FY22-23 CRCP International Coral Reef Conservation Grants and Cooperative Agreements

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Funding Opportunity Description . . . 4
A. Program Objective . . . 4
B. Program Priorities . . . 5
C. Program Authority . . . 10
II. Award Information . . . 10
A. Funding Availability . . . 11
B. Project/Award Period . . . 11
C. Type of Funding Instrument . . . 12
III. Eligibility Information . . . 12
A. Eligible Applicants . . . 12
B. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement . . . 13
C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility . . . 14
IV. Application and Submission Information . . . 15
A. Address to Request Application Package . . . 15
B. Content and Form of Application . . . 15
C. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM) . . . 26
D. Submission Dates and Times . . . 27
E. Intergovernmental Review . . . 27
F. Funding Restrictions . . . 27
G. Other Submission Requirements . . . 28
V. Application Review Information . . . 29
A. Evaluation Criteria . . . 29
B. Review and Selection Process . . . 30
C. Selection Factors . . . 31
D. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates . . . 32
VI. Award Administration Information . . . 32
A. Award Notices . . . 32
B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements . . . 33
C. Reporting . . . 35
VII. Agency Contacts . . . 37
VIII. Other Information . . . 37

NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

Funding Opportunity Title: FY22-23 CRCP International Coral Reef Conservation Grants and Cooperative Agreements

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: NOAA-NOS-OCM-2022-2006993

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 11.482, Coral Reef Conservation Program

Dates: There will be NO pre-application stage for this competition. Full applications in electronic form must be received and validated through www.grants.gov by 11:59 p.m. U.S. Eastern Time, by WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2021. Due to the COVID-19 situation and NOAA staff telework status, paper format applications delivered at our physical address will NOT be accepted for this FY22-23 application cycle.

Please keep in mind the following information necessary to submit an application to Grants.gov: (1) The free annual registration process in the electronic System for Award Management (SAM) may take between three and five business days or as long as several weeks (see Section IV.F. of this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), and (2) if you submit an application via Grants.gov you will receive a series of email notifications for up to two business days before learning via validation or rejection whether NOAA has received your application.

Funding Opportunity Description: The NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program (CRCP) provides matching grants and cooperative agreements for international coral reef conservation projects. CRCP solicits proposals that will support the NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program Strategic Plan (Strategic Plan-2018) which uses a resilience-based management approach, focused on conservation that supports the ability of corals to withstand and recover from stress. All non-U.S. international tropical coral reef locations are eligible under this Federal Funding Opportunity with emphasis on the Wider Caribbean, South East Asia and South Pacific, and Micronesia. See specific countries in Section I. B.

Funding for the Fiscal Year 2022 competition is subject to the availability of Congressional appropriations and is expected to be approximately $1,000,000. NOAA expects each applicant will request between $40,000 and $300,000 annually for an award with a project period up to

two years. Funding after the first year generally depends on future Congressional appropriations, NOAA/CRCP priorities, and recipient performance in the first year(s) of the award.

FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Program Objective

A. Program Objective

Coral reefs and associated seagrass and mangrove communities are among the most complex and diverse ecosystems on earth. They support important fishing and tourism industries, protect coasts from wave and storm damage, build tropical islands, contain an array of potential pharmaceuticals, and provide essential services like food security, livelihood, and culture, among other benefits.

As shallow-water, near shore communities, coral reef ecosystems are ecologically closely linked to adjacent watersheds and are highly vulnerable to human activity. Stresses in the coral reef environment include poor water quality from runoff and inadequate sewage treatment, destructive fishing practices, sedimentation, recreational overuse and misuse, and impacts from climate change and ocean acidification.

To address these threats, Congress passed the Coral Reef Conservation Act of 2000 (Act), codified at 16 U.S.C. §§ 6401-6409, which established the NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program (CRCP) and provided guidance for allocation of Federal funding toward efforts to conserve coral reef ecosystems in the U.S. and internationally. As required in the Act, one of the primary functions of the CRCP is to provide matching grants and cooperative agreements of financial assistance to external partners for coral reef conservation projects consistent with the Act and CRCP priorities. CRCP implements several financial assistance programs under the Act's authority, including the CRCP International Coral Reef Conservation Cooperative Agreements solicited in this announcement. More information about CRCP is available at https://coralreef.noaa.gov/.

In 2018, the NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program established the new NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program Strategic Plan (Strategic Plan-2018) which uses a resilience-based management approach, focused on conservation that supports the ability of corals to withstand and recover from stress. The Strategic Plan-2018 includes international priorities within the selected pillars and is available at https://www.coris.noaa.gov/activities/strategic_plan2018/. Please refer to the Program Priorities in Section I.B. for details on the components of the Strategic Plan-2018 that are relevant to this funding announcement. This announcement will not award funding for construction projects. A construction project is defined as an award in which the major purpose of the project or program is construction.

As directed by the Act, NOAA also issued Coral Reef Conservation Grant Program Implementation Guidelines, most recently published at 75 Fed. Reg. 48934 (Aug. 12, 2010) and available at http://go.usa.gov/3FT7z. The most recent Guidelines cover 2010-2015 but their approach generally remains in effect until further notice unless otherwise stated in a NOAA CRCP funding announcement posted on Grants.gov. Please note that CRCP funding announcements will be issued only on Grants.gov, not in the Federal Register as stated in the Guidelines, and the Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notice referenced in the Guidelines is updated as described in Section VI.B. of this NOFO.

B. Program Priorities

B. Program Priorities

CRCP's international efforts focus on strategic goals, objectives, regions, and specific coral reef conservation activities where the CRCP can have the greatest impact while building on NOAA strengths, partnerships, resources, and expertise. In FY 2022, the CRCP will accept applications for cooperative agreements and grants up to a two-year project period focused on building international capacity for the effective ecosystem-based management of coral reef ecosystems. Priority will be given to proposals that support the following selected international priority objectives from the Strategic Plan-2018:

1. Fisheries Pillar: Improve Fisheries Sustainability

Strategy F1 Objectives – Provide data essential for coral reef fisheries management:

a. Support baseline and performance biological or socioeconomic assessments of priority marine protected areas (MPAs) to better understand human perceptions and behaviors and realize ecological benefits.

b. Encourage engagement of community and fishing partners in Coral Program-supported fisheries research and monitoring to incorporate more local and traditional knowledge into data collection and analysis and increase common understanding of the goals for and uses of fisheries related data.

Strategy F2 Objectives – Build capacity for coral reef fisheries management:

a. Assist domestic and foreign partner agencies in prioritizing needs for fisheries and Marine Protected Area managers, such as ecosystem-based fisheries management, planning, valuation, and sustainable financing, and leverage tools and strategies to help meet those prioritized needs.

b. Assist domestic and foreign partner agencies to identify successful enforcement models and solutions and share information across the jurisdictions.

c. Additionally, the program seeks to leverage expertise in fisheries management and enforcement capacity building, and social marketing and outreach to provide technical support to the jurisdictions and partnering foreign governments.

2. Climate Pillar: Increase Resilience to Climate Change.

Strategy C1 Objectives:

a. Support the implementation of resilience-based management approaches.

b. Support the necessary training and capacity on the resilience-based management approaches, principles and tools.

c. Support activities to address potential climate change impacts in resilience-based management planning efforts.

d. Support the collection, sharing and integration of multiple types of monitoring and modeling to provide a dynamic understanding of the system to inform decisions and allow for adaptive management

3. Restoration Pillar: Restore Viable Coral Populations

Strategy R2 Objectives - Prevent avoidable losses of corals and their habitat

a. Support emergency response to and restoration of areas impacted by physical events (e.g., vessel groundings, hurricanes) in high-value areas (e.g., areas of high coral cover).

