Ocean Exploration Fiscal Year 2021 Funding Opportunity

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NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

Funding Opportunity Title: Ocean Exploration Fiscal Year 2021 Funding Opportunity

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: NOAA-OAR-OER-2021-2006431

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 11.011, Ocean Exploration

Dates: A complete, maximum two-page, pre-proposal is a requirement in order to be allowed to submit a full proposal. Pre-proposals must be received by 11:59 pm (EDT) on July 8, 2020. Full proposal submissions must be received by 11:59 pm (EST) on October 22, 2020. Applications received after the above deadlines will not be considered. An informational webinar will be held shortly after the NOFO is announced. Please check the website https://oceanexplorer.noaa.gov/about/funding-opps/welcome.html for details. The recorded presentation will also be archived at this website.

Funding Opportunity Description: NOAA's Office of Ocean Exploration & Research (OER) is soliciting proposals for ocean exploration in waters under U.S. jurisdiction, including the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). OER is interested in projects that provide data and information that may inform ocean-related segments of the U.S. economy through mapping, characterization, and exploration of the deep seafloor and water column of the U.S. EEZ as well as marine cultural heritage in U.S. waters. OER is soliciting proposals for three themes:

OCEAN EXPLORATION. Ocean exploration to inform management, sustainable use, and conservation of marine resources in poorly explored deep ocean areas of the U.S. EEZ. Areas proposed for exploration and/or initial characterization must be at water depths of 200 m or more.

TECHNOLOGY. Application of new or novel use of existing ocean technologies or innovative methods that increase the scope and efficiency of acquiring ocean exploration data and improve usability of and access to ocean exploration data. Proposed technologies must be applicable to water depths of 200 m or greater, though testing in shallower water or lab-based testing will be supported. Technology testing may occur outside of U.S. waters.

MARINE ARCHAEOLOGY. Discovery and characterization of underwater cultural heritage to

inform decisions on preservation and seabed use, and to identify sources of potential environmental impacts. Marine archaeology proposals can be conducted in any water depth within the U.S. EEZ.

Informational documents on this funding opportunity are accessible through the OER website: https://oceanexplorer.noaa.gov/about/funding-opps/welcome.html.

For the purpose of this opportunity, costs for ship time and/or other ocean data collection platform support (remotely operated vehicles, autonomous underwater vehicles, etc.) are considered rental costs and therefore are not included in Modified Total Direct Cost (MTDC). The exception is for institutions with a federal negotiated Indirect Cost (IDC) Rate agreement that covers these charges.

Note: Ship time on the NOAA Ship Okeanos Explorer will not be funded through this announcement.

The following checklists are provided to aid in preparing your application.
Pre-proposal stage (due July 8, 2020):

1. OER FFO cover sheet
2. Pre-proposal, max 2 pages

Submit by email to: oer.ffo2021@noaa.gov

Full proposal stage (due October 22, 2020):

1. Updated OER FFO cover sheet
2. Executive summary, max 1 page
3. Project narrative, max 15 pages
4. Data and information sharing plan, max 2 pages
5. Outreach and education plan, max 1 page
6. Statement of diversity and inclusion
7. Previous significant results
8. Summary of current funding support for each principal investigator
9. Curriculum vitae, max 2 pages per each principal investigator
10. Budget justification and budget tables
11. (if applicable) Negotiated Indirect Cost (IDC) Rate memo
12. NEPA questionnaire
13. (optional) Letters of support, e.g. from local State Historic Preservation Office
14. (non-federal only) Forms: SF-424, SF-424A, SF-424B, SF-LLL, Unpaid Tax Liability
15. (optional) Suggested reviewers

All documents required at the full proposal stage must be submitted individually through

Grants.gov.

FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Program Objective

The world’s deep ocean remains largely unexplored, leaving significant gaps in the basic environmental intelligence needed to manage and protect ocean resources, forecast future environmental changes, and facilitate sustainable economic development of the ocean. By leading national efforts to explore our ocean and making ocean exploration more accessible, the NOAA Office of Ocean Exploration and Research (OER) is filling gaps in the basic understanding of U.S. deep waters and seafloor, providing critical deep-ocean data, information, and awareness needed to sustain and accelerate the economy, health, and security of our nation.

