

NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

Table of Contents

NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY	1
Executive Summary.....	1
Full Text of Announcement.....	2
I. Funding Opportunity Description	2
II. Award Information	3
III. Eligibility Information	4
IV. Application and Submission Information.....	4
V. Application Review Information	7
VI. Award Administration Information	10
VII. Agency Contacts.....	15
VIII. Other Information	16

Executive Summary

Federal Agency Name

OAR Climate Program Office (CPO)

Funding Opportunity Title

Climate Program Office (CPO) FY2026 Earth System Science and Services Partnership

Announcement Type

Competitive

Funding Opportunity Number

NOAA-OAR-CPO-2026-33326

Assistance Listing Number(s)

11.431

Dates

Full applications for all competitions must be received by 11:59 p.m. Pacific Time, on **October 26, 2026.**

Funding Opportunity Description

The Earth System Science and Services Partnership (ESSSP) supports research, programs, projects and other activities related to NOAA's mission, primarily through collaborations among scientists and professionals in areas of mutual interest associated with understanding and predicting changes in the Earth's atmosphere, oceans, coasts, land, and ice and their interrelated effects on ecosystems, weather and hazards, and communities and infrastructure. Areas for collaborative efforts under this agreement include research and analysis; observations and monitoring; data impact evaluations; numerical modeling; and service development and stakeholder engagement.

Eligible applicants must be academic institutions of higher learning which offer doctoral degrees in NOAA-related sciences; consortia of academic institutions of higher learning which offer doctoral degrees in NOAA-related sciences; or non-profit research institutions. Multi-institution applications will not be accepted.

The total NOAA funding amount available for the ESSSP is anticipated to be approximately \$10,000,000.

This announcement provides requirements and details for the technical program, evaluation criteria, and competitive selection procedures.

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Program Objective

Earth system variability and change present society with significant economic, health, safety, and security challenges. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) addresses these challenges by advancing Earth system research, observations, monitoring, modeling, assessments, social science research, interdisciplinary decision-support research and services, outreach, education, engagement, and partnership development. These investments support NOAA's mission of "Science, Service, and Stewardship" and are designed to advance our understanding of changes to the Earth system and to foster the application and use of this knowledge to improve community resilience to environmental hazards.

B. Program Priorities

The recipient is expected to possess unique capabilities to address the following seven priority areas.

1. Improved scientific understanding of the Earth system, Earth system change, and associated impacts to ecosystems, communities, and infrastructure. There is a need to advance understanding of Earth system change to improve weather prediction and multidecadal forecasts that provide information to support societal preparedness and resilience efforts. This is particularly true for monthly-to-decadal timescales and at the regional and local levels, scales highly relevant to planning and decision making. Research on the connections between weather and atmospheric processes, for instance, is necessary to understand how precipitation patterns and severe weather events, such as hurricanes, severe heat, drought, and wildfires, are evolving. Advancements in knowledge on community vulnerabilities to environmental hazards can inform how changes in the Earth system affect and interact with both built infrastructure and social, ecological, and economic systems to help identify options for enhancing resilience and minimizing economic disruption. Research is also needed to improve understanding of how changes in global ocean circulation affect the Earth system and their subsequent impacts on coastal regions, including sea level rise, ocean acidification, and effects on living marine resources.
2. Leading development, co-development, or enhancement of cutting-edge tools and services to support decision-making by community and business leaders. Engagement with information users and decision makers is key to ensuring accessibility and usability of data, information, and tools. Assessments across spatial and temporal scales can advance the integration of knowledge across many disciplines to provide decision makers with authoritative information on risks, impacts, and vulnerabilities, and can identify gaps in understanding to help prioritize future research and development efforts. When pursued on a sustained basis, assessments build relationships between researchers and users that are critical for informing decisions across scales.
3. Co-development of comprehensive, long-lead-time research and numerical modeling that is fundamental to advancing understanding of the physical, dynamical, chemical, and biogeochemical processes governing the behavior of the atmosphere, oceans, land, and ice components and their interactions with ecosystems. If applicable, these efforts should leverage and advance the development and use of NOAA modeling systems.
4. Engagement to ensure that communities, businesses, and other decision makers understand the risks associated with environmental hazards and severe weather and have access to relevant and useful strategies, information resources, and tools to identify and address risks and support resilience.

