2019 NOAA California Bay Watershed Education and Training (B-WET) Program

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ANNOUNCEMENT OF FEDERAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Federal Agency Name(s): National Ocean Service (NOS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce

Funding Opportunity Title: 2019 NOAA California Bay Watershed Education and Training (B-WET) Program

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: NOAA-NOS-ONMS-2019-2005886

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 11.429, Marine Sanctuary Program

Dates: The deadline for applications is 11:59 PM Eastern Time on April 5 , 2019 when submitting through www.grants.gov (Grants.gov). PLEASE NOTE: For applicants that submit through Grants.gov, it may take Grants.gov up to two business days to validate or reject the application. Please keep this in mind in developing your submission timeline. If use of Grants.gov is impractical for technical or other reasons, paper copy applications will be accepted only as described in Section IV.D. Applications received after the deadline will be rejected without further consideration. No email and/or facsimile applications will be accepted.

An informational webinar about the FY 2019 California B-WET funding announcement will be held on February 19, 2019 from 3:00-4:30 PM Pacific Time. To register please email Seaberry.Nachbar@noaa.gov to be added to the email list for registration.

Funding Opportunity Description: California B-WET funds locally relevant, authentic experiential learning for K-12 audiences through Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs). MWEEs involve learning both outdoors and in the classroom as students engage in issue definition, outdoor field experiences, synthesis and conclusions, and action projects. The goal is to increase understanding and stewardship of the ocean, its local watersheds, and special areas like national marine sanctuaries. Projects advance the Next Generation Science Standards, the California Environmental Literacy Standards, and the Ocean and Climate Literacy Essential Principles.

The terms used throughout each Section are defined as follows: a. Monterey Bay watershed—the counties of San Mateo, Santa Cruz, Santa Clara, Monterey, San Benito, and San Luis Obispo; b. San Francisco Bay watershed—the counties of Marin, San Francisco, Alameda, Contra Costa, Sonoma, Mendocino, Humboldt, Del Norte, Trinity, Napa and Santa Rosa; c. Santa Barbara Channel watershed—the counties of Santa Barbara and Ventura; d. Teachers—formal (school-

based) and non-formal (not school-based) educators for kindergarten through high school; e. Students—kindergarten through high school.

FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Program Objective

The NOAA B-WET National Program is an environmental education program that promotes locally relevant, experiential learning in the K-12 environment. B-WET was established in 2002 in the Chesapeake Bay watershed and currently exists in seven regions: California, Chesapeake Bay, Hawai`i, Gulf of Mexico, New England, Pacific Northwest, and Great Lakes. For more information, visit our NOAA B-WET National Program website at: http://www.noaa.gov/office-education/bwet.

NOAA recognizes that knowledge and commitment built from firsthand experience, especially in the context of one's community and culture, is essential for achieving environmental stewardship. Carefully selected experiences driven by rigorous academic learning standards and nurturing a sense of community, will further connect students with their watershed, help reinforce an ethic of responsible citizenship, and promote academic achievement.

PROGRAM BACKGROUND
The Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience (MWEE) is the backbone of all B-WET funded projects. All projects, regardless of the priority, must incorporate all elements of the MWEE in order to be successful. The definition of the MWEE that follows was created by the NOAA B-WET National Program and is used by all seven B-WET regions throughout the country.

DEFINING THE MEANINGFUL WATERSHED EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE (MWEE)
MWEEs should be learner-centered and focused on questions, problems, and issues to be investigated through collecting, analyzing and sharing data; learning protocols; exploring models; and examining natural phenomena. These activities, grounded in best practices and the context of the local community and culture, help increase student interest, motivation, and attitudes toward learning, and achieve environmental stewardship. As a result of the MWEE activities students should have an understanding of basic watershed concepts, as well as the interaction between natural systems (e.g. wildlife, plants, and the watercycle) and social systems (e.g. communities, transportation systems, and schools), highlighting the connection between human activity and environmental conditions. MWEEs consist of multiple components as defined below. In order to completely understand the MWEE components so your application is successful, please refer to the following

document: www.noaa.gov/office-education/bwet-mwee.pdf

(1) MWEEs

1.1 Issue definition and background research
1.2 Outdoor field activities
1.3 Stewardship action projects
1.4 Synthesis and conclusions

When you are developing your MWEE, please consider utilizing the MWEEE Guide: http://baybackpack.com/mwee/what-is-a-mwee. Although this was created for the Chesapeake B-WET Program, it is relevant and useful for all B-WET Programs.

In addition to the components identified above, the CA B-WET program recommends that the following elements are in place to fully support successful MWEE implementation:

(2) MWEE - STUDENT COMPONENTS

2.1 Teacher participation for the duration of the MWEE—While external partners are entirely appropriate to support MWEEs, teachers should support the experience in the classroom and in the field. Teachers are in the best position to help students make connections and draw on past lessons, serve as environmental role models, and enhance students overall outdoor education experience and should be involved in all components of the experiences detailed above. To support them in this role, teachers should have appropriate knowledge of environmental issues and watershed concepts, skill in connecting these issues to their curriculum, and competency in environmental education pedagogy, including the ability and confidence to teach outdoor lessons and to lead students in critical thinking about environmental issues.

2.2 Integration with classroom curriculum—Experiences should be integrated into what is occurring in the classroom, and can provide authentic, age appropriate, engaging multi-disciplinary content to address academic standards. Specifically, elements of science and social studies standards related to questioning and investigation, evidence-based analysis and interpretation, model and theory building, knowledge of environmental processes and systems, skill for understanding and addressing environmental issues, and personal and civic responsibility align well with MWEE activities. Non-school activities may enrich traditional classroom curriculum when needed, though this need should be documented and supported by local education agencies. Integration into the classroom must include connections to the Next Generation Science Standards, the California Environmental Literacy Standards and

the Ocean and Climate Literacy Principles.

2.3 Use of the local context for learning—The local community and environment should be viewed as a primary resource for student MWEE activities. Place-based education promotes learning that is rooted in the unique history, environment, culture, economy, literature, and art of a students' schoolyard, neighborhood, town, or community, and thus offering students and teachers the opportunity to explore how individual and collective decisions impact their immediate surroundings. Once a firm connection to their local environment is made, students are better positioned to expand their thinking to recognize the far-reaching implications of the decisions they make to the larger national and global environment.

2.4 Experiences are a set of activities over time—The MWEE includes the full duration leading up to and following the outdoor field experiences. Each component should involve a significant investment of instructional time, incorporate time for reflection, and include all students. Experiences such as tours, simulations, demonstrations, or nature walks may be instructionally useful, but alone do not constitute an entire meaningful watershed educational experience as defined here.

(3) MWEE - TEACHER COMPONENTS
Teachers should be skilled in using environmental education and MWEEs to address multiple subjects' curriculum standards and local education agency initiatives. In order to gain and maintain environmental education competencies, teachers need access to sustained, high-quality professional development that includes ongoing support and feedback. Teachers should gain confidence in the value of implementing MWEEs and strategies for conducting them so that they will conduct MWEES after the B-WET supported program has ended.

