

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.....	8
VI. Award Administration Information	11
VII. Agency Contacts.....	15
VIII. Other Information	15

Executive Summary

Federal Agency Name

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

Funding Opportunity Title

2026 Alaska Marine Education and Training Mini-Grant Program

Announcement Type

Competitive

Funding Opportunity Number

NOAA-NMFS-AK-2026-33268

Assistance Listing Number(s)

11.455

Dates

Applications will be accepted and considered on an annual basis, with due dates of June 22, 2026; May 3, 2027; and May 1, 2028. Applications for projects starting no earlier than September 1, 2026, must be received through www.grants.gov by 7:59 p.m. Alaska Standard Time (AKST) on June 22, 2026. To be considered for funding in subsequent fiscal years, applications must be received by 7:59 p.m. AKST on May 3, 2027, for projects starting no earlier than September 1, 2027, and May 1, 2028, for projects starting no earlier than September 1, 2028. The earliest date for receipt of awards for this funding opportunity is anticipated to be September 1, 2026. Further application details are provided in the announcement.

Submission Validation

When you submit an application to this competition you will receive notification of submission validation from Grants.gov and eRA Commons. Only validated applications are sent to NOAA to review. To ensure successful submission of an application, we strongly recommend that you submit a final and complete application at least two business days prior to the submission deadline.

In addition to the Grants.gov automated notification messages, once an electronic application is accepted in eRA Commons, you will receive an automated notification from eRA Commons that the completed application was received and that an application number will be assigned. If there are errors in the application, eRA Commons will send an automated email notification(s) of any errors or warnings identified by eRA Commons. You must resolve all eRA Commons errors prior to the application due date in order for the application to be processed.

You should save and print the proof of submission messages from both Grants.gov and eRA Commons. If you do not receive an acceptance message from both Grants.gov and eRA Commons, you should follow up with the eRA Helpdesk at 1-866-504-9552 and the agency contact listed in Section VII to confirm NOAA's receipt of the complete submission. See Section IV(G) for detailed instructions on submission validation requirements.

Registration Requirements

NOTE: We strongly encourage all prospective applicants to begin required registrations as early as possible. Completing the required registrations can take six weeks or longer. Submission due dates will not be extended because of registration delays. Submissions received after the due date will be considered late and will not be accepted.

Applicant organizations and individuals must register for three different Federal systems prior to submitting an application through Grants.gov (SAM.gov, eRA Commons, and Grants.gov).

Applicant organizations and individuals must first register with SAM.gov and obtain a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI). After you obtain your UEI, you can complete your Grants.gov and eRA Commons registrations concurrently.

See Section IV(G) for detailed instructions on registration requirements. If you do not have access to the internet, please contact the Agency Contacts listed in this NOFO for submission instructions.

Funding Opportunity Description

This announcement supports Executive Order 14276, Restoring America's Seafood Competitiveness, by soliciting projects that support: workforce development for marine-related professions in marine science, aquaculture/mariculture, and maritime operations; enhancing seafood safety and management through training in seafood best practices, marketing, and fishery management; technological innovation in fishing practices; outreach and education for consumers on quality and sustainability of wild caught fish or products farmed through aquaculture/mariculture; enhanced regionally-specific management of fishery resources based on local knowledge; and strengthening the seafood supply chain through partnerships with industry, researchers, and community organizations to build relationships that increase the sustainability and competitiveness of the marine community in Alaska. Proposed projects must be conducted in Alaska.

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Program Objective

NOAA/NMFS is soliciting competitive proposals for grants and cooperative agreements that will increase the sustainability, education, and training on marine resource issues and increase education for marine-related professions in Alaska. Projects should prepare communities for employment in marine-related professions; increase the sustainability of fishing practices through technological improvements; or increase seafood and fishing safety, seafood marketing, or management.

B. Program Priorities

Projects must improve education and training on marine resource issues in the region and increase education for marine-related professions among coastal community residents. Projects must align with one of the following priorities, which are listed in no particular order of preference. If a project meets more than one of the priorities, the applicant should list the priority that most closely reflects the objectives of the proposed project. It is strongly encouraged that projects should leverage and develop effective partnerships where appropriate. These partnerships may include: government agencies (island, local, state, or federal), non-governmental organizations, tribal entities, researchers, academic institutions, and industry.