5. Developing a scientific workforce to lead cutting-edge research in areas such as Earth system science, atmospheric science and meteorology, hydrology, observations and modeling, and/or operational areas related to promoting resilience to severe weather, drought, and wildfires. Continued improvements in the understanding of the Earth system rely on training and promoting the most promising scientists to grow a workforce qualified to advance scientific understanding and decision support. This will include management of a post-doctoral fellowship program to support the next generation of researchers who are advancing innovative research relevant to NOAA's mission, with a focus on advancing science to observe, understand, model, and predict environmental variability across seasonal and longer timescales. The program pairs early-career scientists with hosting institutions within the U.S. to advance timely, mission-relevant scientific research.
6. Engaging and convening communities of scientists, stakeholders, decision makers, businesses, and members of the public to promote common understanding of scientific advances, tools, data products, and other resources and co-develop solutions. This requires capabilities to coordinate and support online and in-person meetings, travel coordination, facilitation, and engagement for scientific and community audiences.
7. Robust evaluation and monitoring methodologies to quantitatively and qualitatively demonstrate the effectiveness of proposed activities.

C. Program Authority

NOAA's authority to support the research and associated activities anticipated by this FFO is contained in one or more of the following:

- 15 U.S.C. 2904, National Climate Program Act;
- National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS) Public Law 115-423, 109-430, & 113-86
- 15 U.S.C. 2931-2934, Global Change Research Act;
- 15 U.S.C. 111, Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act;
- 49 U.S.C. 44720(b), which authorizes NOAA, *inter alia*, to maintain agreements and support research projects in meteorology through the use of private and Governmental research facilities; and
- 33 U.S.C. 893(a), the provision of the America COMPETES Act, which authorizes NOAA to conduct, develop, support, promote, and coordinate formal and informal educational activities at all levels to enhance public awareness and understanding.

II. Award Information

A. Funding Availability

The total NOAA funding amount available for the award is anticipated to be approximately \$10,000,000.

B. Project/Award Period

This program announcement is for support of a program for one year, with an anticipated start date of December 1, 2026.

C. Type of Funding Instrument

The funding instrument used for this program will be a cooperative agreement, since several NOAA organizations and programs will be substantially involved in working with the award recipient. Examples include, but are not limited to, collaborative research activities, exchange of personnel through adjunct faculty positions and/or Inter-Personnel Agreements (IPAs), co-mentoring of students, participation in community meetings and workshops, and co-authorship on peer-reviewed publications.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants must be academic institutions of higher learning which offer doctoral degrees in NOAA-related sciences; consortia of academic institutions of higher learning which offer doctoral degrees in NOAA-related sciences; and non-profit research institutions. Multi-institution applications will not be accepted.

B. Cost Share or Matching Requirement

No cost sharing is required under this program.

C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility

None.

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Address to Request Application Package

Application packages are at grants.gov. For applicants without Internet access, please contact Kathleen Palermo by mail at NOAA Climate Program Office (R/CP1), SSMC3, Room 12712, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910 to obtain an Application Package.

B. Content and Form of Application

Proposals should total no more than 20 pages in length, single spaced (not including supporting documents). It is strongly recommended that Times New Roman 12-point font, or an equivalent, be used. Federally mandated forms, tables of content, principal investigator (PI) and staff vitae, budget tables, current/pending support, and any letters of support are not included within the page count.

Multi-year proposals up to a maximum of five years will be considered; however, funding beyond the first year will be dependent upon satisfactory performance and the availability of funds. December 1, 2026 is to be used as the proposed start date on proposals unless otherwise directed by the NOAA Program Officer.

The application elements listed below are required before an award can be made. Failure to submit all elements by the deadline will result in the application not being reviewed if the omissions are not corrected prior to the deadline. The program office will make an effort to notify the applicant of any omissions, but there is no guarantee this can occur prior to the application deadline. The aforementioned application elements are as follows:

1. Title Page. The title page must be officially authorized by the institutional representative. The PI and institutional representative should be identified by full name, title, organization, telephone number, and address. It is requested that the title page clearly indicates the total amount of requested Federal funds.
2. Abstract Page. An abstract should be included and should contain an introduction of the problem, rationale, and a brief summary of work to be completed. The abstract should appear on a separate page, headed with the proposal title, institution's investigators, total proposed cost, and budget period.
3. Results from Prior Projects. The results of relevant projects should be described, including their relation to the currently proposed work. Reference to each prior award should include the title, agency, award number, PIs, period of award, and total award. The section should be a brief summary and should not exceed five pages total.