Specifically, the following elements are recommended for professional development to support teachers implementing MWEEs:

3.1 Increases teachers' knowledge and awareness of environmental issues—Teachers must have an adequate level of content knowledge for their MWEE topic area specific to their grade level and discipline, including an understanding of basic watershed concepts and the human connection to the watershed. Recognizing that environmental issues often include different perspectives and opinions, teachers must also have a deep understanding of the facts related to environmental issues along with an understanding of the various stakeholder values. In addition, teachers who demonstrate environmentally responsible attitudes and behaviors may be role models for their students and increase their ability to guide students in actions to address complex environmental issues.

3.2 Models environmental education pedagogy—Facilitators/trainers should utilize the same techniques and experiences in trainings that teachers are expected to use with their students, such as hands-on, place-based, outdoor field experiences and environmental issue investigation and action.

3.3 Allows for adequate instructional time—Professional development trainings should be multi-day, occurring consecutively or over the course of several months. Trainings should include ample opportunity for teachers to reflect on their own teaching practices and planning for how to use knowledge and skills gained from professional development in the classroom. Based on educational research findings and preliminary evidence from the B-WET national evaluation system, the B-WET program recommends that professional development include more than 30 hours of professional development time, of which more than 10 hours should be spent outdoors. These targets are expected to support teacher change and increase the likelihood that teachers will implement MWEEs.

Where appropriate, professional development should include tools for teachers to implement MWEEs on their school grounds. Resources exist to support the effective hands-on implementation of MWEEs and the development and continued use of integrated, sustainable indoor and outdoor environmental learning projects that provide substantial benefit to both students and the school environment.

3.4 Provides ongoing teacher support and appropriate incentives—Even in cases where teachers participate in robust multi-day trainings, such as summer or weekend courses, it is still essential that professional development providers have a structure in place for on-going teacher support and enrichment. This can take the form of follow-up meetings, creating web-based forums for communication and feedback, establishing mentor teachers who can serve as points of contact, or including teams of teachers from one particular school. Continuing education credits and stipends can be used to encourage participation in on-going professional development opportunities. Outreach and training opportunities for school administrators may help increase high level support for both environmental education and continuing teacher professional development for teachers.

3.5 Meets jurisdictional guidelines for effective teacher professional development—Each jurisdiction has established guidance and recommendations germane to all forms of teacher professional development. When possible, professional development opportunities in environmental education should adhere to these general guidelines set forth by local education agencies.

4. ADDITIONAL REQUIRED COMPONENTS

4.1 Includes NOAA assets, including personnel and resources—NOAA has a wealth of applicable products and services, as well as a cadre of scientific and professional experts that can heighten the impact of environmental instruction both in the classroom and in the field. Additionally, environmental professionals can serve as important role models for career choices and stewardship. For more on NOAA assets for education please see:

- http://www.oesd.noaa.gov/grants/NOAA_assets.html
- http://www.noaa.gov/education
- http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/education
- https://coast.noaa.gov/nerrs/education/
- http://www.legislative.noaa.gov/NIYS/NIYSCA.pdf

4.2 Educating Every Student In, About, and For the Environment—Unfortunately, many K-12 students do not currently have consistent access to adequately funded high-quality environmental experiences. The California B-WET Program is strongly committed to expanding the participation of underrepresented youth. Underrepresented youth have traditionally not seen their identities reflected in outdoor spaces and the environment as a whole. In addition, a focus on cultural relevancy is expected both for the target audience and the organization structure. Cultural relevancy is defined as the ability to effectively reach and engage communities and their youth in a manner consistent with the cultural context and values of that community while effectively addressing disparities of diversity, equity, and inclusion within an organization’s entire structure. The California B-WET Program anticipates that a substantial portion of the target audience served by funded projects will represent diverse communities, especially those who have had historical and systemic barriers to accessing the outdoors. Please include information about the target audiences reached and the web page(s) that used to gather that information.

4.3 Projects make a connection to the sanctuary and the ocean environment—Projects must include information about the National Marine Sanctuary System and the ocean environment throughout the duration of the project—before, during and after the MWEE activities. Information provided may highlight one or more of the national marine sanctuaries located on the West Coast and must demonstrate a connection to the ocean environment through the watershed system. The idea is that students understand how their actions can affect the coastal/ocean environment through the watershed system. They also need to understand what a national marine sanctuary is, why it is important, the resources found within the sanctuary, and where it is located. Examples of curriculum and lesson plans that can be used to highlight this information can be found at: https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/education/teachers.

4.4 Climate change education—Earth's climate is changing. When humans burn fossil fuels

such as coal, oil and gas for energy, we put rampant amounts of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. This carbon dioxide acts like a heat trapping blanket and warms the planet. The carbon dioxide also enters the ocean, causing the pH to drop and leading to ocean acidification, which makes it difficult for animals to build and maintain their shells and skeletons and has enormous health implications for life in the ocean. The overwhelming majority of climate scientists agree that humans have had a profound influence on our changing climate. Climate change will bring economic and environmental challenges as well as opportunities, and citizens who have an understanding of climate science will be better prepared to respond to both. Our quality of life and, ultimately, our survival are dependent on our "climate literacy"—our ability to understand and predict a warming planet.

Projects should incorporate on one or more of the following areas of climate change as is relates to the watershed and MWEEs:

Ocean Acidification
Energy Reduction
Consumer Choices
Ecosystem Resiliency

And should integrate the following key themes and messages:

a. Changes in climate will impact national marine sanctuaries and the overall health of the ocean that is vital to our quality of life and, ultimately, our survival.

b. One or more of the following key messages:
1) Human activities are changing the Earth's climate.
2) Climate change affects national marine sanctuaries and the underwater treasures they protect.
3) The choices you make today do make a difference.
4) Collectively we need to adapt our carbon footprint and lower our carbon emissions.
5) Collective actions are needed to preserve as much biodiversity in the ocean as possible.

B. Program Priorities

B-WET projects under this funding announcement support the direct implementation of the MWEE. All proposals should follow the MWEE definition and all additional required components to be successful. In addition to the components listed below.

The following applies to one or more of the three priority areas:

Students should participate in all MWEE elements (issue definition, outdoor field experiences, synthesis and conclusions, and action projects). MWEEs should be organized around a driving question that has students focus on a locally relevant environmental issue, problem, or phenomenon. Students should engage in background research in order to understand the issue and develop supporting questions for further investigation, and have the opportunity to reflect on personal and stakeholder values and perspectives related to the issue. Applicants should consider the following characteristics of driving questions when developing projects: supports learning objectives; is relevant and related to everyday life, is thought-provoking and intellectually engaging; is open-ended (i.e. typically will not have a single, final, and correct answer); promotes further inquiry (i.e. raises additional questions); encompasses both natural and social systems and topics; requires students to revisit the problem frequently as knowledge and understanding evolves; calls for higher-order thinking, including analysis, inference, prediction, and evaluation; and includes concepts and practices from multiple disciplines.

Students should participate in multiple outdoor experiences that are directly related to the issue the students are studying. Students should experience at least three outdoor experiences. Whenever possible, students should be actively involved in planning the inquiry that occurs during the outdoor field experience. These outdoor experiences should be fully supported by their teachers to ensure that the concepts of watershed education are reinforced in the classroom throughout the school year. Outdoor experiences can support any element of the MWEE and can occur wherever appropriate to reinforce the unit of study, including at partner sites and/or on or near school grounds.

Throughout the process students need dedicated class time to make conclusions based on their research, outdoor field experiences, and related data analysis. Students should communicate these results and conclusions to an audience beyond their classroom.

