

American Lobster Research Program

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Funding Opportunity Description.....	4
A. Program Objective.....	4
B. Program Priorities.....	4
C. Program Authority.....	5
II. Award Information.....	5
A. Funding Availability.....	5
B. Project/Award Period.....	5
C. Type of Funding Instrument.....	5
III. Eligibility Information.....	5
A. Eligible Applicants.....	5
B. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement.....	6
C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility.....	6
IV. Application and Submission Information.....	6
A. Address to Request Application Package.....	6
B. Content and Form of Application.....	7
C. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM).....	10
D. Submission Dates and Times.....	10
E. Intergovernmental Review.....	11
F. Funding Restrictions.....	11
G. Other Submission Requirements.....	11
V. Application Review Information.....	11
A. Evaluation Criteria.....	11
B. Review and Selection Process.....	12
C. Selection Factors.....	13
D. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates.....	13
VI. Award Administration Information.....	13
A. Award Notices.....	13
B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements.....	14
C. Reporting.....	17
VII. Agency Contacts.....	18
VIII. Other Information.....	18

NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Federal Agency Name(s): Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce (DOC)

Funding Opportunity Title: American Lobster Research Program

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: NOAA-OAR-SG-2021-2006808

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 11.417, Sea Grant Support

Dates: Applications must be submitted to Grants.gov by 11:59 p.m. Eastern time, April 20, 2021.

Funding Opportunity Description: The National Sea Grant College Program (Sea Grant) was enacted by U.S. Congress in 1966 (amended in 2020, Public Law 116-221) to support leveraged federal and state partnerships that harness the intellectual capacity of the nation's universities and research institutions to solve problems and generate opportunities in coastal communities.

The American lobster (*Homarus americanus*) is one of the most iconic modern American fisheries. It is one of the largest and most valuable fisheries along the Atlantic coast. In 2018, the American lobster fishery was the highest valued species group for U.S. commercial fisheries and seafood industries, valued at \$684 million dollars. While lobster landings continue to remain above historical averages, NOAA Fisheries data showed a 15% decline in pounds of American lobster landed in 2019 from the data collected the previous year.

Rising ocean temperatures have caused global fish population distribution shifts, and studies suggest warming temperatures may also directly impact the migration, growth, maturity, and natural mortality of American lobster. Ecosystem shifts, food web changes, and ocean acidification all present threats to the American lobster fishery in the Gulf of Maine, Georges Bank, and southern New England. The 2020 Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission Lobster Benchmark Stock Assessment found the stock in the Gulf of Maine/Georges Bank to be healthy but uncertainty about its future remains as the Gulf of Maine continues to warm rapidly. The assessment for the southern New England lobster fishery showed that the fishery was depleted, and found no projection of a resurgence.

A growing body of research has shown the influence of environmental factors, particularly water temperature, on the American lobster's life history and its population dynamics. From southern

New England through downeast Maine the environmental conditions for the range of the American lobster are dynamic and changing quickly. Increased understanding of the rate and scale of these changes are important for the management of this commercial industry whose ex-vessel value was nearly \$630 million dollars in 2019.

As the fishery adapts to the effects of environmental change, teams of researchers, as well as research partnerships between state agencies, academia, and/or industry are needed to understand the potential ecological and economic implications of those changes for the ecosystem and the fishing communities that rely on the resource.

In FY21, the American Lobster Research Program will support teams of researchers and will strongly encourage research partnerships between state agencies, academia, and/or industry to address critical gaps in knowledge about how the American lobster and how its fishery is being impacted by environmental change. The program is informed by past listening sessions with regional fishing industry stakeholders, state and federal fisheries managers, and university, state and federal fisheries researchers.

Research topics suitable for study on American lobster under this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) should have a geographic focus on the Gulf of Maine, Georges Bank, and/or southern New England and address one or more of the following: (1) life history parameters, including but not limited to impacts of ocean acidification; (2) distribution and abundance, including but not limited to ecosystem shifts; (3) species interactions; and/or (4) bait alternatives.