4. Project Narrative. The proposed project must be completely described, including identification of the problem, relevance to the program priorities, and scientific merit. Benefits of the proposed project to the general public and the broader scientific and educational community must be discussed.

5. Data/Information Sharing Plan:

Proposals submitted in response to this announcement must include a data management plan (up to 2 pages). See section VI.B Administrative and National Policy requirements below for additional information of what the plan should contain.

6. Budget, Proposed Budget Justification, and Other Required Forms. Applicants must submit a Standard Form (SF) 424, Application for Federal Assistance, including a detailed budget using the SF 424A, Budget Information–Non-Construction Programs. (The forms are available on grants.gov.) Applicants should pay careful attention to show the yearly budget breakout on the SF 424A for multi-year proposals. In addition, the body of the proposal should include a separate table showing total and annual budgets (if multi-year) corresponding with the project description. Additional text to justify expenses should be included as necessary. Additional budget narrative guidance provided by NOAA Grants

Management Division can be found here:

https://www.noaa.gov/sites/default/files/atoms/files/gmd_budget_narrative_guidance_-_05-24-2017_final.pdf

If indirect charges are included in the budget, a copy of the institution's current Negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA) must be included. The NICRA does not, however, count as part of the required page limit. See Section VI.B Administrative and National Policy requirements below for additional information.

The application must also include form SF-424B, Assurances – Non-Construction Programs; form CD-511, Certifications; and (5) SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities.

7. Vitae. Abbreviated curriculum vitae are requested with each proposal. Reference lists should be limited to all publications in the last five years, with up to five other relevant papers.

8. Current and Pending Support. For each investigator, submit a list which includes project title, supporting agency with grant number, investigator months, dollar value, and duration. Requested values should be listed for pending support.

9. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Questionnaire. This program does not require any NEPA questions to be answered as part of the application.

Proposals submitted in response to this Announcement must include a Data Management Plan (up to 2 pages). See Section VI.B., Administrative and National Policy Requirements, below for additional information on what the plan should contain.

C. Unique entity identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)

Excerpt 2 CFR Appendix-I-to-Part-200(b)(5)(ii)

- Each applicant (unless the applicant is an individual or Federal awarding agency that is excepted from those requirements under 2 CFR 25.110(a) or (b)) is required to:
 1. Be registered in SAM before submitting its application;
 2. Provide a valid unique entity identifier (UEI) in its application; and
 3. Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency.
- NOAA may not make a Federal award to an applicant:
 - Until the applicant has complied with all applicable UEI and SAM requirements.

- If an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time NOAA is ready to make a Federal award, NOAA may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another applicant.

Grants.gov

After receiving a UEI from SAM.gov, applicants must register their organization in Grants.gov. Register early to avoid delays.

To apply:

- Register for a user ID and password.
- Process time: 3-5 days or up to 4 weeks if all steps are not completed correctly.
- Start early and read the instructions before the deadline. For organization registration, see Grants.gov registration info <https://www.grants.gov/applicants/applicant-registration>.

Keep Grants.gov and SAM registrations current. This is essential for your applications to be accepted. Create a new SAM user account, as CCR usernames won't work. Registration on SAM is mandatory.

- Stay registered: Organizations already on Grants.gov don't need to register again.
- Maintain: Ensure your SAM and Grants.gov passwords are up-to-date.
- Check status: For more info or to verify a current registration, visit www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM.
- Once an organization submits their registration in SAM.gov, it can take at least ten business days for it to become active.

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

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

In the event of a confirmed systems issue, NOAA reserves the right to accept an application in an alternate format prior to the application deadline. Problems with an applicant organization's computer system or equipment are not considered system issues. Similarly, an applicant's failure to do the following are not considered systems issues:

- Complete the required registration
- Ensure that a registered Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) submits the application
- Read an email message with guidance from Grants.gov.

eRA Commons

Prior to submitting in Grants.gov, applicant organizations must first register in eRA Commons.