Teacher professional development should be offered for all teachers whose students will be engaged in MWEEs so they can support classroom integration. It is recommended that professional development opportunities are at least 24 cumulative hours in duration, which can be accomplished in consecutive days or over the course of a school year. Trainings should deliver teaching on both content and instruction in the outdoors, include year-long support for teachers, and include a plan for how teachers will be involved in implementing watershed education with their students. This kind of in-depth professional development reinforces a teacher's ability to teach, inspire, and lead young people toward thoughtful stewardship of our natural resources. If the teacher professional development requirements are not feasible in the targeted school district, applicants should explain why it is not feasible, and how they will build towards these requirements over the course of the grant and

into the future. Letters of support from curriculum supervisors and science, socials studies, and other relevant subject coordinators at the district level can be effective in communicating such details.

Whenever possible, MWEEs should be embedded across an entire grade level or levels, or be part of a broader systemic program in a school district to reach every student. For example, projects may reach only half of a grade level's teachers and students if the application includes documentation from the school district and other partners that the proposed project is a component of a larger systemic effort that reaches the entire grade level. If this is not feasible, applicants should explain why it is not feasible and how they will build toward systemic implementation over the course of the grant and into the future. Applications for projects can come from any applicant type, however, substantial coordination and support from the school district is required. To document the appropriate level of support and engagement from school districts, official letters from superintendents, school boards, and/or school district curriculum supervisors are requested with the proposal.

PRIORITY 1: MWEE Implementation in School Districts (Professional development for teachers and student experiences)
CA B-WET is putting a priority on the development and implementation of systemic MWEEs in school districts. This year's funding announcement is focused on reaching school districts that will provide MWEEs, over a period of time, for whole school districts. These can be through grants directly to school districts or through grants awarded to non-profit organizations, state agencies, universities, or other partners to work with school districts on their systemic programs. Placed based MWEEs can provided excellent opportunities to teach the Next Generation Science Standards and California Environmental Literacy Standards (Senate Bill No. 720).

Systemic MWEE projects reach the entire student population in one or more grades with teacher-supported MWEEs. The systematic implementation should ensure that the teachers of these students receive high quality professional development to give them the content knowledge and pedagogical skills for outdoor learning to support all aspects of the MWEE. Projects that are systemic encourage ownership from a broad range of constituents and promote long-term sustainability of the MWEE project in a school district. These programs require leadership and support from the school district, however, because of the broad reach of systemic projects, partnerships with multiple partners are often needed to ensure all students receive all components of a MWEE and meaningful professional development for teachers is provided.
Applicants must demonstrate how trained teachers will implement student MWEEs, and what resources (funds, staff, facilities, partner organizations, etc.) exist to support student

components of the MWEE. Successful applicants under this priority will be asked to document the number of students receiving MWEEs as a direct result of the project. Proposals should include details about where the project fits in the scope and sequence of school district curriculum, and applicants should clearly understand and convey the primary learning objectives. Multi-disciplinary objectives are encouraged.

PRIORITY 2: Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs) for Students
MWEEs for students should be learner centered and focused on questions, problems, and issues to be investigated through collecting, analyzing and sharing data; learning protocols; exploring models; and examining natural phenomena. These activities, grounded in best practices and the context of the local community and culture, help increase student interest, motivation, and attitudes toward learning, and achieve environmental stewardship. As a result of the MWEE activities, students should have an understanding of basic watershed concepts, as well as the interaction between natural systems (e.g. wildlife, plants, and water cycle) and social systems (e.g. communities, transportation systems, and schools), highlighting the connection between human activity and environmental conditions.

PRIORITY 3: Teacher Professional Development for Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs)
Teachers should be skilled in using environmental education and MWEEs to address multiple subjects' curriculum standards and local education agency initiatives. In order to gain and maintain environmental education competencies, teachers need access to sustained, high-quality professional development that includes ongoing support and feedback. Teachers should gain confidence in the value of implementing MWEEs and strategies for conducting them so that they will conduct MWEES after the B-WET supported program has ended.

C. Program Authority

Under 33 USC 893 a(a), the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is authorized to conduct, develop, support, promote, and coordinate formal and informal educational activities at all levels to enhance public awareness and understanding of ocean, coastal, Great Lakes, and atmospheric science and stewardship by the general public and other coastal stakeholders, including underrepresented groups in ocean and atmospheric science and policy careers. In conducting those activities, the Administrator shall build upon the educational programs and activities of the agency.

II. Award Information

A. Funding Availability

This solicitation announces that approximately $950,000 may be available in FY 2019 in award amounts to be determined by the proposals and available funds. About $400,000 will be made available to the San Francisco Bay area, about $325,000 will be made available to the Monterey Bay area, and about $225,000 will be made available to the Santa Barbara and Ventura areas. The NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries anticipates that approximately 8-10 grants will be awarded with these funds.

If you are applying for Priority 1, you may apply up to $100,000.
If you are applying for Priorities 2 or 3, you may apply up to $60,000.

There is no guarantee that sufficient funds will be available to make awards for all qualified projects. The exact amount of funds that may be awarded will be determined in pre-award negotiations between the applicant and NOAA representatives. Publication of this notice does not oblige NOAA to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds. If applicants incur any costs prior to an award being made, they do so at their own risk of not being reimbursed by the government. Notwithstanding verbal or written assurance that may have been received, there is no obligation on the part of NOAA to cover pre-award costs unless approved by the Grants Officer as part of the terms when the award is made.

Applicants are hereby given notice that funds have not yet been appropriated for this program. Future opportunities for submitting proposals to the California B-WET competitive process are anticipated, but will depend on funding levels and resources available to support new projects.

B. Project/Award Period

The project start date should not begin before August 1, 2019.

If you are applying for Priority 1, you may apply up to three (3) years. These are called multi-year grants. Applications should cover a project period of between one and three years. Projects that request multi-year funding must include in their submission a full description of the activities and estimated budget by line item (e.g. personnel, equipment, supplies) for all proposed work for each year.

When a multi-year project is awarded, the scope of work and budget for all years is approved at the time of the award, but funding is usually provided only for the first year of the project with the remainder of the award subject to incremental funding, usually annually. NOAA anticipates continuing these multi-year awards for the entirety of their project periods; however, the agency has no obligation to provide any additional funding in connection with the award beyond the initial funding increment. Continuation of an award to increase

funding or extend the period of performance beyond the initial funding increment is at the sole discretion of NOAA and will be contingent upon satisfactory performance, continued relevance to the NOAA mission and priorities, and the availability of funds.

Recipients of incrementally-funded projects will not need to compete for funding in subsequent years, and current recipients seeking continued funding of these multi-year awards issued under the incremental funding policy do not need to apply to this funding announcement.

If you are applying for Priority 2 or 3, applicants may apply for funding in 12-month increments for a maximum of three consecutive years. Each funding request should not exceed more than 12 months and a new competitive application must be submitted each year in response to the program's annual funding announcement. Proposal projects do not need to change significantly in scope from year to year, but should demonstrate growth in subsequent project years (i.e. in Project Years 2 and 3). Projects should demonstrate they are being evaluated and changing as a result of the assessment. Renewal of an application will depend on submission of a successful proposal subject to panel reviews, adequate progress on previous award(s), and available funding to continue the award.