Pending appropriation of funds, Sea Grant anticipates awarding between five to 10 research projects totaling between \$1 million and \$2 million dollars in FY21. Projects must have a maximum duration of two years.

The American Lobster Research Program funded seven projects in FY19 and nine projects in FY20. A list of these projects can be found at the links below:

FY19 projects: <https://seagrant.noaa.gov/News/Article/ArtMID/1660/ArticleID/2753/Sea-Grant-awards-2-million-to-advance-understanding-of-American-lobster-support-industry>

FY20 projects: <https://seagrant.noaa.gov/News/Article/ArtMID/1660/ArticleID/2809/Sea-Grant-announces-2-million-in-support-of-2020-American-Lobster-Initiative-projects>

This document sets out requirements for submitting to NOAA-OAR-SG-2021-2006808. Additional guidance and tips on how best to prepare an application are provided in the Sea Grant General Application Guide available at (<https://seagrant.noaa.gov/Portals/1/Guidance/SeaGrantGeneralApplicationGuide.pdf>)

FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Program Objective

Recent research has produced a mixed picture about the current and future state of the American lobster fishery. The strong influence of environmental and climatic factors on the American lobster fishery continue to raise concerns about its future state in spite of the high abundance reported for the Gulf of Maine/Georges Bank in the 2020 lobster stock assessment. Gaps in scientific understanding, including the rate, scale, and nature of these environmental and climatic changes, further complicate resource managers' abilities to track change, manage the fishery and adequately plan for its future. Due to the potential for wide-ranging ecological and economic impacts, the National Sea Grant College Program (Sea Grant)'s American Lobster Initiative will fund a national competition focused on research priorities for American lobster with a focus on the Gulf of Maine, Georges Bank, and/or southern New England, in accordance with its authorizing legislation, to enhance practical use and conservation of marine resources and create a sustainable economy and environment (33 U.S.C. 1121 et seq., as amended).

The American Lobster Initiative is a two-part effort that supports a regional extension program in the northeast and a national research competition called the American Lobster Research Program. The American Lobster Research Program is run by the National Sea Grant Office to address critical knowledge gaps about American lobster and its iconic fishery in a dynamic and changing environment.

B. Program Priorities

It is a priority of the American Lobster Research Program to fund a robust and diverse suite of research implemented by research teams and/or research partnerships between state agencies, academia, and/or industry stakeholders across priority areas to support the practical use, conservation, and sustainable management of the American lobster fishery.

Research topics suitable for study on American lobster under this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) should have a geographic focus on the Gulf of Maine, Georges Bank, and/or southern New England and address one or more of the following: (1) life history parameters, including but not limited to impacts of ocean acidification; (2) distribution and abundance, including but not limited to ecosystem shifts; (3) species interactions; and/or (4) bait alternatives.

This opportunity falls under the following NOAA Mission Goals: (1) Climate adaptation and mitigation; (2) Healthy Oceans; and (3) Resilient Coastal Communities and Economies.

C. Program Authority

Statutory authority for this program is provided under the National Sea Grant College Program Act of 1966, as amended (33 USC 1121 et seq.).

II. Award Information

A. Funding Availability

Subject to the availability of funding, this announcement describes how eligible applicants should apply for NOAA-OAR-SG-2021-2006808. Sea Grant anticipates funding between five to ten research projects totaling between \$1 million and \$2 million dollars. The duration of proposed projects must not exceed two years.

There is no guarantee that funds will be available to make awards, or that any application will be selected for funding. If an applicant incurs any costs prior to receiving an award agreement signed by an authorized NOAA official, it does so at its own risk of not being selected or of these costs not being included in a subsequent award. NOAA and DOC will not be responsible for any incurred project costs if this program fails to receive full funding.

B. Project/Award Period

The anticipated start date is September 1, 2021, with projects to be completed by August 31, 2023.

