

Fiscal Year 2023 Chesapeake Bay Fisheries Research Program

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NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Federal Agency Name(s): National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce

Funding Opportunity Title: Fiscal Year 2023 Chesapeake Bay Fisheries Research Program

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: NOAA-NMFS-HCPO-2023-2007764

Federal Assistance Listings Number: 11.457, Chesapeake Bay Studies

Dates: The deadline for applications is 11:59 PM Eastern Time on April 17, 2023 and applications must be submitted using www.grants.gov (Grants.gov). PLEASE NOTE: 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. Due to limited staffing of federal offices, hardcopy applications will not be accepted.

An informational webinar about the FY 2023 Chesapeake Bay Fisheries Research Program funding announcement will be held on January 20, 2023 at 10 AM Eastern Time. To register for these webinars, please visit: meet.google.com/gpo-fivy-ywg

Funding Opportunity Description: The NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office (NCBO) is directed by law to provide technical assistance in: (1) identifying science-based management options for restoration and protection of living resources and their habitats; (2) monitoring and assessing the status of living resources and their habitats; and, (3) evaluating the effectiveness of management plan implementation.

This Fiscal Year 2023 Notice of Funding Opportunity is seeking projects with clear near term management application and projects that either 1) investigate the impacts of climate change, habitat quality, and/or changing environmental variables on fish and shellfish resources to inform sustainable and ecosystem based fisheries management or 2) use innovative methods to assess the effectiveness of nearshore habitat restoration in enhancing fish communities and ecosystem resilience in response to climate change. Projects should seek to employ and educate undergraduate or graduate students from groups underrepresented in marine science careers, including minorities,

NCBO also encourages projects from principal investigators that have not been funded through the Chesapeake Bay Fisheries Research Program before.

For FY 2023, it is anticipated that up to approximately \$1,500,000 could be made available for projects that address funding priorities and the special interest area identified in the Program Priorities Section (I.B.1 - I.B.2).

FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Program Objective

NCBO's Fisheries Research Program targets better understanding of fisheries status, trends, and ecosystem value to inform ecosystem based management of Chesapeake Bay estuarine species and habitats. The program seeks to establish a strong understanding of the Chesapeake Bay system, the complex connections among organisms and their habitats, multispecies interactions, and the wide range of processes that affect their dynamics. Research conducted under this program should help to inform fisheries management and natural resource decisions through:

- Integration of species, habitat and ecosystem information
- Increased understanding of climate change and related ecological shifts,
- Improved habitat restoration assessment techniques, and
- Quantification and valuation of habitat ecosystem services.

Data, findings and products resulting from projects supported through this research program should lead to tools and applications that guide management decisions for commercial, recreational, and non-consumptive uses of Chesapeake Bay living resources to support ecosystem based management, sustainable fisheries and vibrant coastal communities and economies.

This research program aims to support NOAA Fisheries Ecosystem Based Fisheries Policy and Road Map and the Chesapeake Bay Program's 2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement.

The NOAA Fisheries Ecosystem Based Fisheries Policy outlines principles to guide long-term actions and decisions. It directs continued progress toward Ecosystem Based Fisheries Management (EBFM) development and implementation and reinforces NOAA Fisheries' commitment to incorporate EBFM into its resource management decisions. The policy has six guiding principles:

1. Implement ecosystem-level planning.
2. Advance our understanding of ecosystem processes.

3. Prioritize vulnerabilities and risks of ecosystems and their components.
4. Explore and address trade-offs within an ecosystem.
5. Incorporate ecosystem considerations into management advice.
6. Maintain resilient ecosystems.

The EBFM Roadmap guides implementation of the EBFM policy and outlines actions to further the policy's six guiding principles. This research program in the context of the FY21 request for proposal primarily addresses EBFM roadmap actions 2.2.a Conduct science to understand ecosystems, 2.2.b Provide Ecosystem Status Reports for each Large Marine Ecosystem, 2.5.a Develop and monitor Ecosystem-Level Reference Points, 2.5.b Incorporate ecosystem considerations into appropriate living marine resource assessments, control rules, and management decisions, and 2.5.c Provide integrated advice for other management considerations. More specifically the program priorities in section B below seek to better understand a broader suite of ecosystem processes, drivers, and threats, including:

- 1) Measurable biogeochemical, biophysical, and ecological factors, processes, and interactions, such as:
 - a) Spatiotemporal distributions and abundance of key species related to changing environmental conditions
 - b) Climate change and associated species thresholds, vulnerability, and impacts
 - c) Habitat quality, and linking habitat to ecosystem productivity patterns; and
- 2) Social and economic considerations, such as:
 - a) Enhanced fish habitat and productivity for commercial and recreational species resulting from nearshore habitat restoration; and
 - b) Community and ecosystem resilience provided by nearshore habitat restoration.

The 2014 Chesapeake Watershed Agreement establishes goals and outcomes for the restoration of the Bay, its tributaries and the lands that surround them. This research program supports science needed to improve living resource outcomes associated with the following interrelated goals:

-Sustainable Fisheries Goal: Protect, restore and enhance finfish, shellfish and other living resources, their habitats and ecological relationships to sustain all fisheries and provide for a balanced ecosystem in the watershed and Bay.

-Vital Habitats Goal: Restore, enhance and protect a network of land and water habitats to support fish and wildlife and to afford other public benefits, including water quality,

recreational uses and scenic value across the watershed.

-Water Quality Goal: Reduce pollutants to achieve the water quality necessary to support the aquatic living resources of the Bay and its tributaries and protect human health.

-Climate Resiliency Goal: Increase the resiliency of the Chesapeake Bay watershed, including its living resources, habitats, public infrastructure and communities, to withstand adverse impacts from changing environmental and climate conditions.

Descriptions and reports from previously funded projects can be found on the NOAA Fisheries website: <https://go.usa.gov/xAGBE>

This FY 2023 Notice of Funding Opportunity will focus on 1) applied science investigating the impacts of climate change, habitat quality, and/or changing environmental variables on fish and shellfish resources to inform sustainable and ecosystem based fisheries management 2) supporting innovative methods to assess the effectiveness of nearshore habitat restoration in enhancing fish communities and ecosystem resilience to climate change.

B. Program Priorities

The Chesapeake Bay is an important spawning, nursery area and forage area for many ecologically, commercially and recreationally important fish species along the Atlantic Coast. There is limited information connecting the abundance, distribution and productivity of these species and/or fish communities to changing habitat, climate and other environmental conditions. Likewise there is limited information on the effectiveness of nearshore habitat restoration to support fish productivity and ecosystem resilience. This FY 2023 Notice of Funding Opportunity is seeking projects that improve understanding of the links between habitat condition, water quality, and living resources, and develop innovative approaches for evaluating the success of nearshore habitat restoration in enhancing fish communities and providing ecosystem resilience in response to climate change.