If a recipient would like to apply for additional years of funding, beyond the three (3) consecutive years (both for multi-year and renewal projects), they will be determined to be new awards. No assurance for a funding renewal proposals or funding for project beyond the initial three consecutive years exists; funding will be at the complete discretion of NOAA.

C. Type of Funding Instrument

Whether the funding instrument is a grant or a cooperative agreement will be determined by the amount of the NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries' involvement in the project. A cooperative agreement will be used if National Marine Sanctuary System staff share responsibility for management, control, direction, or performance of the project with the recipient. Specific terms regarding substantial involvement will be contained in special award conditions.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are K-12 public and independent schools and school systems, institutions of higher education, community-based and nonprofit organizations, state or local government agencies, interstate agencies, and Indian tribal governments. For profit

organizations, foreign organizations, and foreign public entities are not eligible to apply.

However, for-profit and foreign organizations and foreign public entities may participate with an eligible applicant as a project partner. Likewise, Federal agencies are not eligible to receive Federal assistance under this announcement, but may be project partners. Applicants must be located within the U.S. and can be physically located in any state, but must work within the geographic boundaries of the Monterey Bay, San Francisco Bay or Santa Barbara Channel watersheds. Projects whose sole audience is outside the watersheds outlined above are not eligible.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

Cost sharing is not required under this program. Any voluntary cost sharing or matching does not impact scoring and must be consistent with the requirements of 2 CFR §200.306.

C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility

None

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Address to Request Application Package

1. Electronic submission

Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit applications electronically through http://www.grants.gov. You may access the electronic grant application for the California Bay Watershed Education and Training Program at http://www.grants.gov.

Please note that applicants must locate the downloadable application package for this program by the FFO number (found on the first page of the FFO) or CFDA number (11.429). Users of Grants.gov are now required to use a new application process called Workspace. For more information regarding this platform, please visit: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/workspace-overview.html.

After electronic submission of the application, applicants will receive an automatic acknowledgment from Grants.gov that contains a Grants.gov tracking number. NOAA may request that you provide original signatures on forms at a later date.

Information on the CA B-WET program, including examples of currently supported projects, can be found at https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/news/bwet/welcome.html.

2. Hard copy submission
If an applicant does not have Internet access or if Grants.gov has technical issues that make submission impractical, hard copy applications will be accepted. A signed original may be submitted to Attn: Seaberry Nachbar, B-WET Coordinator, Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Office, 99 Pacific Street, Building 455A, Monterey, CA 93940. The closing deadline for applying through Grants.gov is the same as for the paper submission noted in this announcement.

B. Content and Form of Application

Proposals must adhere to the following provisions and requirements.

The required Federal forms are as follows:
Standard Form 424: Application for Federal Assistance
Standard Form 424A: Budget Information, Non-construction Programs Standard Form 424B: Assurances, Non-Construction Programs
Form CD-511: Certification Regarding Lobbying
Standard Form LLL: Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (if applicable)

1. Proposals
Applicants should not assume prior knowledge on the part of the NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries as to the relative merits of the project described in the application.

a. Proposal Requirements: Required elements for all submissions

(1) Components of the proposal outlined in Section IV. B. 2b. (1-9) should be submitted as a single PDF document and uploaded into the Grants.gov system as a single PDF document. The order of the documents should reflect the order outlined below (Project summary, Project description (items 2- 7), Budget narrative, Budget table, Letters of support, CVs, Logic model, and all other Supporting documents).

(2) Proposal format must be in a 12-point font and single-spaced. The entire project description should not exceed 15 pages. The budget narrative, budget table, Federal forms, indirect cost rate, and the project summary are not included in this 15-page limit.

(3) Appendices and supporting documentation may be included, but may not exceed a total of 10-pages. Appendices may include information such as curriculum, resumes, and/or letters of endorsement. Additional informational material will be disregarded.

(4) Brevity will assist reviewers and program staff in dealing effectively with proposals.

Therefore the entire application package (project narrative and appendices and supporting documentation) should not exceed 25 pages (this total does not include the budget narrative, budget table, Federal forms, indirect cost rate, and the project summary).

b. Proposal Format:
Proposals should include the following information and it is recommended that they follow the format outlined below:

(1) Project summary (1-page):
- Organization title
- Principal Investigator(s) (PI)
- Address, telephone number, and email address of applicant and PI
- Partner(s)
- Priority Area
- Project title
- Project duration
- Summary of work to be performed (include number of teachers and/or students that will be involved in your project and total project cost per student/teacher)
- Total Federal funds requested
- Cost-sharing to be provided from non-Federal sources, if any (specify whether contributions are project-related cash or in-kind)
- Total project cost

(2) Project description (15-pages):

- Accomplishments to date (this applies only to those applicants that have received a B-WET grant in prior years):
List your objectives from previous years and provide accomplishments to date for each of the objectives. Provide as much detail as possible to demonstrate to reviewers that the project goals and objectives of your grant have been/are being met. Please include your evaluation results from your evaluation report, including the tools and methods that you used. Specifically include your evaluation summary.

This is intended to provide to the reviewers a clear outline of the work you have accomplished in prior years and to outline what work is needed to be accomplished with additional funds. More importantly, this is your opportunity to describe to the reviewers your successes, lessons learned and any assessment/evaluation results you have completed. When the reviewers are reading this proposal they will want to know why funding should be continued, so use this section to demonstrate your growth.

- Need: Provide a statement that describes the need for this type of project. Why are you proposing this project? Cite studies or sources, where appropriate, that validate the need for your project. It should be made clear in this section that your organization's proposed project is not duplicating other efforts in your region.

- Target audience: Identify the target audience and demonstrate an understanding of the needs of that audience. Identify specifically how many students and/or teachers are involved in your project and their demographics.

- Participant recruitment: Provide a plan of action that outlines how you will recruit your target audience and identify incentives to be used such as teacher stipends or continuing education credits.

- Objectives: Explain your objectives and how you are going to accomplish these objectives. Objectives should be simple and understandable; as specific and quantitative as possible (please reference the CA B-WET website: https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/news/bwet/, when developing your objectives). Clearly explain how you will achieve your expected outputs and outcomes.

- What: Provide a statement of your project that includes a clear statement of the work to be undertaken. Demonstrate how your project meets the criteria defined in the Program Priorities. This section should include a document that illustrates how the proposed project will meet the full definition of the MWEE, including integration into the school curriculum (supporting NGSS and Environmental Literacy), using issue investigation, and conducting a stewardship action project. The document should include a brief (2-3 sentence) description about how the proposed project will address the following information. In addition to this document this section should also include a table that outlines how you are meeting NGSS. For an example of a table please reference the CA B-WET website: https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/news/bwet/welcome.html.

- Where: Give a precise location of the project and the area(s) that will be served.

(3) Who: Organization leads and partners.
- Organization leads: Explain who from your organization will conduct the project. Include key individuals who will work on the project and a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution. A CV for each individual that is participating significantly in the project is required. These can be embedded within the Project description or as a part of the Supporting documents. Please demonstrate to the reviewers that the staff employed is

representative of the target audience needs. For example if you are working with a Latino audience, you have/will be employing a bi-lingual staff member.

- Partners/collaborators: List each partner organization, cooperator, or other key individuals who will work on the project. A letter of support from each partner must be included in the Supporting documents.