Strategy R3 Objectives – Enhance population resilience

a. Continue to build domestic and foreign partnerships, while leveraging the network of the Coral Reef Consortium, to conduct restoration projects at ecologically meaningful scales.

Strategy R4 Objectives – Improve coral health and survival

a. Support research and development of control techniques for coral diseases and corallivores.

b. Implement control techniques at the appropriate scale to prevent additional losses of corals.

To be competitive, a proposal should effectively address at least one (1) of the Strategic Plan-2018 Objectives described above (except Priority 5 below which requires at least two (2) Objectives), and should identify and address at least one of the five(5) Priorities listed below. Applicants that wish to address more than one (1) Priority in a single proposal should clearly identify each in the application narrative, and all summaries; and may increase the proposal funding cap accordingly (See section II.A Funding Availability). Any applicant that intends to sub-award Priorities 3-5 should clearly demonstrate their administrative capacity to do so.

All proposals should include evidence of engagement in the implementation of the award through a letter of support from each affected country's government agency responsible for planning and/or management of coastal and marine resources. If the letter cannot be obtained by the application deadline, describe the reason and name the government official who has certified that they will sign one if the CRCP requests a proposal revision. The letters should

be attached with the application in grants.gov.

PRIORITIES 1-2
Proposals identifying and addressing priorities 1-2 are expected to be awarded as COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS where the recipient CAN EXPECT substantial NOAA involvement through collaboration, participation, or intervention in project performance.
1. PRIORITY 1 - Wider Caribbean Marine Protected Area Management Capacity: To be competitive, applications for this Cooperative Agreements priority should include activities that support the ongoing coordination of the MPAConnect Learning Network of MPA Managers, including:
a. developing and implementing capacity building activities, including but not limited to peer-to-peer exchanges, webinars, technical assistance, mentorships, and small grants, that address regional and site-specific priorities identified in two management capacity assessments of MPConnect members conducted in 2011 and 2017 (2011 Assessment: https://www.gcfi.org/pdf/MPAConnect/MPAManagementCapacity%20Assessment_2011_en.pdf; 2017 Assessment: https://arcg.is/nHjn8);
b. facilitating the exchange of information on research findings, best management practices and resources between MPAConnect members and the wider MPA and coral reef conservation community;
c. conducting new management capacity assessments for new and existing MPAConnect member sites; and
d. reporting on assessment findings and capacity-building efforts.
Proposed coordination and capacity building activities should include engagement with all of the following 31 MPAConnect non-U.S. member MPA sites:
The Bahamas: Andros Barrier Reef National Park; Pelican Cays Land and Sea Park; South Berry Islands Marine Reserve; Moriah Harbour Cay National Park
Belize: Half Moon Caye and Blue Hole Natural Monuments; Port Honduras Marine Reserve; South Water Caye Marine Reserve; Turneffe Atoll Marine Reserve
The British Virgin Islands: Hans Creek Fisheries Protected Area; Horseshoe Reef Fisheries Protected Area; Wreck of the Rhone Marine Park
Grenada: Molinière/Beauséjour Marine Protected Area; Sandy Island/Oyster Bed Marine Protected Area
Honduras: Monumento Natural Marino Archipiélago Cayos Cochinos; Zona de Protección Especial Marina Sandy Bay-West End; Zona de Protección Especial Marina Turtle Harbour-Rock Harbour
Mexico: Parque Nacional Arrecife Alacranes; Parque Nacional Arrecifes de Xcalak; Parque Nacional Costa Occidental de Isla Mujeres Punta Cancún y Punta Nizuc; Banco Chinchorro Reserva de la Biosfera
The Dutch Caribbean: Saba Marine National Park; Saba Bank National Park; Sint Eustatius

Marine National Park
St. Lucia: Soufriere Marine Management Area; Pitons Management Area; Point Sable Environmental Protected Area
St. Vincent and the Grenadines: South Coast Marine Conservation Area; Tobago Cays Marine Park
The Turks and Caicos Islands: Columbus Landfall National Park; Princess Alexandra Land and Sea National Park; West Caicos Marine National Park.
Competitive applications for this Cooperative Agreements priority should also support efforts to detect, monitor and respond to the outbreak of Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease (SCTLD) at coral reef sites across the wider Caribbean region and Bermuda, including, where needed, in the following countries and territories: Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bermuda, Bonaire, Cayman Islands, Colombia, Costa Rica, Curacao, Dominica, Dominican Republic, The Dutch Caribbean (Saba, Sint Eustatius and Sint Maarten), Grenada, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and The Turks and Caicos Islands. SCTLD coordination activities include but are not limited to: coordinating surveillance, data collection, data standardization and data management, building capacity for response and rescue, informing coral reef practitioners in unaffected jurisdictions, and reporting research findings.
2. PRIORITY 2 - Micronesia Marine Management and Capacity Building: To be competitive, applications for Cooperative Agreements in Micronesia should conduct work in all of the following independent countries under compacts of free association with the United States: the Republic of the Marshall Islands; the Republic of Palau; and the Federated States of Micronesia. The proposed project/s may include:
a. Capacity building
b. MPA and sustainable fisheries management;
c. Ecosystem-based management
d. Community climate change adaptations
e. Compliance and enforcement
f. Integrated biophysical and socioeconomic monitoring that will inform adaptive management ; and/or
f. Communication to the public, stakeholders and policy makers about project impacts and lessons learned on coral reef conservation. Applicants should describe how they intend to work closely with policy/decision makers and other relevant stakeholders to ensure that, to the greatest extent possible, the information is considered when making decisions about coral reef conservation.

PRIORITIES 3-5:
Proposals identifying and addressing priorities 3-5 are expected to be awarded as GRANTS

where the recipient can expect to perform the project WITHOUT any substantial NOAA involvement through collaboration, participation, or intervention in project performance. Proposed projects should increase management capacity, as well as address key strategies and objectives in the NOAA CRCP strategic plan. Priority will be given to activities and geographies listed in the section below; however, all international tropical coral reef locations are eligible. Applicants seeking funding under this category should address specific capacity gaps as identified through planning processes and that have been prioritized for action identified as follows:

3. PRIORITY 3 - Implement Coral Reef Management Priorities in Southeast Asia and the South Pacific: Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Indonesia, Kiribati, Malaysia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu. To be competitive, applicants seeking funding under this category should address:
a. Coral reef conservation and resilience-based management capacity needs and/or priority actions identified through management planning and capacity building initiatives, including but not limited to activities supported by United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and NOAA. Project examples include the implementation of the following: resilience-based management, assessments for vulnerability and/or resilience to a changing climate, ecosystem approach to fisheries management, marine protected area (MPA) management effectiveness, MPA management plans, marine spatial planning and zoning plans, sustainable tourism plans, MPA community-based enforcement plans, MPA Sustainable Finance, and MPA Community-based management focused on coral reef conservation, sustainable financing for MPAs, coral restoration for MPAs, and planning for coral disease events; and
b. Learning Networks or Communities of Practice for supporting coral reef management capacity, sharing of best practices, and Knowledge Management in one or more countries.

4. PRIORITY 4 - Implement Caribbean MPA Management activities: To be competitive, projects submitted for funding under this category should address specific and discrete management capacity needs identified by MPA managers at one or more of the non-U.S. 31 MPA sites that are part of the MPAConnect network in the Wider Caribbean (see the listing of eligible MPA locations here). To be competitive, applicants under this proposal category should address specific needs identified in either of two assessments of management capacity conducted in 2011 and 2017 within these 31 sites, coordinate directly with the managing authority for each MPA included in the proposal and indicate the extent to which capacity gaps would be filled if the proposal was funded. Information on specific MPA management needs is available in the 2011 “Management Capacity Assessment of Selected Coral Reef Marine Protected Areas in the Caribbean” found at

https://www.gcfi.org/pdf/MPAConnect/MPAManagementCapacity%20Assessment_2011_en.pdf. Summaries of priority needs identified in the 2017 management capacity assessment can be found here: https://arcg.is/nHjn8.