This research program has previously addressed timely management questions and research needs as identified by the science and resource management community. For example, multiple research projects focused on blue catfish (*Ictalurus furcatus*) from 2011-2014 in response to fishery managers and stakeholders expressing concern about the potential ecological impact of this non-native species on the Bay ecosystem. Funded research included diet and growth studies that directly informed work of the Chesapeake Bay Invasive Catfish Workgroup. These projects were followed by several Oyster Reef Ecosystem Services (ORES) studies quantifying the ecosystem service benefits (fish utilization, denitrification)

of tributary-scale oyster restoration projects. More recently projects focused on forage dynamics, habitat suitability and connectivity between estuarine and marine habitat for species such as summer flounder and black sea bass and assessing the socio-economic value of coastal habitats including oyster reefs, SAV, and natural and restored shorelines.

NCBO is interested in expanding our grantee applicant pool for this funding opportunity and encourages applications from principal investigators that have not received funding from the Chesapeake Bay Fisheries Research Program. Furthermore, NCBO is also interested in supporting research projects that employ and educate undergraduate or graduate students from groups underrepresented in marine science careers, including minorities.

We are soliciting proposals for projects under the following priority areas:

1. Priority Area 1: Applied science investigating the impacts of climate change, habitat quality, and/or changing environmental variables on fish and shellfish resources to inform sustainable and ecosystem based fisheries management.

Projects sought should:

- Involve field studies and/or analysis of existing information that improves understanding of the impacts climate change, habitat quality, and other environmental conditions on fish species distribution, abundance, productivity and community structure.

- Include existing observations such as Chesapeake Bay Interpretive Buoys, satellites, hypoxia profiles, and other data sources.

- Leverage the newly established mainstem Chesapeake Bay acoustic telemetry arrays through new fish tagging studies or use of existing data from receivers (More information here: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/feature-story/tracking-fish-chesapeake-bay-helps-researchers-and-resource-managers>)

- Develop quantitative relationships that can be reproduced and used to support ecosystem based fishery management through the Chesapeake Bay seasonal summaries and Mid Atlantic State of the Ecosystem Reports. More information here: https://apps-nefsc.fisheries.noaa.gov/rcb/publications/soe/SOE-MAFMC_2022_Final.pdf

- Have clear federal-state management applications linked to fishery management plans for species such as striped bass and federally managed species that could be limited by climate

change and habitat quality. More information can be found at these links:
-<https://www.mafmc.org/eafm>; <https://www.mafmc.org/research-priorities>;
https://seagrant.unh.edu/sites/default/files/media/202105/nhfishandgame_research_priorities_2019.pdf)

Potential project objectives under this topic are:

- a. Quantitative assessment of water column habitat variability (temperature, salinity, turbidity, flow, dissolved oxygen) impacts on species abundance, distribution and/or productivity, predator-prey interactions or community structure at seasonal, annual and interannual time scales.
- b. Assessment of fish species sensitivity to climate change and /or development of climate change thresholds or indicators for fish species.
- c. Investigations of species moving northward into the Chesapeake Bay and their impacts.

Specific examples for the above objectives are:

- What are the effects of climate variability (seasonal changes in temperature, precipitation, flow, etc) on spawning and/or recruitment success of anadromous species like striped bass?
- Are there northward range shifts by species such as red drum (*Sciaenops ocellatus*) and what are the ecological implications for the Chesapeake Bay?
- Are changes in habitat quality (marsh and/or submerged aquatic vegetation) or water quality limiting fish productivity?

2. Priority Area 2: Innovative methods to assess the effectiveness of nearshore habitat restoration in enhancing fish communities and providing ecosystem resilience in response to climate change.

Projects sought should:

- Develop assessment methods and techniques for measuring habitat restoration success (fish species and/or community response) that incorporate climate change.
- Apply new technologies (video, acoustics imaging, telemetry), quantitative analysis, and/or modeling.

- Consider transferability and cost effectiveness of new assessment methods for use by the restoration community.

- Inform planning and design of habitat restoration projects that can provide resilience to climate change for fish communities.

Potential project objectives under this topic are:

- a. Development of methods to assess the effectiveness of habitat restoration in enhancing fish habitat and refuge from climate change.

- b. Analysis quantifying the fish productivity value of habitat restoration compared to natural systems.

Specific examples for the above objectives are:

- Do nearshore habitat restoration projects provide climate change refuge for fish species?

- What types of habitat restoration and design features best enhance fish habitat and shoreline resilience?

NOAA SPECIAL INTEREST AREA

Any proposal to this announcement must meet one of the Priority Areas described in the previous section. NOAA also has an additional Special Interest Area, the Middle Peninsula of Virginia Habitat Focus Area (HFA). This new HFA includes the tidal watersheds of the York River, the Piankatank River, and Mobjack Bay in Virginia. Within this geography, NOAA is working with partners to enhance fish habitat restoration and improve coastal resiliency. Applicants may target their research efforts in this geography if they choose. More information on the NOAA Middle Peninsula Habitat Focus Area can be found at <https://www.habitatblueprint.noaa.gov/habitat-focus-areas/middle-peninsula-virginia/>

While applicants are not required to address a NOAA Special Interest Area, projects that do so are encouraged because they capitalize on a specific area that is a focus of the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office.

C. Program Authority

The Secretary is authorized under the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, as amended, at 16 U.S.C. 661, to provide assistance to, and cooperate with, Federal, State, and public or private agencies and organizations in the development, protection, rearing, and stocking of all species of wildlife, resources thereof, and their habitat, in controlling losses of the same from disease or other causes, and in minimizing damages from overabundant species.

Under 33 U.S.C. § 893a(a), the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is authorized to conduct and support formal and informal educational activities at all levels to enhance public awareness and understanding of ocean and coastal science and stewardship by the general public and other coastal stakeholders, including underrepresented groups in ocean science careers. In conducting those activities, the Administrator shall build upon the educational programs and activities of the agency with consideration given to the goal of promoting the participation of minorities in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields.

II. Award Information

A. Funding Availability

This solicitation announces that up to approximately \$1,500,000 may be available in FY 2023 in award amounts to be determined by the proposals and available funds. Funding is anticipated to maintain cooperative agreements for up to 3 years duration, but is dependent on funding made available annually by Congress. NOAA does not anticipate supporting project proposals requesting federal funding less than \$50,000 annually or greater than \$150,000 annually.

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.