- The eRA registration can start while an organization is waiting for their final SAM.gov approval of their UEI.
- eRA Commons registration must be completed by the Signing Official (SO). An SO is someone in the organization with signatory authority such as a President, Executive Director, Owner, etc.
- Instructions can be found here: <https://www.era.nih.gov/register-accounts/register-in-era-commons.htm>
- Organizations registering in the eRA Commons for the first time should allow 2-4 weeks to complete the registration process.

Common Errors

- A Project Director/Principal Investigator (PD/PI) account must be created and entered on the Applicant Identifier field of the SF-424 for a successful submission.
- The applicant's congressional district number must be included in the SF-424 for a successful submission. It must be the two-letter abbreviation, a hyphen, and the three-digit district number. For example: State of Virginia, 1st Congressional District would be "VA-001."
- Refer to the "Common Errors" section of the NOAA Fisheries site for more information on common errors that can impede a successful submission:
<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/funding-financial-services/grant-application-process>

D. Submission Dates and Times

The deadline for receipt of proposals is 11:59 p.m. Pacific Time, on October 26, 2026. For proposals submitted through grants.gov, a date and time receipt indication is included and will be the basis of determining timeliness. Proposals received after the deadline will be rejected or returned to the sender without further consideration.

E. Intergovernmental Review

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

F. Funding Restrictions

Funding beyond the first year will be dependent upon satisfactory performance and the continued availability of funds.

G. Other Submission Requirements

All applications should be submitted through grants.gov. If an applicant does not have Internet access, Program Manager Todd Christenson should be contacted by mail at NOAA Climate Program Office (R/CP1), SSMC3, Room 12705, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910 for hard copy submission instructions.

Faxed or emailed copies of applications will not be accepted.

H. Address for Submitting Proposals

Todd Christenson

Program Manager

NOAA/OAR/Climate Program Office

1315 East West Highway, Rm. 12705

Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

V. Application Review Information

1. Importance/relevance and applicability of proposed projects to the program goals	Maximum Points: 5
(Weight = 25%) This criterion ascertains whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and/or relevance to NOAA priorities. For the NOAA Earth System Science and Services Partnership competition, this includes:	

(a) Can the proposed research activities lead to improved understanding of NOAA-related science by society? (b) What is the likelihood that the proposed scientific collaborations will develop research personnel across the full spectrum of NOAA-related sciences, with a stronger understanding of these sciences and NOAA fields of work? (c) What is the degree and quality of collaboration with multiple NOAA units throughout the project?	
2. Technical/scientific merit	Maximum Points: 5
(Weight = 20%) This criterion assesses whether the approach is technically sound and/or innovative, if the methods are appropriate, and whether there are clear project goals and objectives. For this competition, this includes: (a) Was a sound strategy developed to identify, develop, and manage the scientists that will enter the program and work with NOAA professionals across numerous science areas? (b) Were focused scientific objectives and strategies, including data management considerations, project milestones, and timelines used?	
3. Overall qualifications of applicants	Maximum Points: 5
(Weight = 30%) This criterion ascertains whether the applicant possesses the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project. For this competition, this includes: (a) Does the applicant clearly document past experience with identifying, developing, and managing numerous science support activities, including project coordination, logistics support (meetings, travel), human resources support, and general business administration support and generally have the technical expertise to carry out the project? (b) Has the applicant demonstrated the ability to conduct successful program management and coordinate a variety of different research activities with numerous NOAA and external partners?	
4. Project costs	Maximum Points: 5
(Weight = 15%) This criterion evaluates the budget to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time-frame. For this competition, this includes: (a) Is there a clear and efficient plan in place to identify, develop, and manage a variety of different research projects? (b) Through the proposed project plan, does the applicant demonstrate the ability to manage resources effectively?	
5. Engagement and Education	Maximum Points: 5

(Weight = 10%)

NOAA assesses whether this project provides focused and effective engagement outreach, and/or education to advance societal preparedness and NOAA's mission. For this competition, this includes:

- (a) Will the proposed project support result in a richer understanding and knowledge of NOAA-related science and the application of that science to support societal decisions?
- (b) Will research results be communicated in an effective way to develop broader awareness and application?

