

NOAA Ocean Acidification Program Education Mini-Grant Program

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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: NOAA Ocean Acidification Program Education Mini-Grant Program

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: NOAA-OAR-OAP-2024-2008061

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

Dates: A webinar outlining required proposal elements and the review process will take place on Monday, July 10th, 2023 at 5 pm Eastern Standard Time (EST). This will be recorded and posted to OAP's website, for those who are unable to attend. Register here:
<https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/8280904086201675103>

Letters of Intent (LOIs) are strongly encouraged, and if submitted must be received by 11:59 pm EST on Friday, September 15th, 2023.

Full proposals must be received by 11:59 pm EST on Friday, February 23rd, 2024.

Funding Opportunity Description: NOAA's Ocean Acidification Program (OAP) Education Mini-Grant Program, is a competitively-based initiative that supports coastal and ocean acidification education programs that are responsive to the goals of the NOAA Ocean Acidification Education Implementation Plan and the 2021-2040 NOAA Education Strategic Plan. Priority goals include engaging diverse audiences in ocean acidification education and outreach, matching ocean acidification communication needs with existing research, education and outreach activities, while developing innovative approaches for community involvement. These goals are part of NOAA's efforts to increase Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) (<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/06/25/executive-order-on-diversity-equity-inclusion-and-accessibility-in-the-federal-workforce/>) in ocean literacy, stewardship, and workforce development, particularly in underserved and/or Indigenous communities or Tribes.

FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Program Objective

The principal objective of NOAA's Ocean Acidification Program (OAP) Education Mini-Grant Program is to provide federal financial assistance to develop ocean and coastal acidification education tools and programs in underserved and/or Indigenous communities or Tribes. Ocean and coastal acidification are emerging issues that will have far reaching impacts on ocean health and long-term sustainability of ecosystems that support human populations. It is critical that educators have access to the latest science information and communication tools on these topics and are able to effectively share the science of ocean and coastal acidification, potential impacts, and positive actions to diverse audiences in an accessible format.

The Education Mini-Grant Program provides funding opportunities that respond to the four goals laid out in the NOAA Ocean Acidification Education Implementation Plan. In response to Goal 1, a comprehensive needs assessment has been conducted to determine strengths, weaknesses and gaps within the landscape of ocean acidification education and outreach programs. Competitive proposals will respond to the gaps identified by this needs assessment and/or respond to the other goals laid out in the NOAA Ocean Acidification Education Implementation Plan. These goals include (Goal 2) prioritize and engage target audiences for ocean acidification education and outreach, (Goal 3) match ocean acidification communication needs with existing research, education and outreach activities, and (Goal 4) develop innovative approaches for community involvement. As outlined in the NOAA Education Strategic Plan, these activities will engage students, particularly from underserved and/or Indigenous communities or Tribes, to increase awareness and interest in education and career pathways in NOAA mission disciplines.

Useful Document Links:

(1) NOAA Ocean Acidification Education Implementation Plan: https://origin-east-wordpress-oceanacidification.woc.noaa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Final_OAEIP_9-14.pdf

(2) NOAA Ocean Acidification Education Needs Assessment Summary Report: https://oceanacidification.noaa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/NOAA_OA_Needs_Assessment_Report_-_Final_5_16.pdf

(3) 2021-2041 NOAA Education Strategic Plan: <https://www.noaa.gov/sites/default/files/2021-07/Report-EducationStrategicPlan2021-2040-07162021-OfficeOfEducation.pdf>

B. Program Priorities

Projects in one or more of the areas below will fill those needs that were identified as highest priority in the NOAA Ocean Acidification Education Needs Assessment: (1) Education and outreach products that incorporate data interpretation and/or visualization; (2) Multimedia educational tools (such as video, infographics and apps); (3) Discrete hands-on lab modules that incorporate inquiry-based learning and align with Next Generation Science and/or Common Core Standards to be used in a formal education setting; (4) Protocol or tools for ocean acidification community science programs.