B. Project/Award Period

The project start date should not begin before October 1, 2023. Applications should cover a project period between 12 and 36 months. 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.

Multi-year project period requests may be funded incrementally on an annual basis, but once awarded, multi-year partnerships will not need to compete for funding in subsequent years. NOAA has no obligation to provide additional funding in subsequent years. Funding for subsequent years of work will depend on availability of funds, and the performance of grantees to successfully conduct activities as determined by the Federal Program Officer through performance reports, site visits, and compliance with award conditions. A recommendation to the NOAA Grants Management Division (GMD) to continue an award in subsequent years, or to extend the period of performance, is at the discretion of the selecting official based on recommendations by the Federal Program Officer.

Single year requests or projects that NOAA chooses to fund for only one year will be required to re-compete in subsequent years. Any continuation of the award period will depend on the submission of a new proposal subject to review, adequate progress on previous award(s), and available funding.

Future opportunities for submitting proposals to the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Fisheries Research competitive process are anticipated, but will depend on funding levels and resources available to support new projects.

C. Type of Funding Instrument

Applications selected for funding will be funded through a cooperative agreement under the terms of this notice. Applications funded through cooperative agreements will include substantial involvement of the Federal government, which may include, but is not limited to, collaboration on the scope of work, such as liaison activities between the grantee and NOAA personnel who are contributing data or expertise to the project. Additional forms of substantial involvement that may arise are described in Chapter 5.C of the Department of Commerce (DoC) Grants and Cooperative Agreements Manual, which is currently available at: <https://go.usa.gov/xpR9e>.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are institutions of higher education, non-profit or for-profit organizations, U.S. territories, and state, local and Native American tribal governments. Applications from individuals, federal agencies, or employees of federal agencies will not be considered. Individuals and federal agencies are strongly encouraged to work with states,

non-governmental organizations, municipal and county governments, and others that are eligible to apply. Federal agencies are not allowed to receive funds under this announcement, but may serve as collaborative project partners and may contribute services in kind. Additional guidance on subrecipient partners can be found at <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/section-200.331>.

The Department of Commerce/ National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (DOC/NOAA) is strongly committed to broadening the participation of historically black colleges and universities, Hispanic serving institutions, tribal colleges and universities, and institutions that work in underserved areas. The NCBO encourages proposals involving any of the above institutions.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

No cost sharing is required under this program.

C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Address to Request Application Package

Electronic application packages are required and are available at: <http://www.grants.gov/> (Grants.gov).

If the applicant has difficulty accessing Grants.gov or downloading the required forms from the NOAA website, they should contact Andrew Larkin at the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office by email at andrew.w.larkin@noaa.gov. The NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office does not have a direct telephonic device for the deaf, however, TDD capabilities can be accessed through the State of Maryland-supplied TDD contact number, 800-735-2258, between the hours of 8 AM-4:30 PM.

Potential applicants may contact the NCBO Federal Program Officer before submitting an application to discuss applicability of project ideas to NCBO goals and objectives.

B. Content and Form of Application

(a) At the time of application submission, all applicants shall submit the following forms with signatures of the authorized representative of the submitting institution. (Note: submission through Grants.gov results in automatic electronic signatures on these forms.):

-Application for Federal Assistance: Form SF-424

- Budget Information, Non-construction Programs: Form SF-424A
- Assurances, Non-Construction Programs: Form SF-424B
- Certifications Regarding Lobbying: Form CD-511
- Disclosure of Lobbying Activities: Form SF-LLL (if applicable, see instructions on form)

Content Requirements

NOAA requests the following as part of a complete application package:

1. Project Summary (2 page limit);
 2. Project narrative (15 page limit);
 3. Federal, state, and local government activities and permits (2 page limit)
 4. Data management plan (2 page limit);
 5. Budget Narrative (4 page limit), Provide justifications for all budget items in sufficient detail to enable the reviewers to evaluate the appropriateness of the funding requested. The budget justification should be broken out and detailed using the same budget categories as noted on the SF-424A budget form;
 6. Supporting Documentation (15 page limit, combine into one PDF document) such as:
 - Brief curriculum vitae or resume(s) for up to three (3) key personnel (maximum of two page per person) and examples of similar projects that have been successfully completed by the project team;
 - Documentation of a federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement
1. Project Summary (2 page limit):
 - Applicant Organization
 - Project Title
 - Site Location(s) if applicable: nearest town or watershed, and geographic coordinates
 - Brief Project Description/Executive Summary: Briefly describe the activities to be completed with grant funds
 - Project Time Line
 - Amount of Federal Funding Requested
 - Non-Federal Match Proposed (if applicable, but note that no match is required under this program)

2. Project Narrative (15 page limit):

The project narrative comprises the research plan for the project. The narrative must be detailed enough for reviewers to make a clear connection between the proposed activities and the proposed project costs. The major part of the narrative should be devoted to a description and justification for the proposed project, including details of the method to be used. It should include a timeline for major activities of the proposed project, and should indicate who will be responsible for which activities. There should be a description of how a student(s) from a group underrepresented in marine science careers will be involved, educated and trained as part of the project. There should be no ambiguity about who will perform particular parts of the project, and the time at which these activities take place. The tables and visual materials, including charts, graphs, maps, photographs and other pictorial presentations that you submit to document the project and the problem/opportunity you seek to address are included in the 15-page limit.

The following do not count towards the 15-page limit: standard application forms, project summary, budget and justification, letters of support, vitae; lists of permits, NEPA questionnaire; and data sharing plan.

The project narrative should closely follow the organization of the evaluation criteria (see Section V. A. Evaluation Criteria) for the application to receive a consistent review against competing applications. The narrative should demonstrate your knowledge of the need for the project, and show how your proposal builds upon any past and current work in the subject area, as well as relevant work in related fields. The narrative should highlight any relationship to fishery management plans, or other fishery-related strategic planning or management documents, and if the project will yield environmentally compatible socio-economic benefits.

You should not assume that reviewers already know the relative merits of the project you describe. You must describe your project as follows:

(A). Project goals and objectives. Identify the problem/opportunity you intend to address and describe its significance to Chesapeake Bay fisheries and ecosystem management community. Objectives should be simple and understandable; as specific and quantitative as possible; and attainable within the time, money and human resources available. Projects should be accomplishment oriented and identify specific performance measurements.

(B). Project impacts - Describe the anticipated impacts of the project on Chesapeake Bay fisheries management and/or habitat restoration. Identify the benefits that will be achieved as

a result of this effort, both to the recipient and the general public as a whole. Identify where expected end products can be used (for example, an indicator for use in the Mid Atlantic State of the Ecosystem Report or Bay Program decision support). Describe how you/your organization (or others) will monitor progress and measure the project's impacts.