Evaluation Criteria

Review and Selection Process

An initial administrative review/screening is conducted to determine compliance with requirements/completeness. All proposals will be evaluated and individually ranked in accordance with the assigned weights of the above evaluation criteria by an independent peer panel review. Four to seven NOAA employees, primarily representing units that will likely be involved with scientific collaborations with the applicant, may be used in this process. The merit reviewers' ratings are used to produce a rank order of the proposals. The Selection Official selects proposals after considering the peer panel reviews and selection factors listed below. In making the final selections, the Selecting Official will award in rank order unless the proposal is justified to be selected out of rank order based upon one or more of the selection factors.

Selection Factors

The Merit review ratings shall provide a rank order to the Selecting Official for final funding recommendations. The Selecting Official shall award in the rank order unless the proposal is justified to be selected out of rank order based upon one or more of the following factors:

1. Availability of funding
2. Balance and distribution of funds:
 - a. By research area
 - b. By project type
 - c. By type of institution
 - d. By type of partner
 - e. Geographically
3. Duplication of other projects funded or considered for funding by NOAA/federal agencies.
4. Program priorities and policy factors.
5. Applicant's prior award performance.
6. Partnerships with/Participation of targeted groups.
7. Adequacy of information necessary for NOAA staff to make a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) determination and draft necessary documentation before recommendations for funding are made to the NOAA Grants Officer.

Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

Subject to the availability of funds, review of applications will occur during Fall 2026, and funding decisions will be made in November 2026. Funding is expected to begin in December 2026. December 1, 2026 should be used as the proposed start date on proposals, unless otherwise directed by the Program Officer.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

PRE-AWARD COSTS. Written pre-approval is required from NOAA for pre-award costs but prior approval may be waived for awards designated by NOAA as research. Award recipients expend pre-award costs up to 90 days before the period of performance start date at the applicant's own risk and in accordance with the applicant's internal policies and procedures. Such costs are allowable only to the extent that they would have been allowable if incurred after the date of the Federal award. This does not include direct proposal costs (as defined at 2 CFR 200.460). In no event will NOAA or the Department of Commerce be responsible for direct proposal preparation costs. Pre-award costs will be a portion of, not in addition to, the approved total budget of the award. Pre-award costs expended more than 90 days prior to the period of performance start date require additional approval from the Grants Officer. This does not change the period of performance start date.

GRANTS OFFICER SIGNATURE. Proposals submitted in response to this solicitation are not considered awards until the Grants Officer has signed the grant agreement. Only Grants Officers can bind the Government to the expenditure of funds. The Grants Officer's digital signature constitutes an obligation of funds by the federal government and formal approval of the award.

LIMITATION OF LIABILITY. Funding for programs listed in this notice is contingent upon the availability of funds. Applicants are hereby given notice that funds may not have been appropriated yet for the programs listed in this notice. Publication of this announcement does not oblige NOAA to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

UNIFORM ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS, COST PRINCIPLES, AND AUDIT REQUIREMENTS. Through 2 C.F.R. § 1327.101, the Department of Commerce adopted Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards at 2 C.F.R. Part 200, which applies to awards in this program. Refer to <http://go.usa.gov/SBYh> and <http://go.usa.gov/SBg4>.

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

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE (DOC) TERMS AND CONDITIONS. Successful applicants who accept a NOAA award under this solicitation will be bound by the DOC Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions. This document will be provided in the award package in eRA at <http://www.ago.noaa.gov> and at <https://www.commerce.gov/oam/policy/financial-assistance-policy>.

BUREAU TERMS AND CONDITIONS. Successful applicants who accept an award under this solicitation will be bound by bureau-specific standard terms and conditions. These terms and conditions will be provided in the award package in NOAA's Grants Online system. For NOAA awards only, the Administrative Standard Award Conditions for National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Financial Assistance Awards U.S. Department of Commerce are applicable to this solicitation and may be accessed online at <https://www.noaa.gov/organization/acquisition-grants/financial-assistance>

HUMAN SUBJECTS RESEARCH. For research projects involving Human Subjects an Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval or an exemption determination will be required in accordance with DOC Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions Section G.05.i "Research Involving Human Subjects" found at <https://www.commerce.gov/oam/policy/financial-assistance-policy>.