Through the FY 2021 Federal Funding Opportunity, NOAA OER seeks to support:

1. Interdisciplinary baseline characterizations of unknown or poorly known deep-ocean areas, processes, and resources;

2. Technological innovation or novel application to advance deep-ocean exploration objectives; and

3. Discovery and initial characterization of underwater cultural heritage.

Successful proposals are typically undertaken by a multi-partner group and are characterized by an interdisciplinary and innovative exploration approach; they frequently leverage other programs/organizations with compatible objectives; they employ advanced technology platforms and sensors to further explore and characterize priority themes; they produce information that will be valuable to state and federal marine resource managers; they give consideration to environmental impacts in the project planning and represent the applicant's ability to acquire all necessary permits; they explain the applicant’s plan for making data and results publicly available to advance scientific knowledge and inform environmental management decisions; and they provide a plan for outreach/education activities and diversity and inclusion.

Investigators whose proposals are funded must adhere to an open data policy which ensures that all environmental data and information collected or created by the program, once quality controlled, are promptly made available to requestors; and comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and all other federal laws regarding environmental

protection (e.g., the Endangered Species Act, Marine Mammal Protection Act, and National Marine Sanctuaries Act).

In addition, successful applicants will be expected to foster partnerships to accomplish NOAA ocean exploration goals; and engage and educate audiences by sharing information about ocean exploration through innovative means.

Applicants are encouraged to visit the NOAA OER website (https://oceanexplorer.noaa.gov/about/funding-opps/ffo-recipients.html) to familiarize themselves with past and present OER-funded activities. Links to helpful information on the OER grant program, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), and the required cover sheet for pre-proposal and full proposal applications are available on this OER web page: https://oceanexplorer.noaa.gov/about/funding-opps/welcome.html. Information will be posted at this site regarding an informational webinar, and the webinar will also be archived here for later viewing.

B. Program Priorities

The NOAA Office of Ocean Exploration and Research (OER) is soliciting proposals for ocean exploration in waters under U.S. jurisdiction, including the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). In November 2019, the White House published the Memorandum on Ocean Mapping of the United States EEZ and the Shoreline and Nearshore Alaska (https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/memorandum-ocean-mapping-united-states-exclusive-economic-zone-shoreline-nearshore-alaska/) directing federal agencies to accelerate ocean mapping, exploration, and characterization of the U.S. EEZ. The U.S. EEZ contains a vast array of underutilized, and likely many undiscovered, natural resources, including critical minerals, marine-derived pharmaceuticals, energy, and areas of significant ecological and conservation value. By supporting exploration, i.e., discovery through disciplined, diverse observations, OER seeks to advance the objectives in this memo.

Multidisciplinary (i.e., physical, chemical, geological, and biological) ocean exploration information is fundamental for science-based decision making and implementation of best ocean stewardship practices. As such, OER is interested in projects that map, explore, and characterize deep waters (>200 m) of the U.S. EEZ to improve understanding of the vast ocean resources of the nation and to advance economic, health, security, and environmental interests.

OER is soliciting proposals that focus on the following three topics:

1. OCEAN EXPLORATION. Acquisition of ocean environmental information pertaining

to bathymetry of unmapped, or poorly mapped, areas of the EEZ; new habitats, species, or communities of organisms; potential non-living (e.g., critical minerals) and living resources (e.g., marine natural products); and discovery and initial description of physical, geological, chemical, or biological oceanographic conditions and processes to better inform decision making regarding management, sustainable use, and conservation. Areas proposed for exploration and/or initial characterization must be 200 m deep or greater.

2. TECHNOLOGY. Application of new or novel use of existing ocean technologies or innovative methods that increase the scope and efficiency of acquiring ocean exploration data (e.g., expanding capabilities to make multiple types of concurrent observations) and improve usability of and access to ocean exploration data (e.g., incorporating in situ processing to expedite data delivery). Proposed technologies must be applicable to water depths of 200 m or greater. Proof-of-concept technology demonstrations in shallower water or lab-based testing will be considered.

3. MARINE ARCHAEOLOGY. Discovery and initial characterization of underwater cultural heritage representing past marine-based economic activities (e.g., migration, settlement, trade, resource extraction, warfare, etc.) or human occupation on the previously sub-aerial Continental Shelf to inform future decisions on preservation management and seabed use and identify sources of potential environmental impacts. Marine archaeology proposals can be conducted in any water depth.

Ocean exploration and Marine Archeology projects are to be conducted in waters under U.S jurisdiction. Proof-of-concept technology demonstrations may be conducted outside of U.S. waters.