All projects must promote stronger connections between DEIA and ocean and/or coastal acidification as it relates to ocean literacy, stewardship, or workforce development in the United States, particularly in underserved and/or Indigenous communities or Tribes.

Projects that incorporate NOAA or university-generated ocean acidification data, where applicable, are encouraged. Additionally, those that incorporate solutions that are locally and/or regionally relevant are also encouraged. It is recommended that the project proposed feature a collaboration between NOAA educators and/or scientists and educators/scientists from an entity external to NOAA, such as a minority serving institution. Preference will be given to proposals that include a partner from an underserved and/or Indigenous community or Tribal representative as a co-principal investigator.

NOAA supports cultural and gender diversity and encourages applications involving women and minority individuals and groups. In addition, NOAA is strongly committed to broadening the participation of historically black colleges and universities, minority-serving institutions, tribal colleges and universities, Title I schools, and institutions that work in underserved areas. NOAA encourages applications involving any of the above institutions to apply.

Other helpful links:

- (1) NOAA Ocean Acidification Program (<https://oceanacidification.noaa.gov/>)
- (2) NOAA National Marine Sanctuaries Education Project Evaluation (<https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/education/evaluation/>)
- (3) Next Generation Science Standards (<https://www.nextgenscience.org/>)
- (4) Common Core Standards (<http://www.corestandards.org/>)
- (5) Ocean Literacy Principles and Concepts (<http://oceanliteracy.wp2.coexploration.org/>)
- (6) Ocean Acidification Curriculum Collection (<http://oacurriculumcollection.org/>)
- (7) Pacific Marine Environmental Lab Ocean Acidification (<https://www.pmel.noaa.gov/co2/story/Ocean%2BAcidification>)

(8) IOOS Pacific Region Ocean Acidification Data Explorer (<http://www.ipacoa.org/>)

(9) NOAA Ocean Carbon and Acidification Data System

(<https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/products/ocean-carbon-acidification-data-system>)

(10) 2021-2040 NOAA Education Strategic Plan

(<https://www.noaa.gov/education/explainers/2021-2040-noaa-education-strategic-plan>)

C. Program Authority

Authority for the NOAA OAP Education Mini-Grant Program is provided by the Federal Ocean Acidification Research and Monitoring Act (FOARAM, 33 U.S.C. Chapter 50, Sec. 3701-3708).

II. Award Information

A. Funding Availability

This solicitation announces that up to \$400,000 may be available in FY 2024 in award amounts to be determined by the proposals and available funds.

Individual awards are limited to a maximum of \$50,000 for no more than a 24 month period. The amount of funding that OAP may recommend will be based on a merit review process and pre-award negotiations between the applicant(s) and OAP. The OAP selecting official may defer selected proposals for consideration for funding in the subsequent, or later, fiscal years.

B. Project/Award Period

Applicants may submit multi-year applications covering a 12 to 24-month period with an anticipated start date of September 1, 2024. FY 2024 funding is expected to cover 12 months of any multi-year grant. Subsequent funding is contingent on the availability of out year funding in FY 2024 and performance under the current award.

C. Type of Funding Instrument

The funding instrument is a grant or cooperative agreement if NOAA is substantially involved.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are United States institutions of higher education; other nonprofits;

commercial organizations; state, local and Indian tribal governments; and Federal agencies. 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 grant as described above in section II. C. of this notice. Proposals selected for funding from NOAA scientists shall be effected 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, with a statement from appropriate agency counsel, 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.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

No cost sharing is required under this program.

C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility

N/A.

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Address to Request Application Package

This solicitation, complete application packages (including required Federal forms) with instructions and the address for submission, and information on the NOAA OAP Education Mini-Grant Program competition can be found at www.Grants.gov, or by contacting OAP Program Specialist III Alexandra Puritz (Alexandra.Puritz@noaa.gov). Potential applicants are invited to contact Alexandra Puritz before submitting an application to discuss the applicability of project ideas to the program goals and objectives.