(C). Evaluation of project - Specify the criteria and procedures that you will use to monitor and evaluate the relative success or failure of a project in achieving its objectives.

(D). Need for government financial assistance - Explain why you need NOAA financial assistance for the proposed work, and why other funding sources, if applicable, cannot fund all the proposed work. List all other sources of funding you have or are seeking for the project.

(E). Statement of Work

a) What is the project design? What specific work, activities, procedures, statistical design, or analytical methods will you undertake? You should provide sufficiently detailed information on the proposed activities and potential environmental effects so that NOAA can analyze the impacts of the project as required under the National Environmental Policy Act (see Section VI. B.4.). Examples of the level of detail to be incorporated into the project design section to assist in the environmental review can be found in National Marine Fisheries Service "Project Details" section of the NOAA NEPA questionnaire available here: <https://www.nepa.noaa.gov/docs/NOAA-Grants-Questionnaire-final.pdf>

b) Who will be responsible for carrying out the various activities? Provide information about the specific responsibilities of other personnel funded through the proposal, including the technical and administrative points of contact as appropriate.

c) How will project results be disseminated? Describe any expected products of the project, such as a training manual, management plan, number of people trained, video, or techniques. Detail if/how products will be distributed to potential users (resource managers, researchers, other interested parties.)

d) What are the project milestones? Display timelines for major tasks, target milestones for important intermediate and final products, and key project outcomes. This includes identifying all consultation and permitting requirements and their status (e.g., not applied for, pending, secured). Describe the timelines in increments (e.g., month 1, month 2), rather than by specific dates. Identify the individual(s) responsible for the various specific activities.

(F). Project management - Describe how the project will be organized and managed.

Proposals should demonstrate the applicant organization's knowledge and experience in delivering the project requested in this application. The principal investigator may or may not be the applicant; however, if the applicant is not the principal investigator, there must be

an explanation of the relationship between the applicant and principal investigator (e.g., the applicant may be responsible for managing the grant funds and the principal investigator will be responsible for completing the work).

Include the resume or curriculum vitae of the principal investigator(s) and any consultants and/or subcontractors, and indicate their level of involvement in the project. Include copies of any agreements between you and the participants describing the specific tasks to be performed. Agreement documents and resumes/curriculum vitae (2 page maximum) should be included in the "Supporting Documentation." This information does not count toward the project narrative's 15 page limitation.

(G). Participation by persons or groups other than the applicant - Describe how Federal, state and non-government entities, will participate in the project, and the nature of their participation. If applicable, specifically describe how the applicant will conduct the project in such a way as to employ and educate undergraduate or graduate students from groups underrepresented in marine science careers, including minorities.

(H). Outreach and Education - How will this project provide a focused and effective education and outreach strategy regarding NOAA's mission to protect the Nation's natural resources? This includes the degree to which the potential users of the results, i.e., state and federal resource managers, have been involved in the planning of activity, will be involved in the execution of the activity and/or are providing funds, and whether there is a plan to disseminate the results to user groups (including the Chesapeake Bay Sustainable Fisheries Goal Implementation Team, Maryland and Virginia fisheries management agencies, Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, Mid Atlantic Fisheries Management Council etc.) and the public. The principal investigator should describe how the involvement of undergraduate or graduate students from underrepresented groups, including minorities, will support those students in future Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) careers. Describe specific outreach goals and activities.

3. Federal, state, and local government activities and permits (2-pages)

It is the responsibility of the applicant to obtain all necessary Federal, State, and local government permits and approvals where necessary for the proposed work to be conducted. You must note whether or not permits are required. If no permits are required, this section must indicate "no permits are required". If yes, provide a list of all applicable permits that will be required to perform the proposed work and an indication of the status of any permits needed (e.g., not yet applied, permit application submitted/pending, permit granted, etc.) or a statement indicating that no permits are necessary. List any existing Federal, state, or local government programs or activities that this project would affect, including activities

requiring: certification under state Coastal Zone Management Plans; Section 404 or Section 10 permits issued by the Corps of Engineers; experimental fishing or other permits under Federal Fishery Management Plans (FMP); environmental impact statements to meet the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act; scientific permits under the Endangered Species Act and/or the Marine Mammal Protection Act; or Magnuson-Stevens Act Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) consultation if the project may adversely affect areas identified as EFH. Describe the relationship between the project and these FMPs or activities, and list names and addresses of persons providing this information. You may obtain information on these activities from the NMFS Regions (see Section VII- Agency Contacts).

4. Data Management Plan (2 pages)

Proposals submitted in response to this announcement must include a Data Management Plan of up to two pages. This Data Management Plan does not count against the 15-page Project Narrative page limit. 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. 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.

The contents of the Data Management Plan will be considered as part of application 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 application budget unless otherwise stated in the Guidance. Final Data Management Plans will be developed in coordination with NOAA as part of NOAA's substantial involvement, as described in Section II.C.

Data Management Guidance to Proposal Writers from NOAA's Data Sharing Directive - 1) Responsible NOAA Official for questions regarding this guidance and for verifying accessibility of data produced by the funding recipients is Andrew Larkin (andrew.w.larkin@noaa.gov), Senior Program Analyst with the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office. 2) Data Accessibility: the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office recommends that public

access to grant-produced data be enabled by submitting data to the NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI) which will provide public access and permanent archiving. Note that NCEI may charge a fee for large or unusual datasets.

See also the Data Sharing policy in Section VI.B., Administrative and National Policy Requirements, in this Announcement, and the Data Sharing evaluation criteria applicable to this program in V.A.1.

5. Budget narrative (4 page limit): Total project costs are the amount of funds required to accomplish what is proposed in the Project Description, including cost-share contributions and donations.

a) The budget narrative must include: Personnel costs, including salary and wages, should be broken out by named principal investigator (PI) and number of months requested per year per PI as a percentage of their normal salary rate. Support for each PI should be commensurate with their stated involvement, which may or may not correspond to their current position. Any unnamed personnel (graduate students, post-doctoral researchers, technicians) should be identified by their job title, and their personnel costs explained similar to PI personnel costs above. Fringe benefits should be identified separately from salary and wages; fringe benefit rates should be applied consistently, and should apply equally to both Federal and non-Federal (matching) funds, if applicable. 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.

b) Travel costs should be broken out by number of people traveling, destination and purpose of travel, and projected costs per person. Projected travel costs should be inclusive of transport costs, lodging costs, and per diem expenses for all travelers, which are to be described in detail in the budget narrative. If travel details for a particular trip are unknown, explain the basis for estimating proposed costs. To qualify for support, attendance at meetings or conferences must enhance the investigator's capability to perform the research or disseminate its results. Domestic travel is to be justified separately from foreign travel, since the latter may require additional clearances. You must adhere to the provisions of the 'Fly America Act'.

c) "Equipment" is non-expendable, tangible personal property with a unit cost of \$5,000 or more and a useful life of more than one year. Items that do not meet the equipment definition must be included under supplies. List each piece of equipment separately and reference the type/model to be purchased and its contribution to the achievement of the project goals.

