agency.

Data Sharing Plan - 1. All data collected by projects funded through this call will be freely and openly available to any interested investigator on the corresponding cruise as soon as practical, but no later than 12 months following collection. Within 2 years, data should be available in at least one machine-readable format, preferably a widely-used or open-standard format, and should also be accompanied by machine- readable documentation (metadata), preferably based on widely used or international standards. 2. Proposals submitted in response to this Announcement must include a Data Management Plan of up to two pages describing how these requirements will be satisfied. The Data Management Plan should be aligned with the Data Management Guidance provided by NOAA in the Announcement. The contents of the Data Management Plan (or absence thereof), and past performance regarding such plans, will be considered as part of proposal review. A typical plan should include descriptions of the types of environmental data and information expected to be created during the course of the project; the tentative date by which data will be shared; the standards to be used for data/metadata format and content; methods for providing data access; approximate total volume of data to be collected; and prior experience in making such data accessible. The costs of data preparation, accessibility, or archiving may be included in the proposal budget unless otherwise stated in the Guidance. Accepted submission of data to the NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI) is one way to satisfy data sharing requirements; however, NCEI is not obligated to accept all submissions and may charge a fee, particularly for large or unusual datasets. 3. NOAA may, at its own discretion, make publicly visible the Data Management Plan from funded

proposals, or use information from the Data Management Plan to produce a formal metadata record and include that metadata in a Catalog to indicate the pending availability of new data. 4. Proposal submitters are hereby advised that the final pre-publication manuscripts of scholarly articles produced entirely or primarily with NOAA funding will be required to be submitted to NOAA Institutional Repository after acceptance, and no later than upon publication. Such manuscripts shall be made publicly available by NOAA one year after publication by the journal.

Indirect Cost Rate - If an applicant has not previously established an indirect cost rate with a federal agency they may choose to negotiate a rate with the Department of Commerce or use the de minimis indirect cost rate of 10% of Modified Total Direct Cost (MTDC) (as allowable under 2 C.F.R. §200.414). The negotiation and approval of a rate is subject to the procedures required by NOAA and the Department of Commerce Standard Terms and Conditions. Do not include participant support costs when determining the indirect cost base. Additionally, applicants should be aware that most indirect cost rate agreements require that participant support costs be excluded from the Modified Total Direct Cost base when calculating indirect costs. Applicants should reference their official agreements. The NOAA contact for indirect or facilities and administrative costs is: Raishan Adams, Grants Officer, NOAA Grants Management Division, 1325 East West Highway, 9th Floor, Silver Spring, MD 20910, or raishan.adams@noaa.gov.

Minority Serving Institutions - The Department of Commerce National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (DOC NOAA) is strongly committed to increasing the participation of Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs), i.e., Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-serving institutions, Tribal colleges and universities, Alaskan Native and Native Hawaiian institutions, and institutions that work in underserved communities.

Freedom Of Information Act (FOIA) - In the event that an application contains information or data that you do not want disclosed prior to award for purposes other than the evaluation of the application, mark each page containing such information or data with the words "Privileged, Confidential, Commercial, or Financial Information - Limited Use" at the top of the page to assist NOAA in making disclosure determinations. DOC regulations implementing the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C 552, are found at 15 C.F.R. Part 4, which sets forth rules for DOC to make requested materials, information, and records publicly available under FOIA. The contents of funded applications may be subject to requests for release under the FOIA. Based on the information provided by the applicant, the confidentiality of the content of funded applications will be maintained to the maximum extent permitted by law.

NOAA Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Prevention and Response Policy - If NOAA-operated, leased, or owned facilities are involved in any awards funded under this announcement, such awards are subject to the NOAA Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Prevention and Response Policy Applicable to Financial Assistance Awards Involving NOAA-Operated Facilities (May 2018) found at: https://www.noaa.gov/sites/default/files/legacy/document/2020/Mar/202-1106_SASH.pdf

C. Reporting

NOAA awardees will be required to submit financial and performance (technical) progress reports electronically through Grants Online. Instructions for submitting financial and progress reports will be provided by the NOAA Grants Management Division as part of the award terms and conditions.

Recipients are required to submit progress reports in Grants Online. Included in the report must be a table report out of milestones and deliverables outlined in the project proposal with associated status, anticipated timeline, and actual timeline/date of accomplishment. The tables columns should include:

- Column 1 “Milestone/Deliverable Name”- This column will list 1 key project milestone or deliverable per row.
- Column 2 “Status”- This column will provide the current status of the associated milestone or deliverable. Status options are Complete, In Progress/On Schedule, In Progress/Delayed, Not Started/On Schedule, Not Started/Delayed, Aborted.
- Column 3 “Original Proposed Target Date”- This column will provide the original planned date of completion for the milestone or deliverable. The date will remain unchanged throughout the course of the project.
- Column 4 “Current Target Date or Date of Completion”- This column will provide the anticipated date of completion if the milestone or deliverable is not yet complete. This may be the same as the date listed in Column 3. If the milestone or deliverable is complete, this column will indicate the date of completion.

An excel template can be found here: https://oceanacidification.noaa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/OAP_Milestones_Deliverables_Table_Template.xlsx

VII. Agency Contacts

The Ocean Acidification Program contact information is:
Erica Ombres, Federal Program Officer Erica.H.Ombres@noaa.gov

Technical Point of contact to learn more about what facilities and instrumentation will be

available on each cruise: Liza Wright Fairbanks, Field Operations Manager, Liza.Wright-Fairbanks@noaa.gov

VIII. Other Information

An Informational webinar will be held on July 11th at 3pm ET. Please register for the webinar here:

https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/1340177561837681504

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar. If you are unable to attend the webinar it will be recorded and the video will be posted to the OAP website. Potential applicants are encouraged to check OAP's website at https://oceanacidification.noaa.gov/WhatsNew/Funding.aspx for FAQs and access to the webinar video.

The grant application and final report of all funded grants are public documents, except for privileged information or material that is personal, proprietary or otherwise exempt from disclosure under law. Appropriate labeling in the application will aid identification of what may be specifically exempt. 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 Department of Commerce and external program evaluators. In accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 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.

In addition, 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.

There is no guarantee that funds will be available to make awards for this federal funding opportunity or that any proposal will be selected for funding. If an applicant incurs any costs prior to receiving an award agreement signed by an authorized NOAA official, they do so at their own risk of these costs not being included in a subsequent award. NOAA or the Department of Commerce are not responsible for any direct costs of proposal preparation. Recipients and subrecipients are subject to all federal laws and agency policies, regulations, and procedures applicable to federal financial assistance awards.