B. Content and Form of Application

Letter of Intent (LOI) Suggested Elements:

LOIs are intended to help OAP identify potential applicants and support them through the lengthy process of registering for multiple systems. While LOIs are not required, they are strongly recommended.

A webinar outlining required proposal elements and the review process will take place on Monday, July 10th, 2023 at 5 pm Eastern Standard Time (EST). This will be recorded and

posted to OAP's website, for those who are unable to attend. Register here:
<https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/8280904086201675103>

If submitting an LOI, it should be received by 11:59 pm EST on Friday, September 15th, 2023. Once LOIs are received, program staff will be available to work with applicants to ensure submission of applications on time.

Recommended LOI content: A paragraph sent via email to Alexandra Puritz (Alexandra.Puritz@noaa.gov) including:

- Name(s) of Principal Investigator
- Contact Information
- Institution(s)
- If a partner has already been identified (Yes or No)
- Summary of the project and community need(s) that it will be addressing

Full Proposal

Full proposals must be submitted in Grants.gov and received by 11:59 pm EST on Friday, February 23rd, 2024.

Required Elements

- 1) Standard Form 424 - Application for Federal Assistance (https://apply07.grants.gov/apply/forms/sample/SF424_4_0-V4.0.pdf). The applicant must submit the Standard Form, SF-424, "Application for Federal Assistance", to indicate the total amount of funding proposed for the whole project period. This form is to be the cover page for the original application and is the first required form in the grants.gov application package.
- 2) Cover Page (should not exceed 1 page): including a) project title, b) list of lead investigators/CO-Is, contact details and affiliations, c) total federal funds requested and cost-sharing to be provided from Federal and non-Federal sources, if any.
- 3) Proposal Summary (should not exceed 300 words): should provide an overview of the proposed project including partners, target audience and number of people reached. The summary should be concise and should not exceed 300 words in length.
- 4) Project Description (should not exceed 6 pages): the main body of the proposal must include the following topics in the given order: need, target audience, objectives, how and where (in a classroom, field site, etc.) objectives will be met, and data sharing plans.

Describe expected significance and/or outcomes, especially in terms of connecting DEIA and ocean and/or coastal acidification and ocean literacy, stewardship, workforce development, or needs identified in the NOAA Ocean Acidification Education Needs Assessment towards which the project contributes, and goals laid out in the NOAA Ocean Acidification Education Implementation Plan.

5) Evaluation (should not exceed 1 page): clearly convey a well-defined set of goals for the project and a plan to collect and report basic evaluation outputs such as number of people reached, number of staff involved, contact hours, documented change in attitudes and/or awareness of ocean acidification, etc. Evaluation here is defined as the systematic collection and documentation of information about the 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. In this section plans for meeting the goals and objectives of your project and for tracking and measuring progress on your outputs and your short-term outcomes should be explained. If medium- and long-term outcomes can also be measured within the project period, explain plans for that evaluation as well. Evaluation plans may be quantitative and/or qualitative and may include, for example, evaluation tools, observation, or outside consultation. No more than 10% of the budget can be spent on the evaluation component of your proposal. If applicable, describe the relevance of the proposed work to past related efforts, particularly those previously supported through NOAA.

6) Project Timeline (should not exceed 1 page): a timeline in table format including contributions from each partner.

7) Budget Justification and Narrative: include justifications of personnel costs, supplies and equipment, travel costs, and cost sharing or in-kind contributions. Please refer to NOAA's budget narrative guidance for additional information (https://coast.noaa.gov/data/coasthome/funding/_pdf/forms/budget-narrative-guidance-for-NOAA-grants.pdf)

8) Technical Experience and Qualifications: Attach a 1-page maximum description of programmatic capabilities and ability to successfully implement and manage the proposed project for each lead investigator and co-investigator (if applicable). Include expertise/qualifications, knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them to successfully achieve the goals of the project. Organizational experience and past history in performing tasks similar to the proposed project would also be relevant information to include in this description.