5. PRIORITY 5 - Implement Activities in support of Micronesia Challenge 2030 Additional Goals: To be competitive, applicants seeking funding under this category should address additional goals of the Micronesia Challenge 2030 initiative (https://1.bp.blogspot.com/-Zx2SlgM58fQ/YJtk8pKWmcI/AAAAAAAAAx4/KPHsAR7MwSskfIOwqaTUXFj4Z3CsVh-7ACLcBGAsYHQ/w907-h698/MICRONESIA_CHALLENGE_final2.png) that focus on coral reef conservation, and should also effectively address at least two (2) of the CRCP Strategic Plan pillars and at least two (2) of their corresponding objectives, listed in section B. Program Priorities.
To be competitive, applicants seeking grant funding under this Priority, applicants should address one of the following areas:
Development of sustainable fisheries management plans
Compliance information management

NOAA CRCP does not allow NOAA employees or associates to assist in writing an application or otherwise provide an unfair advantage to applicants in this competitive program. If a letter of support from NOAA staff or associates is included, it will not be considered. If an applicant proposes to collaborate with specific NOAA programs or staff, however, the applicant may include a statement from NOAA staff verifying that they would collaborate with the project applicant if the project receives an award, confirming the degree and nature of the collaboration, and acknowledging the utility of the proposed work. Such specific collaboration does not confer any competitive advantage on the application; applicants may propose general collaboration with NOAA or not mention collaboration in a project, or NOAA may propose collaborating on a project in funding negotiations or an award offer. Federal agencies are not eligible to receive Federal assistance under this announcement, including travel or salary costs, without specific statutory authority. Refer any questions about application procedures, proper completion of forms, the selection process, and potential collaboration or support by NOAA or non-NOAA Federal employees or contractors to the official listed in Agency Contacts, Section VII. of this NOFO.

C. Program Authority

Authority for NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program is provided by Section 6403 of the Coral Reef Conservation Act, 16 U.S.C. 6401-6409.

II. Award Information

A. Funding Availability

Anticipated funding for International Coral Reef Conservation Grants and Cooperative Agreements is approximately $1,000,000 in FY 2022 and approximately $1,000,000 in FY 2023 and is subject to funding availability for both years.

PRIORITIES 1-2, Cooperative Agreements with a project period of up to two years, NOAA expects proposals between the range of $250,000 and $300,000 for Year 1 and between the range of $250,000 and $300,000 for Year 2. Depending on availability of funds, NOAA anticipates awarding two (2) awards in FY 2022, one each in the Wider Caribbean and Micronesia priority regions, subject to the policies described below in Section II.B. Project/Award Period and Multi-Year Funding.
PRIORITIES 3-5, Grants with a project period of up to two years, NOAA expects proposals between the range of $50,000 and $100,000 for Year 1 and between the range of $50,000 and $100,000 for Year 2. NOAA anticipates awarding four (4) to seven (7) awards in FY 2022, subject to the policies described below in Section II.B., Project/Award Period and Multi-Year Funding.

The lead applicant on any proposal will be responsible for ensuring that allocated funds are used for the purposes of, and in a manner consistent with, this program, including any funds awarded to an eligible sub-awardee.

There is no guarantee that funds will be available for this federal funding opportunity or that any proposal will be selected for funding. If an applicant incurs any costs prior to receiving an award agreement signed by an authorized NOAA official, the applicant does so at their own risk of not being selected and these costs not being included in a subsequent award. Proposal preparation costs shall not be included as direct costs within the project application budget although these may be included in indirect costs (See IV.B.4. Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement). In addition, NOAA and DOC will not be responsible for project costs if this program fails to receive funding. Recipients and sub-recipients are subject to all federal laws and agency policies, regulations, and procedures applicable to federal financial assistance awards. Applicants must comply with all existing NOAA grants or cooperative agreements terms and conditions and otherwise eligible to receive federal awards in order to be considered for or receive funding under this competition.

B. Project/Award Period

Applications should use an anticipated start date of October 1, 2022. The period of performance for projects in this program should be up to 24 months. NOAA anticipates multi-year or incremental funding, that is, funding for approved projects will usually only be

provided for the amount budgeted for the first year of the program, and NOAA has no obligation to provide any additional funding in connection with that award. Continuation of an award to increase funding or extend the period of performance is at the sole discretion of NOAA. Continued funding is contingent upon satisfactory performance, continued relevance to the CRCP mission and priorities, and funding availability.

C. Type of Funding Instrument

Successful applicants will enter into a grant or a cooperative agreement with NOAA's Coral Reef Conservation Program as described under the terms of this announcement. Federal cooperative agreements are different from traditional grants in that they allow for substantial federal involvement in the planning and implementation of funded projects. Substantial involvement on the part of NOAA may include the collaboration and participation of NOAA Federal Program Officers and/or NOAA staff in project development, planning and implementation; technical monitoring of award activities beyond ordinary stewardship; and coordination of funded projects with other CRCP-funded efforts as needed. As the Federal government will be substantially involved in the project for cooperative agreements, applicants may suggest anticipated Federal roles and responsibilities in their proposals. Applicants tentatively selected for potential funding are expected to discuss how the CRCP might be involved in the project during project negotiations. Additional information about substantial involvement is described in Section 5.C. of the Department of Commerce Grants and Cooperative Agreements Manual, currently available at http://www.osec.doc.gov/oam/grants_management/policy/.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are institutions of higher education, non-profit organizations, non-U.S. government natural resource management agencies (including state, local, territorial, and tribal government entities), foreign public entities and foreign organizations, and for-profit organizations. An eligible organization may include proposed sub-recipients, contractors, or other collaborators, which may include governmental authorities, effectively forming a team.

NOAA employees are not permitted to assist in the preparation of applications. NOAA CRCP staff are available to provide general information on programmatic goals and objectives, ongoing coral reef conservation programs/activities, and regional funding priorities. For proposals that involve collaboration with current NOAA projects or staff, NOAA employees may provide a limited statement verifying the nature and extent of the

collaboration and confirming prior coordination activities. Letters of support from NOAA employees are not allowable and will not be included among the application materials considered by merit reviewers.

Federal agencies and employees are not allowed to receive funds under this announcement, but may serve as collaborative project partners. In-kind services from federal agencies and employees cannot be considered as part of an applicant's match on shared costs. If federal agencies are collaborators, applicants are expected to provide detail on the planned level of federal engagement in the application. Examples may include, but are not limited to, partnership services, serving in a review capacity, or participating in priority task teams, working groups, or leadership teams.

DOC/NOAA supports cultural and gender diversity and encourages women and minority individuals and groups to submit applications to this program. In addition, 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. DOC/NOAA encourages applications involving any of the above institutions to apply.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

NOAA CRCP financial assistance awards are subject to statutory and regulatory matching fund policies. Federal funds for any coral conservation project under 16 U.S.C. § 6403(b) may not exceed 50 percent of the total cost of the award. Therefore, any coral conservation project under this Grant Program requires a 1:1 contribution of non-Federal matching funds.