1. **Marine Science and Technology:** This may include education and training projects that are focused on preparing coastal community residents for employment in marine-related professions, including: marine resource conservation and management, marine science, marine technology, aquaculture/mariculture, and maritime operations. This may also include projects that, with the fishing industry, not only identify methods and technologies that will improve data collection, quality, and reporting, but also increase the sustainability of fishing practices and ultimately transfer such methods and technologies among fisheries sectors and other stakeholders in the Western, Northern, and Central Pacific.
2. **Fisheries and Seafood-related Training:** Projects addressing fishery observation, seafood safety and seafood marketing, focused on increasing the involvement of coastal community residents in fishing, fishery management, subsistence, and seafood-related operations.
3. **Outreach:** Projects to educate and inform consumers about the quality and sustainability of wild fish or products farmed through responsible aquaculture/mariculture. Projects that promote community education and outreach related to safe fishing and boating practices, reduction of marine pollution, and reducing conflicts with marine mammals.
4. **Traditional Knowledge:** Projects that enhance science-based management of fishery resources of the region.
5. **Develop Partnerships:** Projects that develop partnerships with Alaskan agencies, academic institutions, and other entities to meet the goals of this program.

C. Program Authority

16 USC 1855(j)

II. Award Information

A. Funding Availability

The total funding available under this notice is anticipated to be approximately \$600,000 (\$200,000 per year). Actual funding availability for this program is contingent upon Federal appropriations. Applicants may submit proposals for projects with total costs ranging from a minimum of \$15,000 to a maximum of \$75,000. Only one application per individual or organization may be submitted per fiscal year under this announcement.

Publication of this announcement does not obligate NOAA to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds. The number of awards to be made as a result of this solicitation will depend on the number of eligible applications received, the amount of funds requested, and the merit and ranking of the applications as described in Section V. Proposals not funded in the current fiscal period may be considered for funding in another fiscal period without NOAA repeating the competitive process outlined in this announcement. If an application for a financial assistance award is selected for funding, NOAA Fisheries has no obligation to provide any additional funding in connection with that award in subsequent years.

B. Project/Award Period

Projects may begin no earlier than September 1, 2026. Project durations may be between 1-2 years, as appropriate.

C. Type of Funding Instrument

Grant or cooperative agreement.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are individuals as legal entities (such as sole proprietorships or limited liability companies); commercial organizations; state, local, and tribal governments; institutions of higher education; and nonprofits. Federal agencies and their employees, as well as Federal instrumentalities (including employees and members), are not eligible to apply.

NOTE: We strongly encourage all prospective applicants to begin required registrations as early as possible. Completing the required registrations can take six weeks or longer. Submission due dates will not be extended because of registration delays. Submissions received after the due date will be considered late and will not be accepted.

Applicant organizations and individuals must register for three different Federal systems prior to submitting an application through Grants.gov (SAM.gov, eRA Commons, and Grants.gov).

Registration Requirements: Applicant organizations and individuals must first register with SAM.gov and obtain a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI). After you obtain your UEI, you can complete your Grants.gov and eRA Commons registrations concurrently.

See Section IV(G) for detailed instructions on required registrations. If you do not have access to the internet, please contact the Agency Contacts listed in this NOFO for submission instructions.

B. Cost Share or Matching Requirement

None.

C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility

- Projects must be conducted within Alaska.
- Only one application per individual or organization may be submitted per fiscal year under this announcement.

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Address to Request Application Package

www.grants.gov

B. Content and Form of Application

A complete, standard NOAA financial assistance application package should be submitted, as described below. Each proposal must include the following Federal application forms. The Standard Forms (SF)-424 may be downloaded from www.grants.gov/forms.

- a) SF-424: Application for Federal Assistance
- b) SF-424A: Budget Information for Non-construction Programs
- c) SF-424B: Assurances for Non-construction Programs
- d) CD-511: Certification Regarding Lobbying

In addition to the Federal application forms, NOAA recommends the following components as part of a complete application package. Pages must be composed in at least 12-point font with 1-inch margins.