9) Applicants are expected to design their proposals so that they minimize the potential

adverse impact on the environment. If applicable, documentation of requests or approvals of environmental permits must be received by the Program Manager prior to funding. It is the applicant's responsibility to obtain all necessary Federal, state and local government permits and approvals where necessary for the proposed work to be conducted. For projects that anticipate collecting new environmental data (i.e., as a part of a community science project), please respond to questions 2, 5, 7, 43 and 50 of the OMB approved NOAA NEPA questionnaire that can be found here: <https://www.nepa.noaa.gov/docs/NOAA-Grants-Questionnaire-final.pdf>. For projects that do not anticipate collecting new environmental data, please respond "not applicable".

10) Proposals submitted in response to this Announcement that anticipate collecting new environmental data (i.e., as part of a community science project), must include a Data Management Plan (up to 2 pages). See Section VI.B., Administrative and National Policy Requirements, below for additional information on what the plan should contain. If a proposal is not generating environmental data, a Data Management Plan is not required as part of the proposal, please respond "not applicable".

11) SF-424A - Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (<https://apply07.grants.gov/apply/forms/sample/SF424A-V1.0.pdf>). All applicants are required to provide a SF-424A Budget Form that identifies the budget for each fiscal year of the proposal. Place each fiscal year in separate columns in Section B of page one on the SF424A by filling in the fiscal years 1-2 in Section A Budget Summary - Grant Program Function or Activity column (Note that this revised SF-424A Section B format is a NOAA requirement that is not reflected in the instructions for the SF0424A). The budget figures must correspond with the descriptions contained in the Budget Narrative. Each subaward (if applicable) should provide a SF-424A listing each year of funding being requested. List total subaward costs under line item 6.h. Other category and contractor costs under line item 6.f. Contractual category on the SF-424A. Signed approval from the institution of each identified subaward and contractor should be provided. All ship costs belong in the "other" category and are not subject to indirect costs.

12) SF-424B - Assurances - Non-Construction Programs (https://apply07.grants.gov/apply/forms/sample/Individual_SF424B-V1.1.pdf). Lead institutions can submit these forms through the grants.gov SF-424B document placeholder without a hard signature because electronic signatures are allowed on documents from the submitting institutions.

13) CD-511- Certifications Regarding Lobbying (<https://apply07.grants.gov/apply/forms/sample/CD511-V1.1.pdf>). Lead institutions can

submit these forms through the grants.gov CD-511 document placeholder without a hard signature because electronic signatures are allowed on documents from the submitting institution.

14) SF-LLL - Disclosure of Lobbying Activity (submit with your proposal ONLY IF your organization is engaged in lobbying activities)
(https://apply07.grants.gov/apply/forms/sample/SFLLL_1_2_P-V1.2.pdf)

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 of 2006, to the extent applicable, any proposal awarded in response to this announcement will be required to use SAM, which may be accessed online at <https://www.sam.gov/SAM/>. Applicants are also required to use the Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Universal Numbering System and will be subject to reporting requirements, as identified in OMB guidance published at 2 CFR Parts 25, 170 (2013; <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/01/22/2019-28524/guidance-for-grants-and-agreements>), which can be requested here: <https://fedgov.dnb.com/webform/>.

D. Submission Dates and Times

A webinar outlining required proposal elements and the review process will take place on Monday, July 10th, 2023 at 5 pm Eastern Standard Time (EST). This will be recorded and posted to OAP's website, for those who are unable to attend. Register here: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/8280904086201675103>

LOIs are strongly encouraged, and if submitted must be received by 11:59 pm EST on Friday, September 15th, 2023.

Full proposals must be received by 11:59 pm EST on Friday, February 23rd, 2024. Applications submitted through Grants.gov will be accompanied by a date and time receipt indication on them. Applications received after the deadline will not be reviewed.

E. Intergovernmental Review

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

F. Funding Restrictions

Funding beyond the first year will be dependent upon satisfactory performance and the

continued availability of funds.