Cost sharing or matching is defined by 2 C.F.R. § 200.1 as "the portion of project costs not paid by Federal funds or contributions (unless otherwise authorized by Federal statute)." Any shared costs or matching funds and all contributions, including cash and third party in-kind contributions of property and services, will be accepted as part of an applicant's cost sharing or matching when the contributions meet the criteria listed in 2 C.F.R. § 200.306(b). That is, the contributions: (1) Are verifiable from the non-Federal entity's records; (2) Are not included as contributions for any other Federal award; (3) Are necessary and reasonable for accomplishment of project or program objectives; (4) Are allowable under Subpart E—Cost Principles of 2 C.F.R. § 200; (5) Are not paid by the Federal Government under another Federal award, except where the Federal statute authorizing a program specifically provides that Federal funds made available for such program can be applied to matching or cost sharing requirements of other Federal programs; (6) Are provided for in the approved budget when required by the Federal awarding agency; and (7) Conform to other provisions

of 2 C.F.R. § 200, as applicable. Contributions can come from a variety of public and private sources and can include third party in-kind goods and services such as private boat use and volunteer labor. In addition, applicants are permitted to combine contributions for allowable costs from multiple non-Federal partners in order to meet the 1:1 match requirement, consistent with the standards described in 2 C.F.R. § 200.306.

Applicants should specify the source(s) of match in the budget narrative and may provide or be asked to provide letters of commitment to confirm stated match contributions. Applicants whose proposals are selected for funding will be bound by the percentage of cost sharing reflected in the award document signed by the NOAA Grants Officer. Applicants should be prepared to carefully document matching contributions for each project selected for funding. Valuation of proposed cost sharing is described in 2 C.F.R. § 200.306(d)-(k).

Applicants may choose to designate part or all of their Federally-negotiated indirect costs as match. This may be convenient because the valuation of such costs has already been Federally-approved and documentation is readily available. Refer to the “Indirect Costs” policies in Section IV.B.3. of this NOFO.

The NOAA Administrator or designee may waive all or part of the matching requirement if the Administrator determines that the project meets the following two requirements identified in 16 U.S.C. § 6403(b)(2):

1. No reasonable means are available through which an applicant can meet the matching requirement, and
2. The probable benefit of such project outweighs the public interest in such matching requirement.

If the proposal lacks sufficient matching funds, the applicant may include a separate document in which the applicant requests a waiver to the matching funds requirement as described in Section 6403(b)(2) of the Act. Although the CRCP will consider these requests, in most cases, waivers of matching funds will not be provided for applicants to this competition. Please address all waiver requests to Jennifer Koss, CRCP Director, at Jennifer.Koss@noaa.gov and provide a detailed justification explaining the need for the waiver, the total amount of matching funds requested to be waived, attempts to obtain sources of matching funds, how the benefit of the project outweighs the public interest in providing match, and any other circumstances preventing the availability of match. For more details see Section III.B.

C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility

This section is left blank intentionally.

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Address to Request Application Package

The standard SF-424 application package is available at http://www.grants.gov. For a preview and to submit a paper application, these forms can be accessed at http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html#sortby=1. To be competitive, include the Federal financial assistance forms SF 424, SF4 24A, SF 424B, and CD 511. If unable to access the application package online, it may be requested by contacting Scot Frew, at Scot.Frew@noaa.gov.

B. Content and Form of Application

Applicants should submit a complete standard NOAA financial assistance application package in accordance with the guidelines in this document. Each application must be written in English and it should include the following information to increase competitiveness:

1. A one-page coversheet that includes:
   a. Short title of the proposed Cooperative Agreement project and requested start date;
   b. Applicant organization name, address, phone number and classification (nonprofit, university, government, etc.);
   c. Principal investigator responsible for conducting the project and their contact information;
   d. The applicant organization Authorized Representative and their contact information including address, phone and fax numbers, and e-mail address;
   e. Grant Program: CRCP International Coral Reef Conservation Grants and Cooperative Agreements;
   f. Geographic locations of the project and the site names;
   g. Amount of grant funds requested per year (FY2022 and FY2023);
   h. Amount of matching funds provided per year (FY2022 and FY2023); and
   i. One paragraph project summary emphasizing the project objectives and activities.

2. Project Description (Proposal Narrative)

Each application narrative should clearly describe the proposed work including the budget narrative in 30 pages or less excluding attachments/appendices (letters of support, resumes, maps, appendices, and support documents), which should not exceed 30 pages in total. All application materials should use a legible 11- or 12-point font with 1-inch margins on all sides. To be competitive, electronic applications should be submitted as Adobe Acrobat (.PDF). Applicants should not submit images like JPG files. The title page and table of

content will not count towards the project description 30-page limit. Project descriptions that exceed the 30-page limit will be shortened by removing pages at the end of the proposal narrative (see element 3 of the component section below) before it is forwarded to merit reviewers for evaluation. Pages excised from lengthy applications will not be reviewed or considered. Applications that are incomplete, unclear, or contain numerous typographical errors may not be understood effectively by reviewers, resulting in lower evaluation scores; therefore, applicants are advised to review their application materials closely before they are submitted to the agency for consideration.

Appendices should be limited to materials that directly support the main body of the proposal (e.g., resumes, references, lists of relevant work products or reports, detailed methodologies, data sources, detailed budget information, letters of collaboration, letters of support, lists of data sources, and maps). Applicants should paginate their proposal and any appendices. Appendices should not total more than 30 total pages. Federal Financial forms and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) information, and other information provided (e.g., Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement) to complete the federal forms can be submitted separately or combined and submitted in one PDF document without counting towards the appendix page limit or the proposal page limit. Applications should not be bound or stapled, but can be bundled, for example, by rubber bands or binder clips. All applications and attachments must be written in English. Letters of support in other languages should be accompanied by English language translations.

Please keep in mind that Grants Online has a 5-minute time limit for downloading and uploading files, and so we recommend applicants do not exceed five megabytes for the total electronic file size of the proposal narrative and appendices combined. Files that cannot be opened or downloaded will not be reviewed.
In addition to the cover sheet, each application should INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS in order to be competitive:

a. Strategic Plan-2018: The specific Strategic Plan-2018 objective addressed by the Cooperative Agreement proposal and the specific priority of Priorities 1-6 list in above section B. Program Priorities.

b. Justification for proposed activities: The proposal narrative should describe each of the discrete projects or tasks proposed in the application. Sufficient detail should be provided to enable reviewers to evaluate the relevance and applicability of proposed work to program priorities described in Section I.B of this announcement; to determine the technical/scientific merit of the proposed work; to adequately review the qualifications of the applicants; and to assess whether the proposed scope of work raises any concerns with regard to federal policy

considerations, such as those related to the National Environmental Policy Act, Endangered Species Act, Historic Preservation Act, and Marine Mammal Protection Act.

Applicants should clearly describe how each activity or project will directly benefit the coral reef management efforts of the countries' agencies and identify how the proposal fits into applicant and government strategy for site management. All projects funded through this competition are expected to measurably decrease threats or restore coral reef health and to increase benefits to stakeholders who depend on them for income, safety and security. To achieve this outcome, applicants should specify the activities they will undertake as well as the specific outputs and products that are expected to result from funded proposals. Specific outputs may include: Support to management authorities in the form of management plans, legislation, regulations or policies, best management practices, communication and outreach tools, and/or applied research aimed at enhancing local capacity to conserve coral reef resources.

Applicants should describe their past experience in the selected sites or countries and whether there are any environmental conservation agreements in place with the local partners and government authorities. It is strongly recommended that applicants collaborate with local government authorities in the project design and preparation of the application.

c. Proposal Goals and Objectives: what the application seeks to accomplish;

d. Implementation strategy (methods and activities in relation to Proposal Goals and Objectives): if any bio-physical and/or socio-economic monitoring activities are proposed, the description should include details of proposed methodologies.