(4) Project timeline: Provide a project timeline in a table format that outlines the project from beginning to end. Include a project schedule that indicates when each action, event, milestone, product development, and evaluation will occur. This should include exact activities of the field trips and the classroom instruction, with the total amount of contact time. Applicants should clearly show total anticipated contact time with project participants (teachers in professional development and students), and indicate how much of this time will be spent outdoors. This information will be evaluated as part of the review criteria, so it is necessary to include this information in your project narrative.

(5) Project evaluation: Evaluation here is defined as the systematic collection and documentation of information about your project's outcomes in order to improve the project's effectiveness, guide judgments about its impact, and/or inform decisions about future programming or funding. Up to 10% of the budget can be spent on the evaluation component of your proposal.

For this section, please include a logic model. An excellent example of a logic model can be found on the CA B-WET website: https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/news/bwet/welcome.html. In your evaluation plan, please describe how you will measure and document the outcomes and impacts of your project on your audience(s). How will your audience(s) be different after their involvement in your project and how will you measure those differences? The outcomes you measure should correlate to your goals and objectives and the CA B-WET Program's definition of MWEE’s. Indicators of outcomes may be audience satisfaction with the project experience and changes in their knowledge, skills, attitudes, and/or behaviors. Indicators of outcomes do not include the number of people served or the activities you and your audience(s) engage in.

Please include in your supporting documents any evaluation tools that you will be using as a part of your evaluation.

Also explain how you will document your evaluation results. For detailed information on how to create an evaluation plan or an evaluation report, please use the CA B-WET website at https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/education/evaluation/welcome.html.

Participation in B-WET National Evaluation:
In addition to project evaluation, grantees will be asked to participate in data collection for the national B-WET evaluation. The B-WET national evaluation consists of two parts; part 1 is for all recipients of B-WET grants while part 2 is only for programs that work with teachers. The B-WET national evaluation is intended to monitor program implementation and outcomes on an ongoing basis. Results of this evaluation will be used to improve the B-WET program, document its value, and better tailor it to program audiences. Grantees with teacher participants will be able to view a summary of responses from their participating teachers. Success of this effort depends on grantee participation, so applicants are strongly encouraged to review the information about the national evaluation system (available here: http://www.oesd.noaa.gov/grants/bwet_eval.php) and consider how they can support it as part of their projects.

Part 1 (for all B-WET grantees): As part of this evaluation system, one individual from each recipient organization will be asked to voluntarily complete an online questionnaire once per year of the award. The questionnaire should be able to be completed within 30-60 minutes (depending on the nature of the program) and may require some internal data compilation.
Part 2 (for programs with teacher professional development): For projects that work with teachers, the teacher-participants will be asked to complete one questionnaire at the close of their professional development and one after implementing Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences with their students (at the end of the following school year). Each teacher questionnaire should be able to be completed within 30 minutes. Along with completing the recipient questionnaire, grantees will be asked to provide the email addresses of participating teachers (after notifying teachers that their email will be shared) and to encourage teachers to participate in the national evaluation.

B-WET grantees and teachers who respond to the questionnaires will remain anonymous to B-WET and NOAA. NOAA will only view the resulting data in aggregate at the national or regional level, however grantees will receive a password-protected report link to allow them to view data from teacher participants of their project in aggregate.

All applicants should provide information about how they plan to support this national evaluation system, incorporate it into the project timeline, and ensure responses from participating teachers as part of their application. Applicants may incorporate staff time required to complete the B-WET national evaluation in their budget proposal. More information, including all of the survey instruments, is available on the NOAA B-WET national website here: http://www.oesd.noaa.gov/grants/bwet_eval.php. Grantees should review the information available and take this into consideration in the planning for their

project evaluations. For example:

- Grantees may not need to include questions that will be answered through the teacher instrument in their own evaluations.

- Wherever possible grantees should try to incorporate participation in the evaluation system into existing requirements for professional development program completion. For example, on completion of the teacher professional development survey, teachers will receive some program incentive.

Note that this evaluation system is not intended to replace project level evaluation. While grantees will have access to their teacher's results from the evaluation system, the national evaluation may not provide the level of detail needed to fully understand, describe, and improve specific grant projects. Grantees are therefore encouraged to balance these needs within the 10% of their budget that is recommended for evaluation.

Additional information about this project, including background, FAQs, survey instruments, and suggested text for communicating with your teacher participants about this project, is available here: http://www.oesd.noaa.gov/grants/bwet_eval.php

This data collection will be conducted in a manner consistent with Office of Management and Budget guidelines (OMB Control No 0648-0658).

- Benefits or results expected: Identify and document the results or benefits to be derived from the proposed activities. Include any evaluation data and results that your organization may have conducted. For an example of an outputs table, please reference the CA B-WET website: https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/news/bwet/welcome.html.

(6) Outreach and Education: Explain how your project will work with the target audience to educate and inform others of the results of your project, and any products, outcomes, or benefits of your project. As a part of the MWEE, applicants are required to share the project with the larger community. This section should outline mechanisms for significant external sharing and communication about the project by students, teachers, or project staff. Examples include community events (events that engage parents or other community members), peer to peer sharing for teacher and/or student (e.g., in-service days, school assemblies), conferences and to the media/social media. In addition, students may present to the Sanctuary Advisory Councils that are located in their region.

(7) Budget narrative: The budget narrative should be composed of two parts, a budget table

and a budget description. The budget narrative should include the total project costs that are required to accomplish what is proposed in the Project description and includes contributions and donations. The budget narrative should provide the information needed to determine how the numbers outlined in the budget table and budget information form (SF- 424A) were derived. The narrative should explain the specific budget categories that are outlined in the SF-424A form, such as personnel/salaries, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, contract costs, and indirect costs. The budget narrative submitted with the application should match the dollar amounts on all required Federal forms (SF-424, SF- 424A). Additional cost detail may be required prior to a final analysis of overall cost allowability, allocability, and reasonableness. See 2 CFR part 200, Subpart E “Cost Principles” for additional information. Please note the following:

- If applying for multiple years of funding, the budget should be broken down for each year requested. For multi-year projects: Ensure that there is a detailed budget narrative detailing the budget requested for each year matching each Form SF-424A.

- Need for government financial assistance: Demonstrate the need for assistance. Explain why other funding sources cannot fund all the proposed work.

- Sustainability: The CA B-WET Program should not be considered a long-term source of funding; therefore it is crucial that you explain how you will ensure that ongoing programs, once initiated, will be sustained. If you have received multiple years of funding you must include how your project will be sustainable beyond B-WET funding and how you plan to continue meeting your goals and objectives.

- Funds for salaries and fringe benefits may be requested only for those personnel who are directly involved in implementing the proposed project and whose salaries and fringe benefits are directly related to specific products or outcomes of the proposed project. NOAA strongly encourages applicants to request reasonable amounts of funding for salaries and fringe benefits to ensure that your proposal is competitive.

- For any equipment, defined in 2 CFR §200.33 as “tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost which equals or exceeds the lesser of the capitalization level established by the non-Federal entity for financial statement purposes, or $5,000,” a description of the item and associated costs is required, including a description of how it will be used in the project. For more information on equipment, see 2 CFR §200.313 and §§ 200.317-.326.

- Non-profit and university applicants should identify, if this information is known when

submitting the grant application, who they plan to request that NOAA transfer equipment or property ownership titles to after the project ends. The decision on grant ownership requests will be made by the Grants Officer during the grant closeout process. Property disposition must be consistent with the requirements under 2 CFR §200.313(e).