PDF 1. Title Page and Project Abstract (1-page limit):

- **Title Page.** The Title Page should include the following information: a) Applicant name; b) Funding Opportunity Title; c) Funding Opportunity Number; d) Assistance Listing Number (previously CFDA number); e) Program/Project Title; f) Program/Project Duration; g) Program/Project Contacts (Principle Investigator/Project Manager and Financial Representative); h) Program/Project Objectives (list each priority being proposed) ; i) Program/Project Proposal Total Amount and Sub-Totals for each Priority; and j) Program/Proposed Project Outcomes
- **Project Abstract.** The Project Abstract should provide a high level description of the overall project written for a general audience (4,000 characters max).

PDF 2. Project Narrative (5-page limit). The Project Narrative should be a detailed description of the project goals, objectives, and activities; performance measures for the period of the proposed work and the expected results or outcomes; information that demonstrates the need for the project; descriptions of methodologies and timelines for all phases of work; and, if applicable, the relationship to other ongoing work, or work planned, anticipated, or underway through Federal Assistance or other means. The project description should be a clear statement of all work to be undertaken and must include the information listed below.

- **Project goals and objectives:** This section should very briefly state the project goal, and how this goal will address the problem or opportunity the project intends to address.
- **Project activities and plans:** This section is the technical or scientific plan of activities that are to be accomplished during the project. This description should include detailed descriptions of the specific plan and/or methods that will be employed.
- **Milestone Schedule:** This section should display timelines for each of the major tasks, activities, or objectives.
- **Benefits or results expected:** Clearly identify the outcomes, results, and benefits of the project. Describe how these expected outcomes, results, or products will be applied and/or made available to any appropriate user groups. This section should also include information on how you will measure the success of the project.
- **Project management:** Describe how the project will be organized and managed and who will be responsible for carrying out project activities. The lead organization/individual and person listed as the technical contact should be identified as the Project Manager (PM) or Principal Investigator (PI). Use of subcontractors or volunteer staff time to complete project activities and oversight of those individuals should be discussed.

PDF 3. Budget Narrative (2-page limit). Each application must include clear and concise budget information covering total project costs, both on the required Federal forms and in a detailed budget narrative. We strongly recommend using the [NOAA Grant Management Budget Narrative guidance](#). The budget narrative should include a detailed table of costs by cost category as well as a written justification that supports the costs listed within the table. 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 15% of Modified Total Direct Costs (as allowable under [2 CFR §200.414](#)). If the de minimis rate is being used, this should be stated within the budget narrative.

PDF 4. Attachments (10-page limit). Attachment information should at minimum include abbreviated CVs/resumes of key project personnel and an indirect cost rate agreement (if applicable), but may also include: letters of collaboration; permit information; charts, graphs, maps, photographs, and other pictorial presentations; or any other supporting documentation. The applicant should include any supporting documentation deemed important to the overall understanding and evaluation of the proposed project; all attachments should be combined into one PDF document.

This announcement is not seeking proposals that generate environmental data. Therefore, a Data Management Plan is not required as part of the Proposal.

The [NEPA questionnaire](#) should be reviewed and included based on project specifics. **Applicants are required to submit answers to questions 1-3, 5, 10, and 13-14.** See Section VI.B., Administrative and National Policy Requirements, for additional NEPA information. The NEPA questionnaire does not count towards any page limits.

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

Each applicant (unless the applicant is an individual or Federal awarding agency that is excepted from those requirements under 2 CFR 25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception approved by the Federal awarding agency under 2 CFR 25.110(d)) is required to: (i) Be registered in SAM before submitting its application; (ii) Provide a valid unique entity identifier (UEI) in its application; and (iii) Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency. NOAA may not make a Federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time NOAA is ready to make a Federal award, NOAA may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another applicant.

D. Submission Dates and Times

Applications will be accepted and considered on an annual basis, with due dates of June 22, 2026; May 3, 2027; and May 1, 2028. Applications for projects starting no earlier than September 1, 2026, must be received through www.grants.gov by 7:59 p.m. Alaska Standard Time (AKST) on June 22, 2026. To be considered for funding in subsequent fiscal years, applications must be received by 7:59 p.m. AKST on May 3, 2027, for projects starting no earlier than September 1, 2027, and May 1, 2028, for projects starting no earlier than September 1, 2028. The earliest date for receipt of awards for this funding opportunity is anticipated to be September 1, 2026.