For Cooperative Agreements, the applications may describe proposed substantial involvement with NOAA. The grantee should expect substantial agency collaboration, participation, and/or intervention in project performance. Substantial involvement exists when: responsibility for the management, control, direction, or performance of the project is shared by the assisting agency and the grantee; or the assisting agency has the right to intervene (including interruption or modification) in the conduct or performance of project activities.

e. Timetable: A task timetable with interim benchmarks linked to clearly defined work products or objectives;

f. Local needs: A paragraph that describes how the proposal will address relevant local management needs in the project area. It should include a clear means to incorporate the

results into management needs of the agencies with authority over coral reef ecosystems in the project location;

g. Outcomes: A table with a column for project outcomes and another column for their corresponding concrete outputs/products; NOAA will track these to ensure that they comply with Section 508 standards and are appropriate for public dissemination (See Section VI.C of this announcement);

h. Partner justification and roles: To be competitive, evidence of support for the project from the local management authority where the work is conducted at specific sites should indicate that the project supports local management objectives. In those cases where training is proposed, indication that participants will apply these techniques at their local sites is requested. To be competitive, an application should include evidence of coordination with relevant national and regional project partners, including a list of agencies consulted in developing the proposal and assurances that any necessary permits will be secured prior to the use of U.S. Federal funds. If the applicant is not a regional organization (involving two or more countries), please include evidence of support from a regional organization that has a working relationship and demonstrated experience working with the local government authorities that manage the marine areas addressed;

i. Evaluation method: A methodology to evaluate the success of the grant or cooperative agreement activities;

j. Qualifications: Summary description of the qualifications of the individuals and principal investigators who will conduct the grant or cooperative agreement;

k. Permits and Approvals: It is the responsibility of the applicant to obtain all necessary federal, state, and local government permits and approvals for the proposed work. Applicants must provide a list of all known 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. Applicants should include this required element even if permits are not required.

Failure to apply for and/or obtain federal, state, and local permits, approvals, letters of agreement, or failure to provide environmental analyses where necessary (i.e., NEPA and environmental assessment) will delay or prevent the award of funds for projects that have been preliminarily selected for funding.

For work proposed within National Marine Sanctuaries, National Parks, National Seashores, and other federally designated managed areas, it is the responsibility of the applicant to

request and obtain any necessary permits or letters of agreement from the appropriate government agencies prior to commencement of an award. For applicants who propose to conduct research or monitoring activities that may affect any coral species that are listed under the Endangered Species Act, you will likely need an Endangered Species Act Section 10(a)(1)(A) permit.

l. Other submissions: The applications should also state in the Project Narrative or supporting material whether the project has been submitted for funding consideration elsewhere.

3. Budget Narrative and Justification

In order to allow reviewers to evaluate the appropriateness of all costs, applications should include a detailed budget narrative and a budget justification broken out by individual task. The budget narrative should match the dollar amounts included on all required forms and clearly link to the project narrative. Please explain each calculation and provide a narrative justification to explain expenditures for each budget category. The budget narrative should describe, by category of expenditure, the total funding needed to accomplish the objectives described in the project narrative for the entire award period. Please explain how categorical costs are derived in sufficient detail to enable reviewers to determine if costs are 'allowable and reasonable' according to the cost principles referenced in 2 CFR 200, Subpart E. Budget narrative categories should correspond to the standard object class categories listed in Section B of the SF-424A. For additional details, please review the budget guidance provided at: https://coast.noaa.gov/data/coasthome/funding/_pdf/forms/budget-narrative-guidance-for-NOAA-grants.pdf and the GMD Budget Narrative Guidance at http://www.ago.noaa.gov/grants/training.html.

Applicants should include detailed budget information regarding all known cost-based contracts and sub awards, and indicate the basis for the cost and price estimates for contracts in the narrative. Applicants should describe activities to occur or products or services to be obtained and indicate the applicability or necessity of each to the project. Each sub award should include form SF-424A. Detailed budget information includes:

i. Name of identified qualified sub recipient or contractor, affiliation, contact information, and method of selection. For “to be determined,” describe plans for selection.

ii. Period of Performance. Include the dates for the performance period. If it involves a number of tasks, include the performance period for each task.

iii. Scope of Work. List and describe the specific activities or tasks to be performed.

iv. Criteria for Measuring Accountability: Include an itemized line item breakdown as well as total contract/award amount. If applicable, include any indirect costs paid under the

cost-based contract/award and the indirect cost rate used.
v. Itemized Budget. Include categories used in program budget for subrecipients or cost-based contractors. If applicable, include any direct cost paid under the subaward or contract and the indirect cost rate used.

All sub awards and contracts must be made consistent with the requirements of 2 CFR 200.331-200.333 for sub awards, and 200.317-200.327 for procurements.

For any equipment, a description of the item and associated costs or price is required, including a description of how it will be used in the project. Note that equipment is defined as tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost which equals or exceeds the lesser of the capitalization level established by the non-federal entity for financial statement purposes, or $5,000. See 2 CFR 200.1 and 2 CFR 200.317-327.

Non-federal applicants should identify, if this information is known when submitting the grant application, who they plan to request that NOAA transfer equipment or property ownership titles to after the project ends. The decision on grant ownership requests will be made by the Grants Officer during the grant closeout process.

The cost or price, purpose, and method of selection for identified and planned acquisition contracts should be thoroughly justified in the Budget Narrative. Describe products or services to be obtained and indicate the applicability or necessity of each to the project. Procurements are subject to policies described in 2 CFR 200.317-327. For any to be determined," describe plans for selection.

The budget narrative should also provide, to the extent possible, detailed information on travel, including costs, a description of anticipated travel, destinations, the number of travelers, and a justification of how the requested travel is directly relevant to the successful completion of the project. If actual trip details are unknown, applicants should state the basis for the proposed travel charges. Applicants should allocate travel funds for any coordination meetings at regional or national levels.

If a foreign air carrier is anticipated to be used for any portion of travel, prior approval is required under the DOC Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions, Section G, at https://www.commerce.gov/sites/default/files/2020-11/DOC%20Standard%20Terms%20and%20Conditions%20-%2012%20November%202020%20PDF_0.pdf and therefore, such travel should be included in the proposal to avoid having to request prior approval after the project starts. Applicants

may factor in travel costs for participation in an annual NOAA Grants Management Division (GMD) workshop for recipients.

4. Federal forms from the SF-424 Form family (http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html#sortby=1), as applicable, should be included with the application:

a. Standard Form 424 (SF-424): Application for Federal Assistance (7/2003 version or newer). Applicants requesting Federal funding under this program should submit a copy of SF-424, 'Application for Federal Assistance'. If the applicant submits a hard copy of the application, the SF-424 should be signed and dated by the organization's authorized representative and used as the cover page for the application. An electronic signature and date stamp will automatically be included on SF-424 forms submitted via Grants.gov.

b. Standard Form 424A (SF-424A): Budget Information for Non-construction Programs (includes a separate form for each year of funding and for each proposed sub-award. Applicants are required to submit a SF-424A Budget Form to summarize the budget for the proposed scope of work. The first column of Sections A and B shows the federal funds requested, while the second column of Sections A and B shows the non-federal matching funds provided for the project. Total award funding is shown in the final column of Section B. Non-federal funding is broken out by source in Section C. Forecasted cash needs in Section D should be inclusive of all funding for multiyear projects. Federal and non-federal funds should be expended at a similar rate throughout the course of the project. Section E may be left blank. Section F summarizes the direct charges in line 21 and lists the indirect charges requested; please show the rate used in line 22. Multi-year awards will have out year funds shown in Section E. Please note that completion of the SF-424A form as described above represents NOAA's preference and may not be consistent with the instructions that accompany the SF-424A form. All budget figures should match the funding requested on the application cover sheet and correspond with the descriptions contained in the project and budget narratives. Each proposed sub-award of $30,000 or more should be accompanied by a separate SF-424A form to fully document the proposed sub award budget.

c. Standard Form SF-424B: Assurances for Non-Construction Programs Applicants are required to submit a signed SF-424B, 'Assurances for Non-Construction Programs'.

d. Standard Form 424C - Budget Information - Construction Programs (if applicable).

e. Standard Form 424D - Assurances - Construction Programs (if applicable).

f. Form CD-511: Certification Regarding Lobbying Applicants are required to submit a

Form CD-511, 'Certifications Regarding Lobbying.

g. Standard Form LLL (SF-LLL): Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (if applicable).

5. Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable)
The proposed budget may include an amount for indirect or “Facilities and Administrative” costs if the applicant has an established indirect cost rate with the federal government. Indirect costs are essentially overhead costs for basic operational functions (e.g., utilities, rent, and insurance) that are incurred for common or joint objectives and, therefore, cannot be identified specifically within a particular project. See 2 CFR 200.1 and 200.412-415.

A copy of the current, approved negotiated indirect cost agreement with the federal Government should be included with the application package. If an award recipient does not have a current indirect cost rate with any federal agency, the recipient may request to use the de minimis rate (10% of modified total direct costs) described at 2 CFR 200.414. Alternatively, the negotiation and approval of a new rate is subject to the procedures required by NOAA and the DOC. The U.S. Department of Commerce, Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions require that recipients within 90 days of the award start date, submit to the address listed below documentation (indirect cost proposal, cost allocation plan, etc.) necessary to perform the review.
Lamar Revis, Grants Officer
NOAA Grants Management Division
1325 East West Highway, 9th Floor
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910
Lamar.Revis@noaa.gov

The de minimis indirect cost rate should be used for all federal awards. Non-federal entities may use this rate indefinitely, but may choose to negotiate an indirect (F&A) cost rate at any time. This de minimis rate option is not available to state and local governments, and Indian tribes.
In addition to the standard elements described above, applicants may upload additional supporting documentation, such as the resumes and qualifications of applicants, and letters of support or statements of collaboration, by using the 'Optional Form' box under 'Other Attachments' in Grants.gov during the application submission process.

MATCHING FUNDS: Intended sources of cost sharing or matching funds and whether they have been secured should be described in the application. Applications should include letter(s) of commitment to provide cost share from the organization(s) providing matching funds or third party in-kind contributions. Refer to Section III.B. Cost Sharing or Matching

Requirement, for more information.

6. Data Sharing Plan

a. Environmental data and information collected or created under NOAA grants or cooperative agreements must be made discoverable by and accessible to the 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 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 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. 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. The NOAA Program is not offering specific data management technical guidance. Proposals are to describe their proposed approach. Use of open-standard formats and methods is encouraged. For more information about data sharing in this program, contact the agency official listed in Section VII. of this funding announcement.

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.

e. NOAA's Administrative Order on the Management of Environmental Data Management and Information is available under:
http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/ames/administrative_orders/chapter_212/212-15.html

f. Principal Investigators should indicate how and when they have made their data accessible and usable by the community in the past.

g. More information about the NOAA Data Sharing Policy is available on NOAA's Environmental Data Management Committee website at:
https://nosc.noaa.gov/EDMC/PD.all.php

h. Data Management Guidance to Proposal Writers:
Responsible NOAA Official for questions regarding this guidance and for verifying accessibility of data produced by funding recipients: Scot Frew, Federal Program Officer, NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program, Scot.Frew@noaa.gov, 240-533-0774.

Data Accessibility: The NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program requires that public access to grant/contract-produced data be enabled. Funding recipients are expected to submit data to NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI), which will provide public access and permanent archiving. The NOAA Program has held preliminary consultation with NCEI regarding these pending data.

Technical Recommendations: The NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program is not offering specific technical guidance. Proposals are to describe their proposed approach. Use of open-standard formats and methods is encouraged.

Resources: NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program resources for data sharing or archiving have already been identified; proposals should not include such costs (unless data volume is expected to exceed 20GB).

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.

7. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Environmental Compliance -- Under (NEPA), NOAA must analyze the potential environmental impacts of projects or proposals seeking funding from NOAA.

After the application is submitted, NOAA may require additional information to fulfill NEPA and other compliance requirements. If NOAA determines that an environmental assessment is required, applicants may also be requested to assist in drafting the assessment. Applicants may also be required to cooperate with NOAA in identifying and implementing feasible measures to reduce or avoid any identified adverse environmental impacts of their proposal. The failure to do so shall be grounds for the denial of 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.

The applicants selected for funding must complete questions 3, 5, 11, and 13 of the Environmental Compliance Questionnaire for National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Federal Financial Assistance Applicants accessible at https://www.nepa.noaa.gov/docs/NOAA-Grants-Questionnaire-final.pdf 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).

Question 3. Describe the proposed activity's location, including geographic coordinates, river mile markers, etc., and indicate whether it includes unique geographic areas of notable recreational, ecological, scientific, cultural, historical, scenic, or aesthetic importance (Examples include, but are not limited to: coral reefs; marine protected areas; national marine sanctuaries; essential fish habitat; habitat area of particular concern; critical habitat designated under the Endangered Species Act; park or refuge lands; wild or scenic rivers; wetlands; prime or unique farmland; sites listed on the National Register of Natural Landmarks; sites listed or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places; sites that are ecologically significant or critical areas including areas that are normally inundated by water or areas within the 100-year flood plain).

Question 5. Would the proposed activity degrade or disturb previously undisturbed areas?

Question 11. List all other interested or affected Federal, state, and local agencies; Tribal governments, nongovernmental organizations; minority or economically disadvantaged communities; and individuals. Describe listed entities involvement, activity, or oversight regarding the proposed activity.

Question 13. List all Federal, state, or local permits, authorizations, waivers, determinations, or ongoing consultations that would be required for the proposed activity to comply with all applicable environmental laws and regulations. Provide the date the permit, authorization, waiver, or determination was obtained or would be obtained. Provide copies of the permits, authorizations, waivers, or determinations you have secured.

Detailed information on NOAA compliance with NEPA can be found at the following NOAA NEPA websites: http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/ including NOAA Administrative Order 216-6a for NEPA, https://www.noaa.gov/organization/administration/nao-216-6a and the Council on Environmental Quality implementation regulations under https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=30655823cf5f0dcb1c5ee59d01883b89&mc=true&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title40/40chapterV.tpl

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/.
Applicants are also required to use the Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (www.dnb.com) as identified in OMB guidance published at 2 CFR 25, found at http://go.usa.gov/xZZn4. A recipient's DUNS number must correspond with the recipient's information in SAM.Gov.

Applicants should allow a minimum of thirty days to receive a DUNS number and to be registered in SAM.Gov, or to assure that required annual updates are complete. Applicants are strongly encouraged not to wait until the application deadline date to begin the application process through www.grants.gov.

Each applicant, unless excepted under 2 C.F.R. 25.110, is required to be registered in SAM before submitting its application, provide a valid unique entity identifier in its application, and continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or application under consideration by a Federal agency. A Federal agency may not make an award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and SAM requirements, and if the applicant has not fully complied by the time the agency is ready to make an award, the agency may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive and award and my use

that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.
Applicants are strongly encouraged not to wait until the application deadline date to begin the application process through www.grants.gov.

D. Submission Dates and Times

Applications must be received and validated through www.grants.gov on or before 11:59 p.m. U.S. Eastern Time, on Wednesday, December 1, 2021. Due to the COVID-19 situation and NOAA staff telework status, paper format applications delivered at our physical address will NOT be accepted for this FY22-23 application cycle.

Applicants should consider the possibility of winter storms and other unforeseen impacts from natural hazards that could affect their Internet access and use of Grants.gov on or before application due dates. Applicants should be aware that localized hazardous weather or other situations beyond their control affecting their ability to submit packages before deadlines may not result in changes to the application deadline.