C. Type of Funding Instrument

The funding instrument is a cooperative agreement to an eligible institution. A cooperative agreement is used when substantial involvement of the federal government during performance of the proposed work is anticipated. The nature of the substantial involvement includes communicating and coordinating with the National Sea Grant Office as part of Sea Grant's American Lobster Initiative, including the Lobster Regional Extension Program. For more information, contact the competition manager at oar.hq.sg.competitions@noaa.gov.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

The following entities are eligible and encouraged to participate in this funding opportunity, in conjunction with a Sea Grant program: any individual; any public or private corporation, partnership, or other association or entity (including any Sea Grant College, Sea Grant Institute or other institution); or any State, political subdivision of a State, Tribal government or agency or officer thereof. Federal agencies and their personnel are not permitted to receive federal funding under this competition; however, federal scientists and other employees can serve as uncompensated partners or co-Principal Investigators on applications. Federal labs and offices can also make available specialized expertise, facilities or equipment to applicants but cannot be compensated under this competition for their use, nor can the value of such assets be used as match.

Sea Grant champions diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) by recruiting, retaining and preparing a diverse workforce, and proactively engaging and serving the diverse populations of coastal communities. Sea Grant is committed to building inclusive research, extension, communication and education programs that serve people with unique backgrounds, circumstances, needs, perspectives and ways of thinking. We encourage applicants of all ages, races, ethnicities, national origins, gender identities, sexual orientations, disabilities, cultures, religions, citizenship types, marital statuses, education levels, job classifications, veteran status types, and income and socioeconomic status types to apply for this opportunity.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

Non-federal matching funds equal to at least 50 percent of the federal funding request must be provided unless a waiver justified by statute is granted, such as the waiver for insular areas granted by the Department of Commerce pursuant to 48 U.S.C. 1469a. If you believe your application may qualify for a waiver, please contact the National Sea Grant Office before submission to discuss it. The cumulative match at the end of each year of the grant must not fall below 50 percent of the cumulative federal request up to that point. In-kind contributions directly supporting this application may count towards this matching requirement. See the Sea Grant General Application Guide (<https://seagrants.noaa.gov/Portals/1/Guidance/SeaGrantGeneralApplicationGuide.pdf>) for more information.

C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility

None.

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Address to Request Application Package

Application packages are available online and can be downloaded from www.grants.gov under opportunity NOAA-OAR-SG-2021-2006808. If an eligible applicant does not have access to the internet, please contact the Agency Contacts listed in Section VII for submission instructions.

B. Content and Form of Application

This section provides an overview of these required proposal elements (and where to locate them). Applications must adhere to the provisions under "Required Elements" below. Failure to adhere to these provisions may result in a delay in award processing or rejection of the application, based on the extent of the noncompliance.

Additional guidance on Sea Grant-specific form completion can be found here: Sea Grant General Application Guide (<https://seagrant.noaa.gov/Portals/1/Guidance/SeaGrantGeneralApplicationGuide.pdf>)

The submitting Sea Grant program or applicant must redact all Personally Identifiable Information (PII) in the application materials prior to final submission to grants.gov. PII that must be redacted from the application includes, but is not limited to, social security number, date of birth, student identification number (from transcripts) or other information which if lost, compromised, or disclosed without authorization, could result in harm, embarrassment, inconvenience, or unfairness to an individual.

Required Elements:

1. Project Narrative

The application must include the following documents. It is strongly encouraged that proposals follow the sequence below.

The project proposal narrative itself must not exceed 15 pages.

a) Project Proposal Narrative

- Cover page (does not count towards page limit): Project title, names of the PIs, co-PIs, and/or partners along with their institutional affiliations and the amount of the federal request and non-federal match for each year of the project.
- Project abstract (1 page maximum, does not count towards page limit)
- Project background: Explain the specific problem(s) this project seeks to address and justify its importance.
- Project objectives: Provide a list of clearly defined objectives. For each objective, provide a

concise statement explaining how it is aligned with the goals and priorities of this funding opportunity.