- Applicants must include the budgets and budget justifications of subawards and price or cost information supporting contracts. Information must include, to the extent known, the name of the entity receiving funds, the location of the entity receiving the funds (e.g., city, state, and Congressional district), the location of the entity receiving funds (city, state, and Congressional district), and the location of the primary place of performance under the contract/subaward. All subawards and contracts must be made consistent with the requirements of 2 CFR§§200.330-200.332 for subawards, and 200.317-200.326 for procurements.

- Grant recipients may be encouraged to attend a state or regional B-WET meeting once during the duration of their grant. This will be an opportunity for former and current B-WET grant recipients to present their B-WET projects and learn from each other. This meeting may be part of an existing state conference or environmental education conference to minimize travel expenses. Budgets should include, in the travel category, estimated funds for this meeting (such as meals, lodging, and transportation, including rental car, shuttle, or taxi). No more than $1,000 should be budgeted for this expense.

Please refer to the budget NOAA Budget Narrative Guidance found on NOAA’s Grants Office webpage http://www.ago.noaa.gov/grants/training.html for assistance.

- If indirect costs are requested, indirect-cost-rate agreements must be included for the applicant organization and the negotiated rate must be requested. If an applicant does not have an indirect cost rate and wants to include indirect costs, the applicant has up to 90 days after the award start date to submit an indirect cost proposal or cost allocation plan. Indirect-cost-rate-agreement documentation is not required for sub-awardees, however, indirect cost rates at the negotiated levels should be paid by the primary awardee. Under 2 C.F.R. §200.414 “Indirect (F&A) Costs,” any applicant that has never received a negotiated indirect cost rate may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs which may be used indefinitely. Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs, but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both pursuant to 2 C.F.R.§ 200.403 “Factors affecting allowability of costs.” If chosen, this methodology once elected must be used consistently for all Federal awards until such time as a cooperator chooses to negotiate for a rate, which the non-Federal entity may apply to do at any time. The negotiation and approval of a rate is subject to the procedures required by NOAA and the

Department of Commerce Standard Terms and Conditions Section B.06.

The NOAA contact for indirect or facilities and administrative costs is: Lamar Revis, Grants Officer, NOAA Grants Management Division 1325 East West Highway, 9th Floor Silver Spring, Maryland 20910, lamar.revis@noaa.gov

(8) Supporting documentation: Provide any required documents, which include:

- Letters of support: If the applicant organization has partners, such as schools, state agencies, or other organizations, letters of commitment should be included from partners explaining their role in and/or funding of the proposed project. If no letters are included, it will be assumed the applicant has no partners. Letters of recommendation may also be included to demonstrate previous work.

- Curriculum vitae;

- Evaluation tools;

The amount of information given in this section will depend on the type of project, but should be no more than 10 pages (this does not include the budget narrative, budget table, Federal forms, indirect cost rate, and the project summary).

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

To enable the use of a universal identifier and to enhance the quality of information available to the public as required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act, 31? U.S.C. 6101 note, to the extent applicable, any proposal awarded in response to this announcement will be required to use the System for Award Management (SAM), which may be accessed online at https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/. Applicants are also required to use the Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System, as identified in Office of Management and Budget guidance published at 2 CFR Parts 25, which may be accessed at http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=2dae4a7dcd5848a6364bb94d2d7786dd&mc=true&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2subtitleA.tpl.

D. Submission Dates and Times

Proposals must be received by 11:59 PM Eastern Time on April 5, 2019 when submitting through www.grants.gov (Grants.gov). Proposals being submitted in hard copy must be postmarked or provided to a delivery service on or before April 5, 2019. Electronic proposals received in Grants.gov after this due date and time, will not be considered for funding.

An informational webinar about the FY 2019 California B-WET funding announcement will be held on February 19, 2019 from 3:00-4:30 PM Pacific Time. To register please email Seaberry.Nachbar@noaa.gov to be added to the email list for registration.

E. Intergovernmental Review

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

F. Funding Restrictions

1. The CA B-WET Program should not be considered a long-term source of funds.

2. Funding may not be used to support endowments; individuals; building campaigns or capital construction; deficit financing; annual giving; or fund-raising.

G. Other Submission Requirements

Applicants are strongly encouraged not to wait until the application deadline date to begin the application process through http://www.grants.gov. In developing your submission timeline, note that validation or rejection of your application by Grants.gov may take up to two (2) business days after submission. In addition, potential funding applicants must register with Grants.gov before any application materials can be submitted, and first-time registration with Grants.gov can take up to three weeks or more. It is therefore strongly recommended that this registration process be completed as soon as possible to allow sufficient time to ensure applications are submitted before the closing date. Also, even if an applicant has registered with Grants.gov previously, the applicant's password may have expired or their registration may need to be renewed prior to submitting to Grants.gov. Grants.gov will not accept submissions if the applicant has not been authorized or if credentials are incorrect. Authorizations and credential corrections can take several days or longer to establish.

To use Grants.gov, an applicant must have a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Number 25 System (DUNS) number and be registered in the System for Award Management (SAM), https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/, and periodic renewals are required. Allow a minimum of five (5) days to complete the SAM registration. (Note: Your organization’s Employer Identification Number (EIN) will be needed on the application form.) Applicants can receive a DUNS number at no cost by calling the dedicated toll-free DUNS Number request line at 1-866-705-5711. See also https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-1-obtain-duns-

number.html.

The Grants.gov site contains directions for submitting an application, the application package (forms), and is also where the completed application is submitted. Applicants using Grants.gov must locate the downloadable application package for this solicitation by the Funding Opportunity Number or the CFDA number listed in the Executive Summary of this Announcement. Applicants will be able to download a copy of the application package, complete it offline, and then upload and submit the application via the Grants.gov site. After electronic submission of the application through Grants.gov, the person submitting the application will receive within the next 24 to 48 hours two email messages from Grants.gov updating them on the progress of their application. The first email will confirm receipt of the application by the Grants.gov system, and the second will indicate that the application has either been successfully validated by the system before transmission to the grantor agency or has been rejected because of errors. After the application has been validated, this same person will receive third email when the application has been downloaded by the Federal agency. Only validated applications are sent to NOAA for review, and the validation time is deemed the time NOAA received it.

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 an applicable funding cycle deadline, please (i) print any error message received; and (ii) call the Grants.gov Contact Center at 1-800-518-4726 for immediate assistance. Ensure that you obtain a case number regarding your communications with Grants.gov.
Please note: problems with an applicant organization’s computer system or equipment are not considered “systems issues.” Similarly, an applicant’s failure to: (i) complete the required registration, (ii) ensure that a registered Authorized Organizational Representative submits the application, or (iii) receive an email message from Grants.gov validating or rejecting its application are not considered systems issues. A Grants.gov “systems issue” is an issue occurring in connection with the operations of Grants.gov system, such as the temporary loss of service by Grants.gov due to unexpected volume of traffic or failure of information technology systems, both of which are highly unlikely. In the event of confirmed “systems issue,” or a significant natural disaster affecting submission, NOAA may allow more time for applicant submission due to system problems at Grants.gov at the time of application submission that are beyond the control of the applicant.

Please visit the National Marine Sanctuaries CA B-WET website at: http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/news/bwet/welcome.html or contact Seaberry Nachbar, Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary office; 99 Pacific Street, Bldg. 455A, Monterey, CA 93940, or by phone at 831-647-4204.