E. Intergovernmental Review

Applications submitted by state and local governments are subject to the provisions of Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs." Any applicant submitting an application for funding is required to complete item 19 on SF-424 regarding clearance by the State Single Point of Contact (SPOC) established as a result of EO 12372. To find out about and comply with a State's process under EO 12372, contact the official listed in Section VII of this announcement for referral information.

F. Funding Restrictions

NOAA will not consider expenses associated with fees, fundraising activities, travel for activities not directly related to project implementation, travel or salaries for Federal employees, or profit as allowable costs in the proposed budget. The total costs of a project should consist of all allowable costs incurred in accomplishing project activities during the project period. Project costs can only include support for activities conducted between the effective start date and end date of the award. If pre-award costs are expected, applicants must notify the Program Office (see section VI.A., Award Administration Information, for additional information on pre-award costs). Applicants will not be reimbursed for time expended or costs incurred in developing a project or in preparing an application, or in any discussions or negotiations with the agency prior to the award. Such expenditures may not be considered as part of the applicant's cost share or matching contribution.

G. Other Submission Requirements

Registration requirements

NOTE: We strongly encourage all prospective applicants to begin required registrations as early as possible. Completing the required registrations can take six weeks or longer. Submission due dates will not be extended because of registration delays. Submissions received after the due date will be considered late and will not be accepted.

Applicant organizations and individuals must register for three different Federal systems prior to submitting an application through Grants.gov (SAM.gov, eRA Commons, and Grants.gov). See below for more detailed information on each required registration process. Additional information on the grant application process an associated webinar is available here:

<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/funding-financial-services/grant-application-process>

1. System for Award Management (SAM.gov)

SAM.gov registration is required to do business with the U.S. government. After registering with SAM.gov, you will receive a 12-character Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) that you will use throughout the application process.

We recommend allowing at least three weeks for initial SAM.gov registrations and at least two weeks for SAM.gov registration renewals. Additional information on SAM.gov registration is available here:

<https://sam.gov/content/entity-registration>

You must update your SAM.gov registration any time your entity's information changes. You must also renew and revalidate your entity's SAM.gov registration at least every 12 months from the date you last certified to and submitted the registration. The renewal process may take up to two weeks. Your SAM.gov account's primary point of contact will receive an email message alerting them to the renewal requirement at 60 days, 30 days, and 15 days prior to expiration. If you do not renew your registration by the deadline, it will expire.

2. eRA Commons

After completing your SAM.gov registration and receiving your Unique Entity Identifier (UEI), you must register with eRA Commons and create several required user accounts. NOAA uses eRA Commons to process grant applications and manage grant awards.

NOTE: eRA Commons requires applicants to create one ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE and two USER ACCOUNTS before submitting an application. These requirements are described in detail below.

We recommend allowing at least three weeks for eRA Commons registration. This process can be completed concurrently with your Grants.gov registration. Additional information on the eRA Commons registration process is available here: <https://www.commerce.gov/ocio/key-initiatives/gems/register-your-organization-era-commons>

After creating an overall account for your "institution", which may be for your organization or yourself as an individual, eRA Commons requires you to set up at least two user accounts: one Signing Official (SO) account and one Program Director/Principal Investigator (PD/PI) account.

- The Signing Official (SO) user account must be assigned to an individual with signature authority to legally bind the organization in grants administration matters. The SO will receive 4-5 emails throughout the registration process.
- The Program Director/Principal Investigator (PD/PI) account must be assigned to an individual with primary responsibility for the project(s) described in the grant application. The eRA Commons User ID (Username) for the PD/PI must also be listed on the SF-424 form for item 4 (Applicant Identifier).

Your SO and PD/PI user accounts must be active before you submit an application. Both accounts can be assigned to the same individual if appropriate.

3. Grants.Gov

After completing your SAM.gov registration and receiving your Unique Entity Identifier (UEI), you must complete a one-time registration process with Grants.gov. Grants.gov is a government-wide portal used to solicit and accept grant applications.