- Project details: Provide an explanation of the methods you will use to address your project objectives.
- Anticipated outcomes and deliverables: What are the expected outcomes and deliverables related to the creation of scientific knowledge and/or creation of data products, tools, technologies that can be applied to the current and/or future needs of the American lobster and its fishery?
- Project timeline: Please provide a timeline for accomplishing the proposed work, which covers the entire duration of the project. Include approximate dates for key milestones related to the proposed work, including the accomplishment of anticipated outcomes and release of deliverables.
- Outreach and/or stakeholder engagement plan: Provide a plan or strategy to ensure that stakeholders beyond those who actively participate in the proposed work, will learn about and/or utilize the project's outcomes.
- Works cited (does not count towards page limit): All in-text citations should be listed here.
- Curriculum vitae (CV) for each PI and co-PI (does not count towards page limit): Each person's CV should not be longer than 2 pages. Excess pages will not be included in the review.
- Letters of support (does not count towards page limit): All letters of support should be included here.
- Current and pending support (does not count towards page limit): Describe any current or pending sources of support if applicable.

b) Abbreviated Environmental Compliance Questionnaire (OMB Control No. 0648-0538)
A separate questionnaire must be filled out for each individual project in the application. Applicants must ensure that the questionnaire is completed in full and includes detailed information regarding project location, methodology, and permits. Copies of all permits required for project activities should be included with application materials. If a permit is pending or planned, please provide this information.

The questionnaire can be found here:

<https://seagrant.noaa.gov/insideseagrant/Implementation>. Guidance on how to complete the questionnaire is located in the Sea Grant General Application Guidance document (<https://seagrant.noaa.gov/Portals/1/Guidance/SeaGrantGeneralApplicationGuide.pdf>).

c) Data Management Plan and Data Management Guidance: See Section VI. B. (8).
All applications should include a Data Management Plan. If a proposal responding to this competition will not generate environmental data, the data management plan should say,

“This project will not generate environmental data, therefore a data management plan is not required.” For reference:

https://nosc.noaa.gov/EDMC/documents/Data_Sharing_Directive_v3.0.pdf

2. Budget Narrative

The Budget Narrative must include the following budget documents (Sea Grant 90-4 Forms and Budget Justification) in the following order and format. Additional budget narrative guidance can be found at:

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

a) Sea Grant 90-4 Form (OMB Control No. 0648-0362)

Sea Grant 90-4 Forms are required to provide budget breakdowns and budget justifications by year and object class for the proposal. A completed Sea Grant 90-4 Form should be completed for each project year, as well as a total budget for the entire project duration (i.e., Year 1, Year 2 and Years 1-2). The Sea Grant 90-4 Form can be downloaded at:

<https://seagrants.noaa.gov/insideseagrants/Implementation>. Guidance on filling out these forms is located in the Sea Grant General Application Guide.

b) Budget Justification

For each year of the project, a Budget Justification is required. Each Budget Justification should explain the budget items in sufficient detail to enable review of the appropriateness of the funding requested. For projects involving partners, budgets are encouraged to reflect typical daily/hourly wages associated with partner activities on the project. Each Budget Justification should be attached as a PDF to each Sea Grant 90-4 Form, as appropriate. Guidance on completing the Budget Justification is located in the Sea Grant General Application Guide.

3. Overall Application

In addition to the forms required above, standard Federal Forms and Assurances are required for the overall application and can be found with the application package on Grants.gov or on the Sea Grant website (links found below). These include:

a) SF-424 Form (Grants.gov, OMB Control No. 4040-0004)

This form, titled “Application for Federal Assistance,” must identify the entire funding period as well as the federal funding amount being requested by the applicant and the non-federal matching fund amount. The form must be completed with the institution’s accurate EIN and DUNS and Point of Contact, and signed by the institution’s authorized

representative or designee.

b) SF-424A Form (Grants.gov, OMB Control No. 4040-0006)

This form, titled “Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs,” must describe the entire 1 or 2-year funding period in federal and non-federal dollars, for the entire application. Fill out Section B of this SF-424A form to show the overall budget breakdown by object class by year with separate columns for federal and match each year. If there is insufficient space, an additional SF-424A Form, Extra Section B should be used (see below).