V. Application Review Information

A. Evaluation Criteria

A. Evaluation Criteria

1. Importance and/or relevance and applicability of proposal to the program goals (35 points)
This criterion ascertains whether the proposed work addresses B-WET program priorities and if the project is relevant to NOAA.

For all Priorities

- Issue definition and background research (3 points)- Will the students/teachers focus on an environmental question, problem, or issue requiring background research and investigation? Do they learn about the issue through classroom instruction, the collection of data, conducting experiments, talking to experts and reviewing credible publications? Is the issue age appropriate with practices growing in complexity and sophistication across the grades, starting with educator guided investigation and progressing to student-led inquiry?

- Outdoor field activities (3 points)- Do students/teachers participate in multiple (more than two) outdoor field activities sufficient to collect the data or make observations required for answering the research questions and informing student actions? Are the students/teachers actively involved?

- Stewardship action projects (3 points)- Do students/teachers participate in a grade level appropriate project during which they take action to address environmental issues at the personal or societal level. Does the stewardship action project result in a positive impact on the environment?

- Synthesis and conclusions (3 points)- Do students/teachers analyze and evaluate the results of projects and investigations. Do students/teachers synthesize and communicate results and conclusions to an external audience such as their peers, schools, parents, the community, or at conferences.?

- NOAA assets (3 points)- Does the applicant incorporate NOAA assets into the program that will heighten the impact of environmental instruction in both the classroom and field?

Priority 1 - MWEE Implementation in School Districts
Does the project have a plan to reach all students and relevant teachers at a school district (6

points)? Does the proposal ensure that the teachers of these students receive high quality professional development to give them the content knowledge and pedagogical skills for outdoor learning to support all aspects of the MWEE (6 points)? Do the applicants demonstrate how trained teachers will implement student MWEEs (3 points)? Does the applicant clearly document that the proposed project is a part of building or supporting a broader systemic program in a school district (5 points)?

Priority 2 - Student MWEE
Are the experiences for the students a set of activities over a period of time (8 points)? Does the project include adequate teacher involvement, meaning that the teacher is engaged along with the students from beginning to the end (5 points)? Is there a driving question that the students are focused on that is a locally relevant environmental issue, problem, or phenomenon (7 points)?

Priority 3 - Teacher MWEE
Does the proposal clearly document how it will ultimately result in student MWEEs (6 points)? Does the project increase teacher knowledge and awareness of environmental issues (5 points)? Does the project allow for adequate instructional time (2 points)? Does the project provide ongoing teacher support and appropriate incentives (3 points)? Does the project include more than 24 hours of professional development time (2 points)? Are more than 10 hours of professional development time spent outdoors (2 points)?

2. Technical merit (35 points)
This criterion assesses whether the approach is technically sound and/or innovative, if the methods are appropriate, and whether there are clear project goals and objectives.

For all Priority Areas:
- Does the applicant target the priority audience outlined in the funding announcement and provide specific demographics (6 points)?
- Does the applicant make a clear connection to the marine/estuarine environment and a national marine sanctuary or the National Marine Sanctuary System (3 points)?
- Does the applicant explain the concept of a watershed (3 points)?
- Does the project include the topic of climate change, specifically does it include one of the areas and one of the key messages outlined in outlined in Section I.A.3 (3 points)?
- Does the applicant follow the technical requirements (3 points)?
- Does the project include partners and include letters from each of the partners (5 points)?
- Does the applicant demonstrate that the objectives are realistic and can be reached within the proposed project period (3 points)

- Does the logic model show good understanding of desired outputs and outcomes for the project (3 points)?
- Does the applicant provide an effective evaluation strategy to determine if project objectives and outcomes are being met (6 points)?

3. Overall qualifications of applicants (10 points)

This criterion ascertains whether the applicant possesses the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project.

For all Priority Areas:

- Does the applicant demonstrate an understanding of the target community, including in-depth understanding of schools and school systems? (5 points)
- Does the applicant demonstrate the capability and experience to successfully complete similar projects? (5 points)

4. Project costs (10 points)

This criterion evaluates the budget to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time frame.

For all Priority Areas:

- Is there sufficient detail to verify that the budget request is reasonable for the number of participants and/or target audience to be reached? (5 points)
-- Are the requested funds for salaries and fringe benefits realistic and only for those personnel who are directly involved in the implementation of the proposed project? (5 points)

5. Outreach and education (10 points)

This criterion assesses whether the project involves mechanisms for significant external sharing and communication about the project by students, teachers, or project staff.

For all Priority Areas:

- Does the project involve mechanisms for significant external sharing and communication about the project by students, teachers, or project staff (4 points)?
- Does the project propose community events that engage parents, other community members, etc. (2 points)?
- Does the project propose peer to peer sharing for teacher and/or student (e.g., in-service days, school assemblies) (2 points)?
- Will the project be publicized at conferences and to the media/social media, etc. (2 points)?

B. Review and Selection Process

1. Initial Evaluation of the Application

Once a full application has been received by the NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, an initial administrative review is conducted to determine compliance with requirements and priorities of the application. If applications do not comply, they will be returned without further review. NOAA, in its sole discretion, may continue the review process for applications with non-substantive issues that may be easily rectified or cured.

2. Merit Review

Applications meeting the requirements of this solicitation will be evaluated and scored by independent reviewers in three review panels. Reviewers serving on these panels may be Federal or non-Federal experts in areas relevant to the priorities under consideration. Each proposal will be reviewed by a minimum of three reviewers. The CA B-WET Program Coordinator will neither vote nor score applications as part of the review panels. Before the panels convene, each reviewer will individually evaluate and score proposals using the evaluation criteria provided in Section V.A. above. Scores and comments will be submitted to the Federal Program Officer and the individual reviewers' ratings will be used to establish a preliminary rank order for each panel. New proposals and proposals considered for renewal will be scored using the same criteria as outlined above, but renewal proposals will not be ranked with the new proposals and given priority over new proposals.

The panel will convene to review the ranking and comments and discuss the proposals as a group. Continuation proposals will be considered for continuation based on the comments and feedback from the panel meeting and will be independently recommended with either a yes—continue/fund, or a no—do not continue/fund.

During the panel meeting, reviewers can revise their scores and comments. Reviewers must individually submit final ranking to the CA B-WET Program Coordinator by the end of the panel meeting. If more than one non-Federal reviewer is used, no consensus advice will be given by the review panel members. The reviewers' final ranking will be used to produce a rank order of the proposals for each of the panels.

The CA B-WET Program Coordinator will make the recommendations for funding to the Selecting Official based on rank order of each panel and the selection factors listed in Section V.C. below.

The Selecting Official will recommend selected applications to a NOAA Grants Management Division (GMD) Grants Officer, who is authorized to obligate Federal funding

and execute the award. The NOAA Grants Officer GMD will review financial and grants administration aspects of the proposed award, including conducting an assessment of the risk posed by the applicant in accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.205. Refer to Section VI.B. of this announcement regarding the agency's Review of Risk and the applicant's opportunity to provide information to the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS). In addition to reviewing repositories of government-wide eligibility, qualifications or financial integrity information, the risk assessment conducted by NOAA may consider items such as the financial stability of an applicant, quality of the applicant's management systems, an applicant's history of performance, previous audit reports and audit findings concerning the applicant and the applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on non-Federal entities. Applicants should be in compliance with the terms of any existing NOAA grants or cooperative agreements and other eligible to receive Federal awards, or make arrangements satisfactory to the Grants Officer, to be considered for funding under this competition. All reports due should be received and any concerns raised by the agency should be timely addressed in order to receive a new award. Upon review of these factors, if appropriate, specific award conditions that respond to the degree of risk may be applied by the NOAA Grants Officer pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 200.207. In addition, NOAA reserves the right to reject an application in its entirety where information is uncovered that raises a significant risk with respect to the responsibility or suitability of the applicant. The final approval of selected applications and issuance of awards will be by the NOAA Grants Officer. The award decisions of the Grants Officer are final.