General use equipment must be used 100% for the proposed project if charged directly to the award; if the equipment will be used for multiple projects, only a portion of the expense that is commensurate with the actual use of the equipment during the project may be requested.

d) Supplies should be itemized to the level of detail known or may be based on established historical costs. Whenever possible, you should include the quantity/number of units and cost per unit to justify expenses listed in the supplies category.

e) Contractual costs should be itemized separately, according to standard budget categories that appear in the SF-424A; all types of contractual costs should be included in the Contractual line on the SF-424A and explained in detail in the budget narrative. You must indicate the basis for each contract's cost or price estimate and specify the products or services to be obtained through all contracts.

f) Other costs should be listed by type of material or nature of expense and should be broken down by quantity/number of units and cost per unit if applicable.

g) The budget may include an amount for indirect costs if the applicant has an approved indirect cost rate agreement with the federal government. Indirect costs are essentially overhead costs for basic operational functions (e.g., lights, rent, water, and insurance) that are incurred for common or joint objectives and therefore cannot be identified specifically within a particular project. A copy of the current, approved negotiated indirect costs agreement with the federal government must be included with the application.

If an applicant does not have a current 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 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 U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has entered into a working relationship with the U.S. Department of the Interior's Interior Business Center (IBC) to conduct indirect cost rate negotiation services and issue indirect cost rate agreements on behalf of NOAA, to organizations for which NOAA is the cognizant agency. The Indirect Cost and Contract Audit Division (IBC/ICCAD) will collect the required documents, negotiate, issue and countersign indirect cost rate agreements for your organization effective April 1, 2022. Please visit the ICCAD website at: <https://ibc.doi.gov/ICS/icrna> to download the checklist of items required by ICCAD. Proposals along with the supporting financial statement information and copies of your two most recent NICRAs should be submitted to ICCAD via

their email inbox at: ics@ibc.doi.gov. Please note in the subject line of your proposal submission email or in the body of the email that your cognizant agency is NOAA.

6. Supporting Documentation (15 page limit)

This section should include the supporting documentation such as: qualifications of the primary project personnel (resumes or curriculum vitae, limit two pages each), agreements with key partners, and letters of support received from the relevant jurisdictional representatives, partners, or communities involved in the project.

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/SAM/>. Each applicant is required to (i) register in the Federal System for Award Management (SAM) before submitting an application; (ii) provide a valid unique entity identifier in the application; and (iii) continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by NOAA (or any other Federal agency). NOAA may not make a Federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and SAM requirements. If an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time NOAA is ready to make a Federal award, NOAA may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another applicant. See 2 C.F.R. Part 25 at <http://go.usa.gov/cTbMk>

D. Submission Dates and Times

Full Applications must be received by <http://www.Grants.gov> by 11:59 pm, Eastern Standard Time, April 17, 2023. Please note: Validation or rejection of your application by Grants.gov may take up to 2 business days after submission. In addition, initial registration or annual updated registration processes in the Federal System for Award Management (SAM) can take several weeks and involve multiple steps. In order to allow sufficient time for these processes, applicants should register as soon as they decide to apply even if they are not ready to submit their proposal. Please consider this process in developing your submission timeline. Applications received after the deadline will be rejected/returned to the sender without further consideration. No facsimile or electronic mail applications will be accepted.

E. Intergovernmental Review

Applications under this program (CFDA 11.457, Chesapeake Bay Studies) are subject to Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs. Any applicant submitting an application for funding is required to complete item 16 on SF-424 regarding clearance by the State Single Point of Contact (SPOC) established as a result of EO 12372. To find out about and comply with a State's process under EO 12372, the names, addresses and phone numbers of participating SPOC's are listed in the Office of Management and Budget's home page at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/SPOC-4-13-20.pdf>

F. Funding Restrictions

Projects that primarily involve business start-up or infrastructure development are not eligible for funding under the Chesapeake Bay Fisheries Research Program. NOAA will not consider expenses associated with fees, fund-raising activities, travel for activities not directly related to project implementation, travel or salaries for Federal employees, or profit as allowable costs in the proposed budget. The total costs of a project consist of all allowable costs incurred in accomplishing project activities during the project period. Applicants will not be reimbursed for time expended or costs incurred in developing a project or in preparing an application, or in any discussions or negotiations with the agency prior to the award. Such expenditures may not be considered as part of the applicant's cost share or matching contribution.

G. Other Submission Requirements

Proposals must be received by 11:59 PM Eastern Time on April 17, 2023 in Grants.gov. PLEASE NOTE: After electronic submission of the application through Grants.gov, the person submitting the application will receive, within the next 24 to 48 hours, up to three 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 NOAA or has been rejected because of errors. Only validated applications are sent to NOAA for review. After the application has been validated, this same person will receive a third email, generally within two days, when the application has been downloaded by NOAA. NOAA considers the validation time as receipt. In addition, applicants may need days or weeks to complete registration or updating of registration described in Section IV.C. and D. of this NOFO Announcement. Please keep this in mind in developing your submission timeline.

V. Application Review Information

A. Evaluation Criteria

Reviewers will assign scores to applications ranging from 0-100 points based on the following five standard NOAA evaluation criteria. The maximum score for each criterion is indicated in parentheses. Each criterion also includes the factors that the reviewers will consider to determine how well an application meets the criterion. We encourage applicants to make explicit connections to the evaluation criterion and factors in their applications. Written comments are required to justify provided scores in each section of the review. Applications that best address these criteria will be most competitive.