c) SF-424B Assurances (Grants.gov, OMB Control No. 4040-0007)

The form, titled “Assurances – Non-Construction Programs,” must be completed and signed by the institution's authorized representative or designee.

d) CD-511 (Grants.gov, US DOC)

The form, titled “Certification Regarding Lobbying,” must be completed and signed by the institution’s authorized representative or designee. In some instances, the SF-LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities form may also be required. See the instructions on the CD-511 for further information.

e) SF-LLL (Grants.gov, OMB Control No. 0348-0046)

The form, titled “Disclosure of Lobbying Activities,” must be completed and signed by the institution’s authorized representative or designee, if appropriate.

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, as identified in OMB guidance published at 2 CFR Parts 25, which may be accessed at https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr25_main_02.tpl.

D. Submission Dates and Times

Applications must be submitted to Grants.gov by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time, Tuesday, April 20, 2021. (Note that National Sea Grant Office staff will only be available to answer questions until 5:00 p.m. EDT.) Please note: validation or rejection of an application by Grants.gov may take up to two business days after submission.

E. Intergovernmental Review

Applications under the National Sea Grant College Program are not subject to Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs."

F. Funding Restrictions

The Sea Grant Act at 33 USC 1124(d)(2) states: "No payment under any grant or contract under this section may be applied to:

- a) the purchase or rental of any land; or
- b) the purchase, rental, construction, preservation, or repair of any building, dock, or vessel; except that payment under any such grant or contract may be applied to the short-term rental of buildings or facilities for meetings which are in direct support of any Sea Grant Program or project and may, if approved by the Secretary, be applied to the purchase, rental, construction, preservation, or repair of non-self-propelled habitats, buoys, platforms, and other similar devices or structures, or to the rental of any research vessel which is used in direct support of activities under any Sea Grant Program or project."

G. Other Submission Requirements

Applicants successful to this opportunity will work with Sea Grant's American Lobster Initiative, including its Lobster Regional Extension Program to coordinate and communicate on the progress of their research. Successful applicants will be required to participate in project progress meetings held twice per year and engage with the Lobster Regional Extension Program, as applicable, to extend their research findings to stakeholders. For more information, contact the competition manager at oar.hq.sg.competitions@noaa.gov.

Proposals must be submitted through Grants.gov. If an eligible applicant does not have access to the internet, please contact the Agency Contacts listed in Section VII for submission instructions.

V. Application Review Information

A. Evaluation Criteria

1. Importance/relevance and applicability of proposed projects to the program goals (25 percent). This criterion ascertains whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and/or relevance to NOAA, federal, regional, state, or local activities. This criterion also assesses the extent of meaningful stakeholder engagement planned for the project. For this

opportunity, program goals are the Program priorities listed in Section I.B.

2. Technical/scientific merit (25 percent). This criterion assesses whether the approach is technically sound and/or innovative, if the methods are appropriate, and whether there are clear project goals, objectives and data management considerations.

3. Overall qualifications of applicants (20 percent). This criterion ascertains whether the applicant possesses the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project.

4. Project costs (20 percent). This criterion evaluates the budget to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time frame. For the American Lobster Research Program this includes, as applicable, the consideration of research partner expenses as well.

5. Outreach and Education (10 percent). This criterion assesses whether the project provides a focused and effective education and outreach strategy regarding NOAA's mission to protect the Nation's natural resources. For this opportunity, this includes coordination and communication with the National Sea Grant College Program's American Lobster Initiative and its Lobster Regional Extension Program. For more information, contact the competition manager at oar.hq.sg.competitions@noaa.gov.

B. Review and Selection Process

Once a full proposal application has been received by NOAA, an initial administrative review is conducted to determine compliance with requirements and completeness of the application. Applications that are missing required elements listed in Section IV. B. above, or applications coming from ineligible applicants may be rejected without further review.

Applications will be individually ranked in accordance with the above criteria and assigned scores by an independent review panel. Panel members will provide individual evaluations of applicants, and their ratings will be used to produce a rank order of the applications. The selecting official shall award in the rank order unless the application is justified to be selected out of rank order based upon any of the selection factors provided in Section V.C. The selecting official shall make final recommendations for award to the Grants officer who is authorized to obligate the funds and execute the award.