C. Selection Factors

The B-WET Program Coordinator will review the ranking of the proposals and recommendations of the review panel. The numerical ranking from the review panel will be the primary consideration in deciding which of the proposals will be recommended for funding to the Selecting Official.

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

1. Availability of funding;

2. Balance/distribution of funds;
a. Geographically
b. By type of institutions
c. By type of partners
d. By research areas

e. By project types

3. Whether this project duplicates other projects funded or considered for funding by NOAA or other federal agencies;

4. Program priorities and policy factors as set out in Section I.B.1-5 and Section III.B. of the Full Funding Opportunity;

5. Applicant’s prior award performance;

6. Partnerships and/or participation of targeted groups;

7. Adequacy of information necessary for NOAA staff to make a National Environmental Policy Act determination and draft necessary documentation before recommendation for funding are made to the Grants Officer. See Section VI.B. of this announcement.

NOAA may select all, some, or none of the applications, or part of any application, or ask applicants to work together or combine projects, defer applications to the future, or reallocate funds to different funding categories to the extent authorized. Selected applicants may be asked to modify objectives, project 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.

D. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

Subject to the availability of funds, review of proposals will occur during the winter of 2019. Funding is expected to be awarded August 1, 2019. Projects should not be expected to begin prior to August 1, 2019.

Successful applicants will receive electronic notification that the application has been funded from the NOAA Grants Management Division. This notification will be sent by email from Grants Online to the institution's Authorizing Official. The official notification of funding, signed by a NOAA Grants Officer, is the authorizing document that allows the project to begin.

Successful applicants may be asked to modify objectives, work plans, or budgets prior to final approval of an award. The exact amount of funds to be awarded, the final scope of activities, the collaboration duration, and specific NOAA cooperative involvement in the activities of each partnership will be determined in pre-award negotiations among the

applicant, the NOAA Grants Office and the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries. Project activities should not be initiated in the expectation of Federal funding until a notice of award document is received from the NOAA Grants Office.

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified that their proposal was not recommended for funding (declined) or was not reviewed because it did not meet the minimum requirements prescribed in IV.B (Content and Form of Applications).

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

The official notice of award is the Standard Form CD-450, Financial Assistance Award, issued by the NOAA Grants Officer electronically through NOAA's online grants management system, Grants Online. The CD-450 award cover page is viewable at https://connection.commerce.gov/sites/connection.commerce.gov/files/media/files/2016/cd-450_april_2017.pdf. The Internet Explorer browser should be used with Grants Online. Also, each recipient will need to have a U.S. Treasury Automated Standard Application for Payment (ASAP) account in order to draw funds electronically.

The Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions will apply to awards in this program. A current version of this document is available at https://go.usa.gov/xRh9d. These terms will be provided in the award package in Grants Online at http://www.ago.noaa.gov. In addition, award documents provided by NOAA in the Grants Online award package may contain special award conditions unique to this program and the applicant's project, including conditions that may limit the use of funds for activities due to outstanding environmental compliance requirements and may lead to modification of the project's scope of work. These special award conditions may also include other compliance requirements for the award, such as due diligence documentation, and will be applied on a case-by-case basis. Applicants are strongly encouraged to review award documents carefully before accepting a Federal award to ensure they are fully aware of the relevant terms that have been placed on the award.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

1. Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements

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.

2. Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards
The Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance) at 2 C.F.R. Part 200, adopted by the Department of Commerce through 2 C.F.R. 1327.101, applies to awards in this program. Refer to http://go.usa.gov/SBYh and http://go.usa.gov/SBg4.

3. DOC 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 http://www.ago.noaa.gov and at http://www.osec.doc.gov/oam/grants_management/policy/documents/Department%20of%20Commerce%20Standard%20Terms%20&%20Conditions%2031%20March%202017.pdf.

4. 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. NOAA or the Department of Commerce are not responsible for proposal preparation costs. Publication of this announcement does not oblige NOAA to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds.

5. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
If recommended for funding, applicants whose proposed projects may have an environmental impact will be asked to furnish sufficient information to assist NOAA in assessing the potential environmental consequences of supporting the project. NOAA must analyze the potential environmental impacts, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), for each project, which seeks NOAA funding. Detailed information on NEPA can be found at the following NOAA NEPA web site: www.nepa.noaa.gov, including our NOAA Administrative order 216-6 for NEPA, www.nepa.noaa.gov/NAO216_6.pdf, and the Council on Environmental Quality implementation regulations, http://ceq.hhs.doe.gov/nepa/regs/ceq/toc_ceq.htm.

If needed by NOAA for NEPA assessment, applicants will be asked 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. The 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.

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

7. Unpaid or Delinquent Tax Liability
When applicable under Federal appropriations law, an authorized representative of the selected applicant(s) may be required to provide certain pre-award certifications regarding federal felony and federal criminal tax convictions, unpaid federal tax assessments, and delinquent federal tax returns.

8. 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.

9. 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.

10. 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.

C. Reporting

Grant recipients are required to provide semi-annual financial and performance reports consistent with 2 C.F.R. Part 200 and Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions. Grant recipients will be required to submit financial and performance (technical) reports and a comprehensive evaluation report.

1. Financial Reports
All financial reports shall be submitted through the NOAA Grants Online system, https://grantsonline.rdc.noaa.gov. Deadlines and financial forms can be found at: http://www.ago.noaa.gov/grants/finforms.html.

2. Performance Reports
Performance reports should be submitted to the NOAA Program Officer. Electronic submission of performance reports is required through the NOAA Grants Online system, https://grantsonline.rdc.noaa.gov. The semi-annual reports must be submitted no later than 30 days following the end of each 6-month period from the start date of the award. A final comprehensive report is due at the end of the award period. The final comprehensive report shall be submitted through the NOAA Grants Online. It is recommended that recipients follow the progress report format provided in the following link: http://www.oesd.noaa.gov/grants/bwet.html#page=resources.

In addition, 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 Federal Sub-award Reporting System (FSRS) available at https://www.fsrs.gov/ on all sub-

awards over $25,000. Refer to 2 CFR Part 170.

VII. Agency Contacts

Please visit the National Marine Sanctuaries CA B-WET website at: http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/news/bwet/welcome.html or contact Seaberry Nachbar, Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary office; 99 Pacific Street, Bldg. 455A, Monterey, CA 93940, or by phone at 831-647-4204.

VIII. Other Information

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 proposal preparation costs. Recipients and sub-recipients are subject to all federal laws and agency policies, regulations, and procedures applicable to federal financial assistance awards.

Applicants should be in compliance with requirements in any existing NOAA grants and/or cooperative funding agreements or make arrangements satisfactory to the Grants Officer in order to receive funds.