1. Importance/relevance and applicability of proposed projects to the program goals (40 points).

This criterion ascertains whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and/or relevance to NOAA, Federal, regional, state, or local activities. Does the proposal describe its relevance to a Chesapeake Bay Fisheries Research Program Objective in Section A and Priorities in Section B, and how information gathered will contribute to NOAA mission to enhance the understanding of the fishery resource and contribute to the body of information on which management decisions are made? Does the applicant demonstrate familiarity with previously developed studies or assessments and describe how their project builds upon or incorporates previous work? Does this study address an important problem, providing a clear definition of the problem, need, issue or research need to be addressed? Can the research question be answered using existing data or require a field study? Will the project(s) yield environmentally compatible socio-economic benefits, such as increased business and recreational opportunities? Is the project focused in a specific tributary or watershed? The appropriateness of the data sharing plan: Has the proposal included a Data Information Sharing Plan including description of the types of environmental data and information 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; policies addressing data stewardship and preservation; procedures for providing access, sharing and security; and prior experience in publishing such. Does the proposal describe how it will use NOAA observations (such as but not limited to Chesapeake Bay Interpretive Buoy System, Coastwatch, telemetry) in the analysis? Does the proposal include a plan to engage and collaborate with NOAA staff and resources managers to guide management application of project results (for example, setting up a project advisory team)? If applicable, does the applicant specifically describe how they will conduct the research project in such a way as to employ and educate undergraduate or graduate students from groups underrepresented in marine science careers, including minorities?

Using the scale below, score Item 1 (lowest score possible is 0)

Poor	Fair	Good	Commendable	Excellent
0-----	10-----	20-----	30-----	40

2. Technical and/or scientific merit (30 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. Proposals should provide a clear definition of the approach to be used, including descriptions of field work, theoretical studies, and laboratory analysis to support the proposed research. Are the conceptual framework, design, methods, and analyses adequately developed, well-integrated, and appropriate to the aims of the project? Are the objectives in the proposal clearly defined and focused, realistic and can be reached within the proposed project period? Does the applicant acknowledge potential problem areas and consider ways to resolve the issues or implement alternative tactics? Does the project challenge existing paradigms or develop new methodologies or technologies? Is sufficient detail provided in the proposal about the methods proposed for monitoring and evaluating the success of the project, and are they appropriate? Is there sufficient description of the project's utility to resource management? If field studies will be conducted, have permits been applied for or acquired?

Poor	Fair	Good	Commendable	Excellent
0-----	10-----	20-----	25-----	30

3. Overall qualifications of the applicants (10 points).

This criterion assesses whether the applicant, and team members, possess the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project. Does the applicant have the capacity/knowledge to conduct the scope and scale of the proposed work, as indicated by the qualifications and past experience of the project leaders and/or partners that show adequate administrative capability and experience in successfully completing similar projects? Are the institutional support, equipment and other physical resources available to the investigators adequate for the proposed project? Does the proposal include resumes of the Principal Investigator(s)? In cases where subcontracts are proposed for carrying out specific tasks, are the quality/appropriateness of the personnel, facilities and procedures (laboratory methods, work plan and or quality oversight procedures) adequate?

Poor	Fair	Good	Commendable	Excellent
0-----	4-----	6-----	8-----	10

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. Cost effectiveness of the project is considered. Is the proposed budget cost-effective and realistic based on the applicant's stated objectives, time frame, and amount of overall project budget already secured from other sources? Is the proposed budget sufficiently detailed, with appropriate budget breakdown and justification of costs by object class?

Poor	Fair	Good	Commendable	Excellent
0-----	4-----	6-----	8-----	10

5. Outreach and education (10 points).

This criterion assesses whether the project provides a focused and effective education and outreach strategy regarding NOAA's mission to protect the Nation's natural resources. Does the proposal identify anticipated benefits, potential users, indicators of success, and methods of disseminating results? Is an effective method proposed for dissemination of project results? Are the various target audiences, such as resource managers, the fishing community, or the general public identified? Did the principal investigator describe how the involvement of undergraduate or graduate students from underrepresented groups, including minorities, will support those students in future Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) careers? Will the outreach methods acknowledge NOAA Fisheries support of the project?

Poor	Fair	Good	Commendable	Excellent
0-----	4-----	6-----	8-----	10

B. Review and Selection Process

1. Initial Screening of Applications

Initial Screening - An initial administrative review is conducted on each application to determine compliance with application requirements and completeness of application materials. Applications determined to be ineligible, incomplete or non-responsive will be eliminated from 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. When applications are received they will be screened to ensure that they were received by the deadline date (see Section IV. D. Submission Dates and Times); the applicant is eligible to apply; the proposed project addresses one of the funding priorities; and includes a project

summary, project description, budget, and supporting documentation as outlined in Section IV. B. Content and Form of Application. We do not screen applications before the submission deadline in order to identify deficiencies that would cause an application to be rejected so that you would have an opportunity to correct them. If resources and time are available, NOAA, in its sole discretion, may screen applications that are received early for deficiencies such as a missing attachment, so that applicants might be notified if their application would be rejected without consideration. There is no assurance that this may be possible. However, should an applicant independently decide it is desirable to correct any deficiencies in a submitted application, they may do so before the deadline. After the deadline, the application must remain as submitted; no changes can be made to it. If your application does not conform to the requirements listed above, and the deadline for submission has passed, the application will be returned and rejected without further consideration.

Applications that are cleared for meeting minimum requirements will be moved into merit review and evaluated by a two-phase review process; a preliminary technical review and a panel review meeting. Both phases are conducted by the same set of private and/or public sector expert reviewers. Each review phase is described in detail below, followed by post-merit-review procedures.

2. Technical Review

Technical Review - After the initial screening, independent written technical evaluations from three or more appropriate federal, private or public sector experts (e.g. industry, academia, or governmental experts) with subject matter expertise will be obtained to determine the technical merit of the proposal. Their evaluation will be based solely on the information included in the application based on the criteria described in Section V. A. Evaluation Criteria. Each reviewer will independently evaluate each project and provide an individual score. If one or more non-Federal reviewers is used, no consensus advice will be given. These reviewers will be required to certify that they do not have a conflict of interest concerning the application(s) they are reviewing. NOAA will protect technical reviewer identity to the maximum extent permitted by law. Following completion of the technical review, the individual technical review scores will be averaged to determine the final technical score for each application. Applications will be ranked in descending order by their final technical scores. A "cutoff" score will be established that is based in part, on the amount of funds available for grants. Applications that scored below the cutoff will be eliminated from further consideration.

3. Panel Review

A panel review meeting will be held following the technical review process. This may be an in-person meeting or webinar. Panel reviewers are the same individuals from the technical review. The purpose of the panel meeting is to discuss in-depth the proposals and to get final funding recommendations from reviewers. This in-depth discussion may raise issues or answer questions that a reviewer did not have in the technical review, or it may clarify an issue. After discussing proposals, panelists will provide comments and a final score for each application, upon which a final rank order is established. If more than one non-Federal reviewer is used, no consensus advice will be given by the panel.

Up to three separate review events may be held depending on type of application or topic addressed. Scores from separate review events will not be combined to establish an overall rank order.