The proposals, supplemented with information from the Abbreviated Environmental Compliance Questionnaire, will also be reviewed by the program manager to assess the environmental compliance of the proposed actions. The program manager, NEPA staff lead,

or grants specialist may contact the applicants to discuss questions about the environmental effects, merit, or administrative correctness of the application, and may delay approval of the application, or impose conditions on the award preventing funding or execution of certain activities, until all questions are satisfactorily answered.

C. Selection Factors

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

1. Availability of funding.
2. Balance/distribution of funds:
 - geographically
 - by type of institution
 - by type of partners
 - by research priority
 - by project types
3. Duplication of other projects funded or considered for funding by NOAA/Federal agencies.
4. Program priorities and policy factors.
5. Applicant's prior award performance.
6. Partnerships with/Participation of targeted groups.
7. Adequacy of information necessary for NOAA staff to make a NEPA determination and draft necessary documentation before recommendations for funding are made to the Grants Officer.

D. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

Subject to the availability of funds, awards are expected to start September 01, 2021.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

Successful applicants will receive notification when the application has been recommended for funding to the NOAA Grants Management Division. This notification is not an authorization to begin performance of the project. Official notification of funding, signed by the NOAA grants officer, is the authorizing document that allows the project to begin. Notification will be issued to the authorizing official and the PI of the project either electronically or in hard copy. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified that their proposal was not selected. Anonymous copies of reviews and summaries of review panel

deliberations, if any, will be made available to all applicants, regardless of whether they were selected to be funded.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

(1) 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 <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2014-12-30/pdf/2014-30297.pdf>.

(2) Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements - Through 2 C.F.R. § 1327.101, the Department of Commerce adopted Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards at 2 C.F.R. Part 200, which apply to awards in this program. Refer to <http://go.usa.gov/SBYh> and <http://go.usa.gov/SBg4>.

(3) Department of Commerce Terms and Conditions - Successful applicants who accept a NOAA award under this solicitation will be bound by Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions. This document will be provided in the award package at https://www.commerce.gov/sites/default/files/2020-11/DOC%20Standard%20Terms%20and%20Conditions%20-%202012%20November%202020%20PDF_0.pdf

(4) Limitation of Liability - Funding for programs listed in this notice is contingent upon the availability of appropriations. Applicants are hereby given notice that funds may not have been appropriated yet for the programs listed in this notice. In no event will NOAA or the Department of Commerce be responsible for proposal preparation costs. Publication of this announcement does not oblige NOAA to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds.

(5) Unpaid or Delinquent Tax Liability - In accordance with Section 523 of Division B and Sections 744 and 745 of Division E of the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015 (Pub. L. 113-235) or a future public law, an authorized representative of the selected applicant(s) will be required to provide certain pre-award representations regarding federal felony and federal criminal tax convictions, unpaid federal tax assessments, and delinquent federal tax returns. The form must be completed and submitted with grant applications for: (a) all for-profit and non-profit organization applicants (Part I, and if required, Part II); and (b) all non-federal entity applicants anticipating receipt of \$5 million or more in the current federal fiscal year appropriated funding (Part II only).

The form can be found at

https://www.osec.doc.gov/oam/grants_management/policy/documents/FAM%202015-01.pdf.

(6) 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 216-6A for NEPA, https://www.noaa.gov/sites/default/files/atoms/files/NAO_216-6A.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.

(7) Review of Risk - After applications are proposed for funding by the selecting official, the Grants Office will perform administrative reviews, including an assessment of risk posed by the applicant under 2 C.F.R. 200.206. These may include assessments of the financial stability of an applicant and the quality of the applicant's management systems, history of performance, and the applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on non-Federal entities. Special conditions that address any risks determined to exist may be applied. Applicants may submit comments to the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS) about any information included in the system about their organization for consideration by the awarding agency.