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (NEPA). NOAA must analyze the potential environmental impacts, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), for applicant projects or proposals which are seeking NOAA federal funding opportunities. Detailed information on NOAA compliance with NEPA can be found at the following NOAA NEPA website: <http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/>, including our NOAA Administrative Order 216-6 for NEPA, http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/NAO216_6.pdf, and the Council on Environmental Quality implementation regulations, http://energy.gov/sites/prod/files/NEPA-40CFR1500_1508.pdf. Consequently, as part of an applicant's package, and under their description of their program activities, applicants are required to provide detailed information on the activities to be conducted, locations, sites, species and habitat to be affected, possible construction activities, and any environmental concerns that may exist (e.g., the use and disposal of hazardous or toxic chemicals, introduction of non- indigenous species, impacts to endangered and threatened species, aquaculture projects, and impacts to coral reef systems). In addition to providing specific information that will serve as the basis for any required impact analyses, applicants may also be requested to assist NOAA in drafting an environmental assessment, if NOAA determines an assessment is required. Applicants will also be required to cooperate with NOAA in identifying feasible measures to reduce or avoid any identified adverse environmental impacts of their proposal. Failure to do so shall be grounds for not selecting an application. In some cases if additional information is required after an application is selected, funds can be withheld by the Grants Officer under a special award condition requiring the recipient to submit additional environmental compliance information sufficient to enable NOAA to make an assessment on any impacts that a project may have on the environment.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT. Department of Commerce regulations implementing the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. Sec. 552, are found at 15 C.F.R. Part 4, Public Information. These regulations set forth rules for the Department regarding making requested materials, information, and records publicly available under the FOIA. Applications submitted in response to this Notice of Funding Opportunity may be subject to requests for release under the Act. In the event that an application contains information or data that the applicant deems to be confidential commercial information that should be exempt from disclosure under FOIA, that information should be identified, bracketed, and marked as Privileged, Confidential, Commercial or Financial Information. In accordance with 15 CFR § 4.9, the Department of Commerce will protect from disclosure confidential business information contained in financial assistance applications and other documentation provided by applicants to the extent permitted by law.

DATA SHARING PLAN. 1. Environmental data and information collected or created under NOAA grants or cooperative agreements must be made discoverable by and accessible to the general public, in a timely fashion (typically within two years), free of charge or at no more than the cost of reproduction, unless an exemption is granted by the NOAA Program. Data should be available in at least one machine-readable format, preferably a widely-used or open-standard format, and should also be accompanied by machine-readable documentation (metadata), preferably based on widely used or international standards. 2. Proposals submitted in response to this Announcement must include a Data Management Plan of up to two pages describing how these requirements will be satisfied. The Data Management Plan should be aligned with the Data Management Guidance provided by NOAA in the Announcement. The contents of the Data Management Plan (or absence thereof), and past performance regarding such plans, will be considered as part of proposal review. A typical plan should include descriptions of the types of environmental data and information expected to be created during the course of the project; the tentative date by which data will be shared; the standards to be used for data/metadata format and content; methods for providing data access; approximate total volume of data to be collected; and prior experience in making such data accessible. The costs of data preparation, accessibility, or archiving may be included in the proposal budget unless otherwise stated in the Guidance. Accepted submission of data to the NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI) is one way to satisfy data sharing requirements; however, NCEI is not obligated to accept all submissions and may charge a fee, particularly for large or unusual datasets. 3. NOAA may, at its own discretion, make publicly visible the Data Management Plan from funded proposals, or use information from the Data Management Plan to produce a formal metadata record and include that metadata in a Catalog to indicate the pending availability of new data. 4. Proposal submitters are hereby advised that the final pre-publication manuscripts of scholarly articles produced entirely or primarily with NOAA funding will be required to be submitted to NOAA Institutional Repository after acceptance, and no later than upon publication. Such manuscripts shall be made publicly available by NOAA one year after publication by the journal.

More information can be found on NOAA's Data Management Procedures at:

https://nosc.noaa.gov/EDMC/documents/Data_Sharing_Directive_v3.0_remediated.pdf and at NAO 212-15 Management of Environmental Data and Information:

<https://www.noaa.gov/organization/administration/nao-212-15-management-of-environmental-data-and-information>