C. Selection Factors

The Federal Program Officer will, in consultation with NCBO staff as appropriate, review the ranking of the proposals and recommendations of the review panel and make recommendations to the Selecting Official, who is expected to be the Director of the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office or designee. The numerical ranking from the Panel Review will be the primary consideration for the Selecting Official in deciding which of the proposals will be recommended for funding to the NOAA Grants Officer. However, the Selecting Official NCBO will select proposals after considering the technical reviews and recommendations of the review panel, and recommendations of the Federal Program Officer. The Selecting Official shall award in rank order unless the proposal is justified to be selected out of rank order based upon any 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 priority research
3. Duplication of other projects funded or considered for funding by NOAA/federal agencies
4. Program priorities, policy factors or special interest area set out in Section I.B. of this NOFO
5. Applicant's prior award performance
6. Partnerships with/Participation of targeted group including underrepresented communities

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 NOAA Grants Officer.

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

Please note that not all activities submitted under a single proposal may be deemed appropriate for funding, and the Selecting Official may recommend alternate activities as appropriate or only partial funding, based on the selection factors and the merit and/or panel review written evaluations. For a proposal to be selected for funding, the applicant may be asked to modify objectives and activities, work plans, and budgets, and to provide supplemental information required by the agency prior to the award. This may result in submission of a revised application before final funding decisions are made. The exact amount of funds to be awarded, the final scope of activities, the project duration, and other relevant application details will be determined in pre-award negotiations among the applicant and NOAA officials. Applicants should also note that modifications to projects may be necessary as a result of NOAA's efforts to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), as described in Section VI.B. of this Announcement, and other legislation.

Grants Management Review

The NOAA Grants Officer will review financial and grants administration aspects of a proposed award, including conducting an assessment of the risk posed by the applicant in accordance with 2 C.F.R. 200.206. If Federal funding will be over \$250,000 over the period of performance, NOAA is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (currently FAPIIS) (see 41 U.S.C. 2313). An applicant, at its option, may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM and comment on any information about itself that a Federal awarding agency previously entered and is currently in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM. NOAA will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in §200.206 Federal awarding agency review of risk posed by applicants.

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 otherwise 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. 200.208 NOAA also 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 an applicant. In addition, NOAA may not make a Federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and System for Award Management requirements referenced in Section VI.B. of this Announcement, and if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time NOAA is ready to make a Federal award, NOAA may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another applicant. The final approval of selected applications and issuance of awards will be by the NOAA Grants Officer. The award decision of the Grants Officer is final.

D. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

The competitive selection process and subsequent notification of applications being considered for funding are expected to be complete by August of 2023. The earliest start date for projects will be October 1, 2023, dependent upon availability of Federal funding, acceptable completion of all NOAA/applicant negotiations including NEPA analysis and permit requirements, and the provision of other supporting documentation as requested.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

Successful applicants will receive notification that the application has been approved for funding with an official notice of award, the Standard Form CD-450, Financial Assistance

Award, issued by the NOAA Grants Officer, and accompanying award package. The CD-450 (including associated terms it incorporates by reference) is the authorizing document that allows the project to begin.

The award may be issued to the authorizing official and the principal investigator of the project in hard copy if necessary but will ordinarily be issued electronically via an email from NOAA's electronic grants management system, Grants Online, at <http://www.ago.noaa.gov>. Unsuccessful applicants will receive notification from the NOAA program office indicating that their proposals were not recommended for funding.

Per 2 CFR 200.458, NOAA authorizes award recipients to expend pre-award costs up to 90 days before the period of performance start date at the applicant's own risk without approval from NOAA and in accordance with the applicant's internal policies and procedures. Such costs are allowable only to the extent that they would have been allowable if incurred after the date of the Federal award. This does not include direct proposal costs (as defined at 2 CFR 200.460).

In no event will NOAA or the Department of Commerce be responsible for direct proposal preparation costs. Pre-award costs will be a portion of, not in addition to, the approved total budget of the award. Pre-award costs expended more than 90 days prior to the period of performance start date require approval from the Grants Officer. This does not change the period of performance start date.

The Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions will apply to awards in this program. These terms will be provided in the award package in Grants Online. These terms will be provided in the award package in Grants Online.

In addition, award documents provided by NOAA may contain special award conditions limiting the use of funds for activities that have outstanding environmental or other compliance requirements and may lead to modification of the project's scope of work, 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

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>

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>.

NOAA will also add to any award Agency-Specific Administrative Terms with requirements related to payment processing, reporting, and related matters. A current version is found online at NOAA Administrative Terms (<https://www.noaa.gov/sites/default/files/legacy/document/2021/Mar/Administrative%20Standard%20Award%20Conditions%20for%20NOAA%20Financial%20Assistance%20Awards%2002.18.2021.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. NOAA or the Department of Commerce are not responsible for direct costs of proposal preparation. Publication of this announcement does not oblige NOAA to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds.

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.pdf, and the Council on Environmental Quality implementation regulations, http://energy.gov/sites/prod/files/NEPA-40CFR1500_1508.pdf. Consequently, as part of an applicant's package, and under their description of their program activities, applicants are required to provide detailed information on the activities to be conducted, locations, sites, species and habitat to be affected, possible construction activities, and any environmental

concerns that may exist (e.g., the use and disposal of hazardous or toxic chemicals, introduction of non- indigenous species, impacts to endangered and threatened species, aquaculture projects, and impacts to coral reef systems). In addition to providing specific information that will serve as the basis for any required impact analyses, applicants may also be requested to assist NOAA in drafting an environmental assessment, if NOAA determines an assessment is required. Applicants will also be required to cooperate with NOAA in identifying feasible measures to reduce or avoid any identified adverse environmental impacts of their proposal. Failure to do so shall be grounds for not selecting an application. In some cases if additional information is required after an application is selected, funds can be withheld by the Grants Officer under a special award condition requiring the recipient to submit additional environmental compliance information sufficient to enable NOAA to make an assessment on any impacts that a project may have on the environment.

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

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

NOAA Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassments Prevention and Response Policy . NOAA requires organizations receiving federal assistance to report findings of sexual harassment, or any other kind of harassment, regarding a Principal Investigator (PI), co-PI, or any other key personnel in the award. NOAA expects all financial assistance recipients to establish and

maintain clear and unambiguous standards of behavior to ensure harassment free workplaces wherever NOAA grant or cooperative agreement work is conducted, including notification pathways for all personnel, including students, on the awards. This expectation includes activities at all on- and offsite facilities and during conferences and workshops. All such settings should have accessible and evident means for reporting violations and recipients should exercise due diligence with timely investigations of allegations and corrective actions.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.noaa.gov/organization/acquisition-grants/noaa-workplace-harassment-training-for-contractors-and-financial>.