(8) 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.

(9) Indirect Cost Rate - If an applicant has not previously established an indirect cost rate with a federal agency they may choose to negotiate a rate with the Department of Commerce or use the de minimis indirect cost rate of 10% of Modified Total Direct Cost (MTDC) (as allowable under 2 C.F.R. §200.414). The negotiation and approval of a rate is subject to the procedures required by NOAA and the Department of Commerce Standard Terms and Conditions. Do not include participant support costs when determining the indirect cost base. Additionally, applicants should be aware that most indirect cost rate agreements require that participant support costs be excluded from the MTDC base when calculating indirect costs. Applicants should reference their official agreements. The NOAA contact for indirect or facilities and administrative costs is: Lamar Revis, Grants Officer, NOAA Grants

Management Division, 1325 East West Highway, 9th Floor, Silver Spring, MD 20910, or lamar.revis@noaa.gov.

(10) Minority Serving Institutions - The Department of Commerce National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (DOC NOAA) is strongly committed to increasing the participation of Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs), i.e., Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-serving institutions, Tribal colleges and universities, Alaskan Native and Native Hawaiian institutions, and institutions that work in underserved communities.

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

(12) NOAA Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Prevention and Response Policy - If NOAA-operated, leased, or owned facilities are involved in any awards funded under this announcement, such awards are subject to the NOAA Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Prevention and Response Policy Applicable to Financial Assistance Awards Involving NOAA-Operated Facilities (May 2018) found at:

<https://www.noaa.gov/sites/default/files/atoms/files/NOAA%20Sexual%20Assault%20and%20Sexual%20Harassment%20Prevention%20and%20Response%20Policy%20Applicable%20to%20Financial%20Assistance%20Awards%20Involving%20NOAA-Operated%20Facilities%20%28May%202018%29%20%281%29.pdf>

C. Reporting

Financial reports are submitted semi-annually via Grants Online. Research performance progress reports (RPPR) are submitted annually via Grants Online using the RPPR format. Awardees will coordinate and communicate progress of their research with other elements of Sea Grant's American Lobster Initiative like the Lobster Regional Extension Program, in order to share project objectives and research results. Awardees will also work with Sea Grant's Lobster Regional Extension Program to participate in project progress meetings held twice per year.

The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (31 U.S.C. 6101 note) includes a requirement for awardees of applicable federal grants to report information about first-tier subawards and executive compensation under federal assistance awards. All awardees of applicable grants and cooperative agreements are required to report to the Federal Sub-award Reporting System (FSRS) available at <https://www.fsrs.gov/> on all sub-awards over \$25,000. Refer to 2 CFR Part 170.

VII. Agency Contacts

Contact the American Lobster Initiative Lead, National Sea Grant College Program at the following email. Please use the term ‘American lobster’ in your email’s subject line.
E-mail: oar.hq.sg.competitions@noaa.gov

VIII. Other Information

Once the applicants have been selected, programs will need to provide the information requested in the Sea Grant 90-2 into the PIER project database. Once the project is approved and funded, that information will be publicly available and searchable on the National Sea Grant College Program public website (<http://seagrant.noaa.gov>).

Recipients are required to use the National Sea Grant Planning Implementation and Evaluation Reporting (PIER) project database to communicate with the National Sea Grant Office on activities relating to this award. This includes tracking progress and impacts, in addition to performance metrics.

The grant application and final report of all funded grants are public documents, except for privileged information or material that is personal, proprietary or otherwise exempt from disclosure under law. Appropriate labeling in the application will aid identification of what may be specifically exempt. 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 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.

In addition, 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.

There is no guarantee that funds will be available to make awards for this federal funding opportunity or that any proposal will be selected for funding. If an applicant incurs any costs prior to receiving an award agreement signed by an authorized NOAA official, they do so at their own risk of these costs not being included in a subsequent award. NOAA or the Department of Commerce are not responsible for any direct costs of proposal preparation. Recipients and sub-recipients are subject to all federal laws and agency policies, regulations, and procedures applicable to federal financial assistance awards.