SCIENCE INTEGRITY. 1. Maintaining Integrity. The non-Federal entity shall maintain the scientific integrity of research performed pursuant to this grant or financial assistance award including the prevention, detection, and remediation of any allegations regarding the violation of scientific integrity or scientific and research misconduct, and the conduct of inquiries, investigations, and adjudications of allegations of violations of scientific integrity or scientific and research misconduct. All the requirements of this provision flow down to subrecipients. 2. Peer Review. The peer review of the results of scientific activities under a NOAA grant, financial assistance award or cooperative agreement shall be accomplished to ensure consistency with NOAA standards on quality, relevance, scientific integrity, reproducibility, transparency, and performance. NOAA will ensure that peer review of "influential scientific information" or "highly influential scientific assessments" is conducted in accordance with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Final Information Quality Bulletin for Peer Review and NOAA policies on peer review, such as the Information Quality Guidelines. 3. In performing or presenting the results of scientific activities under the NOAA grant, financial assistance award, or cooperative agreement and in responding to allegations regarding the violation of scientific integrity or scientific and research misconduct, the non-Federal entity and all subrecipients shall comply with the provisions herein and NOAA Administrative Order (NAO) 202-735D, Scientific Integrity, and its Procedural Handbook, including any amendments thereto. That Order can be found at <https://www.noaa.gov/organization/administration/nao-202-735d-2-scientific-integrity>. 4. Primary Responsibility. The non-Federal entity shall have the primary responsibility to prevent, detect, and investigate allegations of a violation of scientific integrity or scientific and research misconduct. Unless otherwise instructed by the grants officer, the non-Federal entity shall promptly conduct an initial inquiry into any allegation of such misconduct and may rely on its internal policies and procedures, as appropriate, to do so. 5. By executing this grant, financial assistance award, or cooperative agreement the non-Federal entity provides its assurance that it has established an administrative process for performing an inquiry, investigating, and reporting allegations of a violation of scientific integrity or scientific and research misconduct; and that it will comply with its own administrative process for performing an inquiry, investigation, and reporting of such misconduct. 6. The non-Federal entity shall insert this provision in all subawards at all tiers under this grant, financial assistance award, or cooperative agreement.

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

REVIEWS AND EVALUATION. The applicant acknowledges and understands that information and data contained in applications for financial assistance, as well as information and data contained in financial, performance and other reports submitted by applicants, may be used by the Department of Commerce in conducting reviews and evaluations of its financial assistance programs. For this purpose, applicant information and data may be accessed, reviewed and evaluated by Department of Commerce employees, other Federal employees, and also by Federal agents and contractors, and/or by non-Federal personnel, all of whom enter into appropriate conflict of interest and confidentiality agreements covering the use of such information. As may be provided in the terms and conditions of a specific financial assistance award, applicants are expected to support program reviews and evaluations by submitting required financial and performance information and data in an accurate and timely manner, and by cooperating with the Department of Commerce and external program evaluators. In accordance with §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.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT, OTHER FORMS of HARASSMENT or SEXUAL ASSAULT

NOAA requires organizations receiving federal assistance to report findings of sexual harassment, or any other kind of harassment, regarding a Principal Investigator (PI), co-PI, or any other key personnel in the award. For more information, please visit <https://www.noaa.gov/organization/acquisition-grants/noaa-workplace-harassment-training-for-contractors-and-financial>. The Climate Program Office (CPO) will not tolerate sexual harassment, other forms of harassment or sexual assault within the agency, at awardee organizations, or anywhere CPO-funded science and education are conducted. As a primary funding agency of fundamental and applied science research in the United States, CPO is committed to promoting safe, productive research and education environments for current and future scientists and engineers. CPO considers the PI and any co-PIs identified on a CPO award to be in positions of trust.

The PIs and all award personnel must comport themselves in a responsible and accountable manner during the performance of award activities whether at the grantee organization, on-line, or conducted outside the organization, such as at field sites, or facilities, or during conferences and workshops.

The many U.S. institutions of higher education and other organizations that receive CPO funds are responsible for fully investigating complaints and for compliance with federal non-discrimination laws, regulations and executive orders. In support of this position, CPO has taken steps to bolster our commitment to a safe research environment, including development and implementation of an award term and condition that requires CPO to be notified: 1) of any findings/determinations regarding the PI(s) that demonstrate a violation of awardee codes of conduct, policies, regulations or statutes relating to sexual harassment, other forms of harassment, or sexual assault; or 2) if the awardee places, or has placed, the PI(s) on administrative leave or imposes, or has imposed, an administrative action relating to a finding or investigation of a violation of awardee policies, codes of conduct, statutes or regulations relating to sexual harassment, other forms of harassment, or sexual assault. CPO expects all research organizations to establish and maintain clear and unambiguous standards of behavior to ensure harassment-free workplaces wherever science is conducted. A community effort is essential to eliminate sexual and other forms of harassment in science and to build a scientific workspace where people can learn, grow and thrive.