DATA SHARING .

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.
- b. 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.
- c. 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.
- d. 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. See also Section IV.B. Content and Form of Application, in this Announcement.

REQUIRED USE OF AMERICAN IRON, STEEL, MANUFACTURED PRODUCTS, AND CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS. If applicable, and pursuant to the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (“IIJA”), Pub.L. No. 117-58, which includes the Build American, Buy American (BABA) Act, Pub. L. No. 117-58, §§ 70901-52 and OMB M-22-11, recipients of an award of Federal financial assistance from the Department of Commerce (DOC) are hereby notified that none of the funds provided under this award may be used for a project for infrastructure unless: 1) all iron and steel used in the project are produced in the United States—this means all manufacturing processes, from the initial melting stage through the application of coatings, occurred in the United States; 2) all manufactured products used in the project are produced in the United States—this means the manufactured product was manufactured in the United States; and the cost of the components of the manufactured product that are mined, produced, or manufactured in the United States is greater than 55 percent of the total cost of all components of the manufactured product, unless another standard for determining the minimum amount of domestic content of the manufactured product has been established under applicable law or regulation; and 3) all construction materials¹ are manufactured in the United States—this means that all manufacturing processes for the construction material occurred in the United States. The Buy America preference only applies to articles, materials, and supplies that are consumed in, incorporated into, or affixed to an infrastructure project. As such, it does not apply to tools, equipment, and supplies, such as temporary scaffolding, brought to the construction site and removed at or before the completion of the infrastructure project. Nor does a Buy America preference apply to equipment and furnishings, such as movable chairs, desks, and portable computer equipment, that are used at or within the finished infrastructure project but are not an integral part of the structure or permanently affixed to the infrastructure project. **WAIVERS.** When necessary, recipients may apply for, and DOC may grant, a waiver from these requirements. DOC will notify the recipient for information on the process for requesting a waiver from these requirements. 1) When DOC has made a determination that one of the following exceptions applies, the awarding official may waive the application of the domestic content procurement preference in any case in which DOC determines that: a. applying the domestic content procurement preference would be inconsistent with the public interest; b. the types of iron, steel, manufactured products, or construction materials are not produced in the United States in sufficient and reasonably available quantities or of a satisfactory quality; or c. the inclusion of iron, steel, manufactured products, or construction materials produced in the United States will increase the cost of the overall project by more than 25 percent. A request

to waive the application of the domestic content procurement preference must be in writing. DOC will provide instructions on the format, contents, and supporting materials required for any waiver request. Waiver requests are subject to public comment periods of no less than 15 days and must be reviewed by the Made in America Office. There may be instances where an award qualifies, in whole or in part, for an existing waiver described at whitehouse.gov/omb/management/made-in-america. DEFINITIONS. “Construction materials” includes an article, material, or supply—other than an item of primarily iron or steel; a manufactured product; cement and cementitious materials; aggregates such as stone, sand, or gravel; or aggregate binding agents or additives²—that is or consists primarily of: non-ferrous metals; plastic and polymer-based products (including polyvinylchloride, composite building materials, and polymers used in fiber optic cables); glass (including optic glass); lumber; or drywall. “Domestic content procurement preference” means all iron and steel used in the project are produced in the United States; the manufactured products used in the project are produced in the United States; or the construction materials used in the project are produced in the United States. “Infrastructure” includes, at a minimum, the structures, facilities, and equipment for, in the United States, roads, highways, and bridges; public transportation; dams, ports, harbors, and other maritime facilities; intercity passenger and freight railroads; freight and intermodal facilities; airports; water systems, including drinking water and wastewater systems; electrical transmission facilities and systems; utilities; broadband infrastructure; and buildings and real property. Infrastructure includes facilities that generate, transport, and distribute energy. “Project” means the construction, alteration, maintenance, or repair of infrastructure in the United States. -- 1 Excludes cement and cementitious materials, aggregates such as stone, sand, or gravel, or aggregate binding agents or additives. 2 IIJA, § 70917(c)(1).

C. Reporting

(a) Financial and performance progress reporting requirements are described in the Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions and 2 C.F.R. 200.328-.200.330, referenced above in Sections VI.A. and B. of this Announcement, and further implemented as described below.

1. Financial Reports - Information about federal financial reports is available at: <http://go.usa.gov/cjE4T>
2. Performance/Progress Reports - Information about research performance progress reports can be found here: https://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/grantsonline/Documents/RPPR_Guide.pdf

(b) 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 Subaward Reporting System (FSRS) available at www.FSRS.gov on all subawards over \$25,000. Refer to 2 C.F.R. Part 170 at <http://go.usa.gov/cT8WW>.

(c) Publications, Videos and Acknowledgement of Sponsorship: Publication of the results or findings of the funded award activities in appropriate professional journals, outreach materials, or press releases, and production of video or other media is encouraged as an important method of recording and reporting scientific information. These are also constructive means to expand access to federally funded research. The recipient is required to submit a copy of any publication to the funding agency, and when releasing information related to a funded project, include a statement that the project or effort undertaken was or is sponsored by NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office. The recipient is also responsible for assuring that every publication of material (including Internet sites and videos) based on or developed under an award, except scientific articles or papers appearing in scientific, technical or professional journals, contains the following acknowledgement and disclaimer: "This project received funding under award [number] from NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office. The statements, findings, conclusions, and recommendations are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of NOAA."

VII. Agency Contacts

For further information about the Chesapeake Bay Fisheries Research Program, please visit the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office website at:
<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/grant/noaa-chesapeake-bay-fisheries-research-program>

For assistance with forms, application requirements, or submission procedures please contact Andrew Larkin at the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office by email at andrew.w.larkin@noaa.gov.

VIII. Other Information

The applicant acknowledges and understands that information and data contained in applications for financial assistance, as well as information and data contained in financial, performance and other reports submitted by applicants, may be used by the Department of Commerce in conducting reviews and evaluations of its financial assistance programs. For this purpose, applicant information and data may be accessed, reviewed and evaluated by Department of Commerce employees, other Federal employees, Federal agents and contractors, and/or by non-Federal personnel, all of whom enter into appropriate conflicts of

interest and nondisclosure agreements covering the use of such information. As may be provided in the terms and conditions of a specific financial assistance award, applicants are expected to support program reviews and evaluations by submitting required financial and performance information and data in an accurate and timely manner, and by cooperating with Department of Commerce and external program evaluators. In accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.303(e), applicants are reminded that they must take reasonable measures to safeguard protected personally identifiable information and other confidential or sensitive personal or business information created or obtained in connection with a Department of Commerce financial assistance award.