We recommend allowing at least two weeks for Grants.gov registration. This process can be completed concurrently with your eRA Commons registration. Additional information on the Grants.gov registration process is available here: <https://www.grants.gov/applicants/applicant-registration>

Submission Validation

The Grants.gov and eRA Commons validation processes for a submitted application can take up to two business days after submission. Only validated applications are sent to NOAA to review. To ensure successful submission of an application, we strongly recommend that you submit a final and complete application at least two business days prior to the submission deadline.

- Grants.gov and eRA Commons will not accept submissions if the applicant has not been authorized or if credentials are incorrect. Submissions may also be rejected if:
- The Project Director/Principal Investigator (PD/PI)'s account username within eRA Commons is not provided on the SF-424 form for item 4 (Applicant Identifier).
- The Universal Entity Identifier (UEI) from SAM.gov is not provided on the SF-424 form for item 8.c (UEI).
- The Congressional District is not entered in the correct format on the SF-424 form for item 16 (Congressional Districts). The correct format is: [State Abbreviation]-[three digit district number]. For example, Virginia's 1st Congressional District would be listed as VA-001.
- PDF files are not flattened. To flatten a fillable PDF, you can use the "Print to PDF" function from any web browser or PDF reader application.
- File sizes exceed 100 MB.
- Page sizes are greater than 8.5x11.
- File names exceed 50 characters (including spaces).
- File names include special characters.

After you submit your application, you will receive an automatic acknowledgment of receipt that contains a Grants.gov tracking number. This notification indicates receipt by Grants.gov only, not receipt by NOAA. Applications submitted through Grants.gov will be accompanied by FOUR automated responses (1-Grants.gov Submission Receipt; 2-Grants.gov Submission Validation Receipt for Application; 3-Grants.gov Grantor Agency Retrieval Receipt for Application; 4-Grants.gov Agency Tracking Number Assignment for Application).

In addition to the Grants.gov automated notification messages, once an electronic application is accepted in eRA Commons, you will receive an automated notification from eRA Commons that the completed application was received and that an application number will be assigned. If there are errors in the application, eRA Commons will send an automated email notification(s) of any errors or warnings identified by eRA Commons. You must resolve all eRA Commons errors prior to the application due date in order for the application to be processed.

You should save and print the proof of submission messages from both Grants.gov and eRA Commons. If you do not receive an acceptance message from both Grants.gov and eRA Commons, you should follow up with the eRA Helpdesk at 1-866-504-9552 and the agency contact listed in Section VII to confirm NOAA's receipt of the complete submission.

H. Address for Submitting Proposals

www.grants.gov

V. Application Review Information

1. Importance/relevance and applicability of proposed projects to the program goals	Maximum Points: 25
--	---------------------------

This criterion ascertains whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and/or relevance to NOAA, Federal, regional, state, or local activities.

- Does the proposal adequately describe its relevance to a program priority?
- Will the project improve communication, education, and training on marine resource issues throughout the region?
- Will the project increase scientific education for marine-related professions among coastal community residents?
- Does the project include or showcase valuable and appropriate partnerships?

2. Technical/scientific merit

Maximum Points: 25

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.

- Are the conceptual framework, design, methods, and analyses adequately developed, well integrated, and appropriate to the aims of the project?
- Are the objectives in the proposal clearly defined, focused, realistic, and can they be reached within the proposed project period?
- Does the applicant acknowledge potential problem areas and consider ways to resolve the issues or implement alternative tactics?
- Does the project challenge existing paradigms or develop new methodologies or technologies?
- Is sufficient detail provided in the proposal about the methods proposed for monitoring and evaluating the success of the project, and are they appropriate?

3. Overall qualifications of applicants

Maximum Points: 25

This criterion ascertains whether the applicant possesses the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project.

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

4. Outreach and Education

Maximum Points: 15

This criterion assesses whether the project provides a focused and effective education and outreach strategy regarding NOAA's mission to protect the Nation's natural resources.

- Does the proposal identify anticipated benefits, potential users, indicators of success, and methods of disseminating results?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is an effective method proposed for dissemination of project results? Are the various target audiences, such as the fishing community or the general public, identified? 	
Project Costs	Maximum Points: 10
<p>This criterion evaluates the budget to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time-frame.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are the costs reasonable for the proposed activities? 	