G. Other Submission Requirements

Workspace is the standard way for organizations or individuals to apply for Federal grants in Grants.gov. Workspace allows a grant team to simultaneously access and edit different forms within an application. Plus, the forms can be filled out online or offline—your choice.

The Grants.gov Workspace also allows applicants and organizations to tailor their application workflow. Please refer to <https://www.Grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/workspace-overview.html> to determine which of the three approaches your institution should take when completing a Workspace application. This page also contains resources to aid in setting up the Workspace and the application submission process.

If you experience submission problems that may result in your application being late, send an e-mail to Support@grants.gov and call the Grants.gov help desk (800-518-4726). The OAP Program Manager will use programmatic discretion in accepting applications due to documented electronic submission problems. NOTE: If more than one submission of an application is performed, the last application submitted before the due date and time will be the official version. If an applicant does not have internet access or cannot submit through www.Grants.gov, applicants may contact OAP Program Specialist III, Alexandra Puritz (Alexandra.Puritz@noaa.gov), to discuss alternatives.

All applications must be submitted via Grants.gov.

V. Application Review Information

A. Evaluation Criteria

All submissions will be evaluated according to the following criteria using the corresponding weight value:

(1) Importance/Relevance and Applicability of Proposal to contributing to DEIA and priority needs identified in the NOAA Ocean Acidification Education Needs Assessment (35%): This criterion ascertains whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and relevance to NOAA DEIA efforts. Specifically this includes the degree to which the proposal addresses and supports ocean literacy, stewardship, and/or workforce development in underserved and/or Indigenous communities or Tribes; the goals of the NOAA OA Education

Implementation Plan; the needs identified in the NOAA OA Education Needs Assessment such as incorporating NOAA or university generated data, where applicable; and solutions that are locally and/or regionally relevant.

(2) Technical Merit (40%): This criterion ascertains whether the approach is technically sound and/or innovative, if the methods and partnerships are appropriate, and if there are clear project goals, objectives, outcomes, and evaluation plans. 25% of this criterion will be scored on how the project will be executed logistically and include details sufficient to determine how stated goals and outcomes will be achieved. This can incorporate how well research, data, and education components of the project are integrated. 10% of this criterion will be scored on proposed partnerships and specifically if the project includes a partnership between federal and non-federal scientists and educators/communicators or Tribal or Indigenous communities or organizations. 10% of this criterion will be scored on the proposal evaluation plan, specifically the techniques for evaluating success and impact. Evaluation is defined as the systematic collection and documentation of information about the 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. Specifically this includes a discussion of how to determine if project objectives and outcomes are being met.

(3) Overall Qualifications of Applicants (10%): This ascertains whether the applicant(s) possesses the necessary education, experience, training, facilities and administrative resources to accomplish the project.

(4) Project Costs (10%): This criterion evaluates the budget to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time-frame.

(5) Data Management Plan Technical Soundness (5%): This criterion assesses whether the Data Management Plan, if required, ensures that the data collected and/or created will be made available to general users in a timely manner free of charge, or at minimal cost.

B. Review and Selection Process

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

All applications will be evaluated and scored individually in accordance with the assigned weights of the above evaluation criteria by independent peer mail review and/or by independent peer panel review. Both Federal and non-Federal experts may be used in this process. The peer mail reviewers will be several individuals with expertise in the subjects addressed by particular applications. Each mail reviewer will see only certain individual

applications within his or her area of expertise, and score them individually on a scale of one to five, where scores represent respectively: Excellent (5), Very Good (4), Good (3), Fair (2), Poor (1).

The peer panel will comprise 3 to 5 individuals, with each individual having expertise in a separate area, so that the panel, as a whole, covers a range of DEIA, education, and scientific expertise. The panel will have access to all mail reviews of proposals and will use the mail review in discussion and evaluation of the entire slate of proposals. All proposals will be evaluated and scored individually. The peer panel shall rate the proposals using the evaluation criteria and scores provided above and used by the mail reviewers. The individual peer panelists' scores shall be averaged for each application and presented to the Program Manager. No consensus advice will be given by the independent peer mail review or the review panel.