C. Program Authority

33 USC 3403(a)

II. Award Information

A. Funding Availability

OER anticipates a total of approximately $3,000,000 will be available through this announcement. Through this solicitation, OER anticipates being able to support approximately 4-10 awards with budgets ranging from $75,000 to a maximum of $750,000 to be spent over one or two years. Any proposal below $75,000 or that exceeds $750,000 will not be considered for review and will be disqualified. The amount of funding available through this announcement will be subject to the final FY2021 appropriation/allocation for

NOAA OER. Publication of this announcement does not obligate NOAA to fund any specific project or obligate all or any part of available funds. There is no guarantee that sufficient funds will be available to initiate or continue exploration activities where funding has been recommended by OER. The amount of funding that OER may recommend for a grant will be determined in pre-award negotiations between the applicant and OER. The OER Selecting Official may defer selected FY2021 proposals for consideration for funding in the subsequent, or later, fiscal year(s).

B. Project/Award Period

OER will accept proposals for projects that are one or two years in duration. The anticipated award start date is on or near September 1, 2021.

C. Type of Funding Instrument

Proposals selected for funding will be funded through a grant or cooperative agreement under the terms of this notice. Proposals selected for funding from NOAA scientists will be funded through an intra-agency transfer. Federal agencies that possess the statutory authority to accept funding for this type of work may also apply and must agree to take and spend FY 2021 funding for proposed projects. Proposals from a non-NOAA federal agency will be funded through an interagency agreement transfer.

For applications funded through cooperative agreements, substantial involvement of the federal government may include, but is not limited to, activities such as specifying direction or redirection of the scope of work due to interrelationships with other projects or stipulating that the recipient must meet or adhere to specific procedural requirements before subsequent stages of a project may continue.

By receiving funding from OER, all applicants agree to certain requirements for education and outreach, data management, and website development. To help meet these requirements, one or more NOAA staff or NOAA designee(s) will be assigned as a primary point of contact to assist in planning and execution of these activities. In some cases, the POC(s) may become a member of an at-sea science team serving roles as Expedition Coordinators, Data Managers, or Web Coordinators. For more details please refer to section VIII of this document.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are U.S.-based institutions of higher education; non-profit

institutions; state, local, and tribal governments; federal agencies; for-profit organizations; and U.S. territories that possess the statutory authority to accept funding for this type of work. PLEASE NOTE: Before non-NOAA federal applicants may be funded, they must affirm that they have legal authority to receive funds from another federal agency in excess of their appropriation. Because this announcement is not proposing to procure goods or services from the applicants, the Economy Act (31 U.S.C. section 1535) is not an appropriate basis. NOAA and other federal agencies that possess the statutory authority to accept funding for this type of work must agree to take FY 2021 funding for proposed projects (both one and two year projects) and allocate them in FY 2021.

The DOC and NOAA support cultural and gender diversity and encourage women and minority individuals and groups to submit applications to this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). In addition, DOC/NOAA is strongly committed to broadening the participation of historically black colleges and universities, Hispanic serving institutions, tribal colleges and universities, and institutions that work in underserved areas. DOC/NOAA encourages applications involving any of the above institutions.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

Cost-sharing, matching funds, in-kind contributions or contribution of no-cost ship time, etc. are not required.

C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility

1. Potential Partners

OER encourages partnerships between academia, government agencies, foundations, and private-sector companies. Foreign entities can participate only through collaboration with an eligible U.S.-based entity through a subaward. OER also encourages investigators to enhance or expand the scope of their projects through complementary proposals to other sponsors, both internal and external to NOAA (e.g., for shiptime or other assets).

2. Permits and Approvals

It is the applicant's responsibility to obtain all necessary international, federal, state, and local government permits and approvals where necessary for the proposed work to be conducted. Applicants are expected to design their proposals so that they minimize potential adverse environmental impacts of the proposed work. If applicable, documentation of requests for or approvals of cultural resource or environmental permits must be included in the proposal package.

A National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) questionnaire (https://www.nepa.noaa.gov/docs/NOAA-Grants-Questionnaire-final.pdf) must be

completed for each proposal to ensure there is sufficient information about the project to allow OER to analyze the project's potential environmental impacts, pursuant to NEPA (See Section VI.B for more details).

Prior to submitting a full proposal, applicants who propose archaeological work in state waters must consult with the appropriate State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). For such proposals, it must be indicated whether SHPO staff provided an opinion of the project's potential to affect historic resources. Applicants must adhere to any regulations or guidelines that may apply and obtain the appropriate permits to conduct the proposed work. Sample collection must adhere to Federal and State law, and the applicant must make accommodations for conservation and curating as described in the Annex Rules of the UNESCO Convention for the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage.

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Address to Request Application Package

Information on this NOFO and how to apply is available at: www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html. For applicants without internet access, please contact the OER Program Lead Amanda Netburn by mail at NOAA Office of Ocean Exploration (R/OER), SSMC3, Room 10238, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910 to obtain an Application Package and guidance on submission of pre-proposals and full proposals.