E. Intergovernmental Review

Funding applications submitted under this competition are subject to Executive Order (EO) 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs." It is the state agency's responsibility to contact their state's Single Point of Contact (SPOC) to find out about and comply with the state's process under EO 12372. To assist the applicant, the names and addresses of the SPOCs are listed on the Office of Management and Budget's website < https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/SPOC-4-13-20.pdf >.

F. Funding Restrictions

1. Indirect Costs

Applicants are permitted to request indirect costs if their organization has an established Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement with a federal agency that covers the period of the award. Applicants requesting indirect costs should submit a copy of their current and signed indirect cost rate agreement with their application package. More information on establishing or negotiating indirect cost rates can be found in Section IV.B.8 of this solicitation.

Indirect-cost-rate-agreement documentation is not required for subawardees; however, indirect cost rates at the negotiated levels should be paid by the primary awardee. Under 2 CFR 200.414 Indirect (F&A) Costs, any applicant that has never received a negotiated indirect cost rate may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs which may be used indefinitely. Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs, but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both pursuant to 2

CFR 200.403 Factors affecting allowability of costs. If chosen, this methodology once elected must be used consistently for all Federal awards until such time as a cooperator chooses to negotiate for a rate, which the non-federal entity may apply to do at any time. The negotiation and approval of a rate is subject to the procedures required by NOAA and the DOC Standard Terms and Conditions Section B.06.

2. Ineligible projects:
The following projects will not be eligible for funding: (1) Activities that constitute legally required mitigation for the adverse effects of an activity regulated or otherwise governed by state or federal law; (2) Activities that constitute mitigation for natural resource damages under federal or state law; and (3) Activities that are required by a separate consent decree, court order, statute or regulation.

3. Cost Principles:
Recipients are subject to the 2 CFR 200, Subpart E Cost Principles, as well as any DOC regulations that may be in effect at the time of award. Generally, allowable costs include salaries, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, and training, as long as the costs are determined to be necessary, reasonable, and allocable to the award.

G. Other Submission Requirements

The standard NOAA funding application package is available at www.grants.gov (Grants.gov) by searching the Funding Opportunity Number or the Assistance Listings number (11.482). Application packages, including all letters of collaboration, shall be submitted through the “Apply” function on Grants.gov. The Grants.gov site contains directions for submitting an application. Applicants must register with Grants.gov before any application materials can be submitted. To use Grants.gov, applicants must have a Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number (www.dnb.com) and be registered in the SAM.gov, which requires periodic renewals. Refer to Section IV.C. for details on receiving a DUNS number and registering with SAM.gov.

After electronic submission of the application through Grants.gov, the person submitting the application will receive two email messages from Grants.gov within the next 24 to 48 hours updating them on the progress of their application. The first email provides a tracking number and confirm receipt of the application by the Grants.gov system. The second email indicates that the application has either been successfully validated by the system before transmission to the grantor agency 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 when the application has been downloaded by the federal agency.

If an applicant submits multiple electronic versions of the proposal, the applicant should advise the federal agency of the tracking number that should be withdrawn. Applicants shall not electronically submit packages with files embedded within files as any such files may not be reviewed or factored into the merit review process.

The federal program office has a process to review for completeness. Administrative reviews generally take place after deadlines because the majority of applicants apply just before deadlines. If there are no time constraints and resources are available, the federal agency may reach back to applicants who have submitted incomplete packages.

V. Application Review Information

A. Evaluation Criteria

The following evaluation criteria are used for the applications.

1. Importance and/or relevance and applicability of proposed project to the program goals (25%): Reviewers will assess the extent to which there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and/or relevance to NOAA, Federal (other than NOAA), regional, state, or local activities. For this competition, reviewers will assess whether the proposal demonstrates the need for the proposed coral reef management activity to fill gaps in the country/region. Reviewers will assess the extent to which the project would fulfill and advance the Strategic Plan-2018 and Program Priorities in Section I.B of this NOFO and the extent to which the project is likely to yield information or data that will directly influence decision making and management.

2. Technical/scientific merit (20%): Reviewers will assess the extent to which the approach is technically sound and/or innovative, if the methods are appropriate, and whether there are clear project goals and objectives. Reviewers will assess the extent to which the proposed approach would be effective in fulfilling the Strategic Plan-2018 and Program Priorities in Section I.B of this NOFO. For this competition, reviewers will assess whether the proposal demonstrates coordination with applicable ongoing local, regional, and international coral reef management activities.

3. Overall qualifications of applicants (20%): Reviewers will assess the extent to which the applicant possesses the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project. Regional organizations that work in multiple countries and have a working relationship and demonstrated experience working with the local government authorities that manage the marine areas addressed will be highly

qualified.

4. Project costs (20%): Reviewers will assess the proposed project budget to determine the extent to which it is realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time-frame. For this competition, the budget should reflect the ability of the applicant to complete the work with the funding and in the timing proposed.

5. Outreach and education (15%): NOAA assesses whether this project provides a focused and effective education and outreach strategy regarding NOAA's mission to understand and protect the Nation's natural resources. The following factors will be considered: a) Whether the project has a plan for dissemination of the data and outcomes to the decision makers and the stakeholders impacted by management decisions; and b) Whether there key audiences identified who will benefit from the project outcomes.

B. Review and Selection Process

An initial administrative review is conducted on each application to assure that it is timely, responsive, and complete. NOAA, in its sole discretion, may continue the review process for applications with non-substantive issues that may be easily rectified or cured. Applications that meet the minimum requirements will be reviewed by at least three independent peer reviewers with coral reef and/or fisheries management experience during a merit-based review and ranking process. Appropriate mechanisms will be implemented to avoid potential conflicts of interest during the proposal review process. Each reviewer will be asked to individually evaluate and rank proposals using the weighted evaluation criteria above. Proposal evaluations will be based exclusively on information included in the application. Merit reviewer ratings will be used to produce a rank order of the proposals.

The Selecting Official, or their designee, may negotiate the funding level or other major aspects of the proposal, and the Selecting Official will make the final recommendation for award to the Grants Officer based on the rank order and selection factors below, who is authorized to obligate Federal funding and execute the award.

NOAA may select all, some, or none of the applications, or part of any application, may ask applicants to work together or combine projects, may defer applications to the future, or may reallocate funds to different funding categories, to the extent authorized. If no proposal is funded in the current fiscal period, a proposal may be considered for funding in another fiscal period, e.g. FY 2024 without NOAA repeating the competitive process outlined in this announcement.

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, NOAA GMD, and Office for Coastal Management officials. Applicants should also note that modifications to projects may be necessary as a result of NOAA's efforts to comply with NEPA and other legislation.

C. Selection Factors

The Selecting Official, an official within the Office for Coastal Management (or their designee) anticipates recommending applications for funding in rank order unless an application is justified to be selected out of rank order based upon one or more of the following selection factors:

1) Availability of funding;
2) Balance/distribution of funds: a) by geographic area, b) by type of institutions, c) by type of partners, d) by research areas; or e) by project types;
3) Whether this project duplicates other projects funded or considered for funding by NOAA or other federal agencies;
4) Program priorities and policy factors set out in Sections I.A. and I.B.;
5) An applicant's prior award performance;
6) Partnerships and/or participation of targeted groups; and
7) Adequacy of information necessary for NOAA staff to make a NEPA determination and draft necessary documentation before recommendations for funding are made to the NOAA GMD.

The Selecting Official or designee may negotiate the funding level of the proposal. Hence, awards may not necessarily be made to the highest-scored applications. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified that their application was not among those recommended for funding. Unsuccessful applications submitted in hard copy will be kept on file in accordance with NOAA records requirements and then destroyed.
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. Applicants may be asked to modify objectives, work plans or budgets, and provide supplemental information

required by the agency prior to the 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.

D. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

CRCP may contact top ranking applicants to submit revised applications according to reviewer comments. This notification may include a request to make modifications or revisions to the project proposal and budget narrative.

Successful applicants will be notified in approximately September 2022. The anticipated start date for cooperative agreement awards made under this competition is October 1, 2022, dependent on funding availability, acceptable completion of all NOAA/applicant negotiations including NEPA and environmental compliance analysis and permit requirements, and the provision of other supporting documentation as requested.

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified by e-mail that their application was not recommended for funding after the final selection package has been approved by the NOAA GMD, which is expected to be approximately September 2022. Unsuccessful applications submitted to this competition will be retained for three years and then destroyed.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

Applications recommended for funding by the Selecting Official will be forwarded to the NOAA Grants Management Division (GMD) by the Program Office. The applicant will be notified by the program office by email that their application was recommended for funding and remains under consideration. The applicant should be aware that the notification by the program office is not the official award notice and funding is not assured. Official notification happens only when the applicant receives an award notice from the Grants Officer electronically. The official notice of award is the Commerce Form 450 (CD-450), Financial Assistance Award, issued by the NOAA Grants Officer Electronically through NOAA’s electronic grants management system, Grants Online.

Risk Review: After applications are proposed for funding by the Selecting Official, the Grants Office will perform administration reviews. 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. NOAA reserves the right to reject an application in its entirety where information is uncovered that raises a significant risk with respect to the responsibility or suitability of an applicant. The final approval of selected applications and issuance of awards will be made by the NOAA Grants Officer.

In addition, award documents provided by NOAA may contain special award conditions limiting the use of funds for activities that have outstanding environmental compliance requirements and may lead to modification of the project's scope of work. These special award conditions may also include other compliance requirements for the award and will be applied on a case-by-case basis. Applicants are strongly encouraged to review award documents carefully before accepting a Federal award to ensure they are fully aware of the relevant terms that have been placed on the award.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

1. Pre-Award Notice

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. Refer to http://go.usa.gov/cXC7A.

2. Uniform Administrative Requirements

Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements at 2 C.F.R. 200, implemented by the Department of Commerce at 2 C.F.R. 1327.101, apply to awards in this program. Refer to http://go.usa.gov/cXCJQ.

3. Terms and Conditions

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. A current version is available for review at https://www.commerce.gov/sites/default/files/2020-11/DOC%20Standard%20Terms%20and%20Conditions%20-%2012%20November%202020%20PDF_0.pdf. Also, NOAA will apply administrative terms, and a current version is at https://www.noaa.gov/sites/default/files/legacy/document/2021/Mar/Administrative%20Standard%20Award%20Conditions%20for%20NOAA%20Financial%20Assistance%20Awards%2002.18.2021.pdf. In addition, award documents provided by NOAA may contain special

award conditions, including those limiting the use of funds for compliance activities such as outstanding environmental compliance requirements, which will be applied on a case-by-case basis, and requirements for submitting progress reports.

4. NEPA Requirements

NOAA must analyze the potential environmental impacts, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), for applicant projects or proposals that 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, NOAA Administrative Order 216-6A for NEPA, https://www.noaa.gov/organization/administration/nao-216-6a, 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.

5. Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

Department of Commerce regulations implementing the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. Sec. 552, are found at 15 C.F.R. Part 4, Public Information. These regulations set forth rules for the Department regarding making requested materials, information, and records publicly available under the FOIA. Applications submitted in response to this Federal Funding Opportunity may be subject to requests for release under the Act. In the event that an application contains information or data that the applicant deems to be confidential commercial information that should be exempt from disclosure under

FOIA, that information should be identified, bracketed, and marked as Privileged, Confidential, Commercial or Financial Information. In accordance with 15 CFR § 4.9, the Department of Commerce will protect from disclosure confidential business information contained in financial assistance applications and other documentation provided by applicants to the extent permitted by law.

6. Data Sharing Requirements

Refer to Section IV.B.5 (Data Sharing Plan) of this announcement for details on data sharing requirements.

7. Limitation of Liability

Funding for programs listed in this notice is contingent upon the availability of continuing Congressional appropriations. Applicants are hereby given notice that funds have not yet been appropriated 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.

C. Reporting

Award recipients will be required to submit financial and performance (technical) progress reports consistent with 2 CFR 200.328 - .330 and DOC Standard Terms and Conditions electronically through NOAA’s electronic grants management system, Grants Online. Performance reports must be submitted on a semi-annual schedule no later than 30 days following the end of each 6- month period from the start date of the award. Financial reports must be submitted every 6 months by the end of April and October during the period of the award in accordance with the DOC Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions. NOAA will provide instructions for submitting financial and progress reports upon request.

A comprehensive final report is due 120 days after the award expiration date along with copies of all products developed under the award. Copies of all materials (including but not limited to brochures, posters, videos, DVDs, publications, reports, management plans, public service announcements, workshop proceedings, etc.) produced through the award, along with copies of any reports submitted by subcontractors as part of the award, must be provided to the program office within 90 days of the end of the award. Except where limited by law, regulation, policy or security, recipients are requested to include a statement on the front page of all products to indicate the material is "Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited." If the applicant has requested publication costs, resulting journal publications must be made available to the public free of charge.

Successful applicants will be requested to ensure that all interim progress reports indicate whether financial reports have been submitted to NOAA's GMD and are up-to-date. In their final progress report, applicants will be asked to (a) clearly state the resulting overall impact of their project with respect to coral reef conservation or within the coastal management community; and (b) certify that "Final financial reports have been submitted to NOAA's GMD and a final funding draw-down has been made through the Automated Standard Application for Payments (ASAP)."

If equipment or tangible personal property is purchased with grant funds, applicants shall submit an inventory to the extent required by the Office of Management and Budget Uniform Guidance set out at 2 C.F.R. Part 200.313. As necessary, SF-428 forms may be attached as an appendix to the final progress report or submitted directly to the NOAA program officer.

Recipients must inventory tangible property at least once every two years and at award closeout. As necessary, SF-428 forms may be attached as an appendix to progress reports or submitted directly to the NOAA program officer.

Recipients must submit reports at least annually and at award closeout on the status of real property in which the federal government retains an interest, unless the federal interest in the real property extends 15 years or more. As necessary, SF-429 forms may be attached as an appendix to progress reports or submitted directly to the NOAA program officer.

The program office recommends that if the equipment is no longer needed, recipients are encouraged to request disposition instructions for equipment approximately 150 days before the project period ends to allow sufficient time to have equipment disposition requests addressed before a project ends. Equipment disposition instructions typically require that recipients “Submit Additional Closeout Documents" as an award action request in Grants Online. NOAA will provide instructions for disposition in accordance with OMB requirements.

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 issued. 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 $30,000. See 2 CFR 170 at https://ecfr.federalregister.gov/.

VII. Agency Contacts

The Federal Program Officer and technical point of contact for the International Coral Reef Conservation Cooperative Agreements is Scot Frew, who can be reached by e-mail at scot.frew@noaa.gov.

VIII. Other Information

Funds awarded cannot necessarily pay for all the costs that the recipient might incur in the course of carrying out an award. Generally, costs that are allowable include salaries, equipment and supplies, as long as these are "necessary and reasonable" specifically for the purpose of the award. Allowable costs are determined by reference to the OMB Uniform Guidance at 2 C.F.R. Part 200, codified by the Department of Commerce at 1327.101. All cost reimbursement sub-awards (e.g. subgrants, subcontracts) are subject to those federal cost principles applicable to the particular type of organization concerned.

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.

Vitas of principal investigator(s). As a standard practice NOAA requires that resumes be on file and are maintained in Grants Online for PIs of competitive awards.