The Program Manager will neither vote or score applications as part of the independent peer panel nor participate in discussion of the merits of the applications. Those applications receiving an average panel score of Fair or Poor will not be given further consideration, and applicants will be notified of non-selection. For the applications scored by the reviewers as either Excellent, Very Good, or Good, the Program Manager will (a) create a ranking of the applications to be recommended for funding using the average panel scores (b) determine the total duration of funding for each application; and (c) determine the amount of funds available for each application subject to the availability of fiscal year funds. Awards may not necessarily be made in rank order. In addition, applications rated by the panel as either Excellent, Very Good, or Good that are not funded in the current fiscal period, may be considered for funding in another fiscal period without having to repeat the competitive review process.

Recommendations for funding are forwarded from the OAP Program Manager to the Selecting Official, the Director of OAP, for the final funding decision. In making the recommendations, the Program Manager will propose awarding in rank order from the peer review process unless the proposal is justified to be selected out of rank order based on the selection factors listed below.

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. Balance/distribution of funds: a. geographically b. by type of institution c. by type of partners d. by research priority e. by project types 3. Duplication of other projects funded or considered for funding by NOAA/Federal agencies. 4. Program priorities and

policy factors. 5. Applicant's prior award performance. 6. Partnerships with/Participation of targeted groups. 7. Adequacy of information necessary for NOAA staff to make a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) determination and draft necessary documentation before recommendations for funding are made to the Grants Officer.

D. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

Subject to the availability of funds, review of proposals will occur during the spring of 2024, and funding is expected to begin September 1st, 2024 for approved projects. Funds are expected to be awarded by approximately September 1st, 2024, the start date that should be used on the Application for Federal Assistance (Form 424) for successful applications.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

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 project duration, and specific NOAA cooperative involvement with the activities of each project will be determined in pre-award negotiations among the applicant, the NOAA Grants Office, and NOAA program staff. 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.

Successful applicants will receive notification that 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 Principal Investigator (PI) of the project either electronically or in hard copy. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified that their proposals were not selected for recommendation.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

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 the Modified Total Direct Costs (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. 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.

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 216-6 for NEPA, <http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/NAO216--6--TOC.pdf>, and the Council on Environmental Quality implementation regulations, http://ceq.eh.doe.gov/nepa/regs/ceq/toc_ceq.htm. 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 of 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.

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

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.

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>.

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://go.usa.gov/hKbj>.

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.

[Only if data sharing is expected] DATA SHARING PLAN 1. Environmental data and information collected or created under NOAA grants or cooperative agreements must be made discoverable by and accessible to the general public, in a timely fashion (typically within two years), free of charge or at no more than the cost of reproduction, unless an exemption is granted by the NOAA Program. 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.

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.

EXECUTIVE ORDER 12866 It has been determined that this notice is not significant for purposes of Executive Order 12866.

EXECUTIVE ORDER 13132 (FEDERALISM) It has been determined that this notice does not contain policies with Federalism implications as that term is defined in Executive Order 13132.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE ACT/REGULATORY FLEXIBILITY ACT Prior notice and an opportunity for public comment are not required by the Administrative procedure Act or any other law for rules concerning public property, loans, grants, benefits, and contracts (5 U.S.C. 553(a)(2)). Because notice and opportunity for comments are not required pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553 or any other law, the analytical requirements of the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) are inapplicable. Therefore, a regulatory flexibility analysis has not been prepared, 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.

C. Reporting

Selected projects will be required to submit and update a Milestones and Deliverables sheet and progress report every six months. Templates will be shared upon award selection.

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 Parts 170.

VII. Agency Contacts

For more information regarding the content of your submission contact Alexandra Puritz, Ocean Acidification Program; email: alexandra.puritz@noaa.gov.

VIII. Other Information

None.