Executive Order 14173: Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity

This award term implements Executive Order 14173, 90 FR 8633 (Jan. 21, 2025), Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity. By accepting this U.S. Department of Commerce financial assistance award, the recipient:

(1) agrees that compliance in all respects with all applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws is material to the government's payment decisions for purposes of section 3729(b)(4) of Title 31 United States Code; and

(2) certifies to the Department that it does not operate any programs promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion that violate any applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws.

Gold Standard Science (if applicable)

GOLD STANDARD SCIENCE. In performing activities under Federal awards, applicants should commit to complying with administration policies, procedures, and guidance respecting Gold Standard Science. As detailed in Executive Order 14303, Restoring Gold Standard Science (May 23, 2025), Gold Standard Science refers to science conducted in a manner that is:

- Reproducible.
- Transparent.
- Communicative of error and uncertainty.
- Collaborative and interdisciplinary.
- Skeptical of its findings and assumptions.
- Structured for falsifiability of hypotheses.

- Subject to unbiased peer review.
- Accepting of negative results as positive outcomes.
- Without conflicts of interest.

Prohibition on Using Federal Awards to Promote or Support Theories of Disparate-Impact Liability (if applicable)

PROHIBITION ON USING FEDERAL AWARDS TO PROMOTE OR SUPPORT THEORIES OF DISPARATE-IMPACT LIABILITY. In accordance with Executive Order 14281, Restoring Equality of Opportunity and Meritocracy (April 23, 2025), it is the policy of the Federal Government to eliminate the use of disparate-impact liability in all contexts to the maximum possible and permitted by law.

TERMINATION. In accordance with 2 CFR § 200.340(a), this federal award may be terminated in part or in its entirety as follows:

- By DOC or the pass-through entity if the recipient or subrecipient fails to comply with the terms and conditions of this federal award.
- By DOC or the pass-through entity with the consent of the recipient or subrecipient, in which case the two parties must agree upon the termination conditions. These conditions include the effective date and, in the case of partial termination, the portion to be terminated.
- By the recipient or subrecipient upon sending DOC or the pass-through entity a written notification of the reasons for termination, the effective date, and, in the case of partial termination, the portion to be terminated. If DOC or the pass-through entity determines that the remaining portion of this federal award will not accomplish the purposes for which this federal award was made, DOC or the pass-through entity may terminate this federal award in its entirety.
- By DOC or the pass-through entity to the extent authorized by law, if the award no longer effectuates the program goals or agency priorities.

Performance Measures

Performance Measures: NOAA will evaluate project performance based on alignment with administration priorities, including but not limited to, domestic economic expansion, infrastructure modernization, capacity building, and national food security, alongside adherence to Executive Orders and 'Gold Standard Science.' These overarching criteria are assessed through a framework that measures a project's contribution to fishery economic optimization, domestic seafood utilization, infrastructure capacity, supply chain resilience, and national maritime strategy. To ensure effective implementation, NOAA reserves the right to incorporate specific quantitative and qualitative metrics into the award agreement (i.e. Notice of Award; Specific Award Conditions). These metrics will be focused on the project's objectives and its ability to foster industry growth, technical modernization, and workforce readiness.

C. Reporting

In accordance with 2 CFR 200.328-9 and the terms and conditions of the award, financial reports are to be submitted semiannually and performance (technical) reports are to be submitted semiannually. Reports are submitted electronically through eRA.

The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act, 31 U.S.C. 6101 note, includes a requirement for awardees of applicable Federal grants to report information about first-tier subawards and executive compensation under Federal assistance awards. All awardees of applicable grants and cooperative agreements are required to report to the FFATA Subaward Reporting System (FSRS) available at <https://www.fsrs.gov/> on all subawards over \$30,000. Refer to 2 CFR Part 170.

VII. Agency Contacts

The point of contact is Todd Christenson, Program Manager, NOAA/OAR/Climate Program Office, 1315 East West Highway, Rm. 12705, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910, by phone at 301-734-1229, or via email at todd.christenson@noaa.gov.

VIII. Other Information

None.