Evaluation Criteria

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

Review and Selection Process

Screening, review, and selection procedures will take place in 3 steps: initial screening, panel review, and final selection by the Selecting Official (the NMFS Alaska Regional Administrator or their designee).

- Initial Screening.** Applications will undergo an initial administrative screening to determine if the packages are eligible and complete. Applications are screened to ensure that they were received by the deadline date; that the applicant is eligible to apply; that the proposed project addresses one of the program priorities; and that the application includes a project narrative, budget, and supporting documentation as outlined in Section IV.B., Content and Form of Application. NOAA, at its sole discretion, may continue the review process for applications with non-substantive issues that may be easily rectified. NOAA is not required to screen applications before the submission deadline to identify deficiencies that would cause the application to be rejected or receive a poor evaluation. However, if deficiencies are identified by NOAA or the applicant before the deadline, the applicant may correct any deficiencies by submitting a revised application. After the deadline, the application must remain as submitted; no changes can be made to it. If an application does not conform to the requirements listed above, the application will be rejected without further consideration.
- Panel Review.** After the initial screening, each application will be reviewed by at least three Federal full-time employees with subject matter expertise. The reviewers will meet and evaluate each proposal individually based on its own merit against the evaluation criteria described above. All applications, regardless of priority, will be reviewed in this manner. Prior to the Panel Review meeting, reviewers will independently evaluate each project and provide an individual score. During the Panel Review meeting, reviewers may revise their scores and comments. Reviewers will submit their final proposal scores to the Competition Manager by the end of the Panel Review meeting. After the panel scores are submitted, a compilation of all proposals in rank order will be developed based on the average score from the reviewer scores.
- Final Selection.** The Selecting Official (or their designee) will review the rank order, funding recommendations, and comments from the Panel Review and will determine the applicants to be funded and how much funding shall be awarded to each selected applicant.

Selection Factors

The Selecting Official (or their designee) 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:

- Availability of funding.

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

Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

The earliest date for receipt of awards for this funding opportunity is anticipated to be September 1, 2026, dependent upon availability of Federal funding, acceptable completion of all NOAA/applicant negotiations including NEPA analysis and permit requirements, and the provision of other supporting documentation as requested.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

PRE-AWARD COSTS. Written pre-approval is required from NOAA for pre-award costs but prior approval will 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 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 obligate 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 <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 the eRA 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>

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.

NOAA SEXUAL ASSAULT AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE POLICY. NOAA requires organizations receiving federal assistance to report findings of sexual harassment, or any other kind of harassment, regarding a Principal Investigator (PI), co-PI, or any other key personnel in the award.

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

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

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.

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 15% of MTDC (as allowable under 2 C.F.R. §200.414). The negotiation and approval of a rate is subject to the procedures required by NOAA and the Department of Commerce Standard Terms and Conditions. The NOAA contact for indirect or facilities and administrative costs is: Jennifer Jackson, NOAA Grants Management Division, 1325 East West Highway, 9th Floor, Silver Spring, MD 20910, or jennifer.jackson@noaa.gov.

EXECUTIVE ORDER 14173. Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity Pursuant to Executive Order 14173, 90 FR 8633 (Jan. 21, 2025), Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity, each recipient that accepts a U.S. Department of Commerce financial assistance award: (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.

RESTORING AMERICAN SEAFOOD COMPETITIVENESS. Pursuant to Executive Order (EO) 14276, Restoring American Seafood, the United States aims to address unfair trade practices, eliminate unsafe imports, level the unfair playing field that has benefited foreign fishing companies, promote ethical sourcing, reduce regulatory burdens, and ensure the integrity of the seafood supply chain. As applicable, the purpose, policies, and requirements of EO 14276 apply to awards made under this notice.

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. 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:

1. By DOC or the pass-through entity if the recipient or subrecipient fails to comply with the terms and conditions of this federal award.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. 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.

C. Reporting

In accordance with 2 CFR 200.328-9 and the terms and conditions of the award, financial reports are to be submitted semi-annually and performance (technical) reports are to be submitted semi-annually. 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.

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.

VII. Agency Contacts

Any questions regarding this grant competition should be directed to the Competition Manager, Leah Gregg, at akr.grants@noaa.gov.

VIII. Other Information

None.