B. Content and Form of Application

See Sections IV.D for submission due dates, IV.G for submission procedures, IV.A for addresses, and V.A for pre-proposal evaluation criteria.

1. Format requirements (applies to both pre- and full proposals):

a. Submissions should be formatted to print on 8.5" x 11"paper with 1-inch margins in 12-point font.

b. The Principal Investigator's last name should be typed in the bottom right-hand corner of each page. All digital files should be named with the applicant's last name and a descriptor indicating the file content, e.g. "Jones Cover Sheet 2021".

c. Title must be no longer than 15 words/100 characters.

2. Pre-proposal Required Content

A pre-proposal is a prerequisite to submitting a full proposal. A pre-proposal should identify the project's priorities and objectives and describe how these relate to NOAA's mission goals and OER's mission, objectives, and priorities (as described in Sections I.A and I.B above).

Complete, two-page pre-proposals are required for all applications. No more than two pages will be evaluated. Incomplete pre-proposals will not be considered. All information must be included in the designated two pages and the OER FFO Cover Sheet. Required information must include: vessels, platforms, or other critical assets required to technically achieve the goals and their costs; auxiliary funding sources for the proposed project; dates of anticipated field operations and any operational constraints, especially with regard to field operations; and anticipated outputs (e.g., potential discoveries, knowledge and impact, published papers, reports, meetings, and/or education and outreach material).

Cover Sheet Requirements

All pre-proposal submissions must include a completed OER FFO Cover Sheet which is available at: https://oceanexplorer.noaa.gov/about/funding-opps/media/fy21-ffo-coversheet.pdf. All applicable sections must be completed in full, including project title; priority themes addressed; PI and collaborator contact information; outside support; field operations, vessel, and ancillary platform information; budget estimate; and education and outreach. Instructions to fill out the cover sheet are here: https://oceanexplorer.noaa.gov/about/funding-opps/media/fy20-coversheet-instructions.pdf.

Pre-proposal Narrative Requirements (see Sections IV.B.1 for formatting requirements and for evaluation criteria):

a. A pre-proposal narrative must not exceed two pages, including any figures, the anticipated funding request, references, and any other content.

b. Describe how the proposal is relevant to NOAA and OER missions and goals. You must include the project's intrinsic value, how it is exploratory rather than research based, and its expected scientific impact.

c. Describe the scientific and technical merit of the proposal. Discuss project goals and objectives, how the project is innovative and interdisciplinary, its exploration value and potential impact, and its logistical feasibility.

d. Provide the qualifications and competencies of the applicant(s).

e. If a ship (or other seagoing asset) is required, the applicant(s) must state that they have assured that the ship (or other asset) is available when needed and have the administrative means to arrange and pay for it.

Pre-proposals must be submitted by email to oer.ffo2021@noaa.gov (see IV.A for guidance for mail submission). Pre-proposals received after the deadline, 11:59 pm on July 8, 2020, will not be evaluated.

3. Full Proposal Required Content

Full proposals should demonstrate relevance to NOAA's and OER's mission goals and priorities (as described in Sections I.A and I.B). Applicants should use September 1, 2021 when referring to the project award date in the proposal and on the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Standard Forms.

No appendices are permitted.

Full proposals must include the content described below in the order listed, unless otherwise indicated. For those using Grants.gov to submit their material, each document listed below must be uploaded as a separate file. All full proposals must include:

a. Completed OER FFO Cover Sheet (Available at: https://oceanexplorer.noaa.gov/about/funding-opps/media/fy21-ffo-coversheet.pdf). This is the same form that is to be submitted with the pre-proposal, but must be updated for submission with the full proposal.

b. Maximum one-page Executive Summary describing the essential elements of the project being proposed. The summary must include: 1) Title (= 15 words/100 characters), 2) List of names, contact details, and affiliations of each investigator who will significantly contribute to the project, 3) A concise statement of the compelling objectives and benefits of the project and the rationale for the work proposed, and 4) Funding request for each year of the project and the total funding requested. The statement should be written in language that can convey to non-experts the key elements of the project and the project's importance in regard to advancing ocean exploration goals.

c. A Project Narrative not to exceed 15 pages, including all text (minimum 12-point font) and any tables and visual materials (e.g., charts, graphs, maps, photographs). This is a firm requirement. Any project narrative pages beyond the 15-page limit will be removed from the proposal before it is reviewed. The 15-page limit does not include: the Executive

Summary, Budget Justification and Tables, Data and Information Sharing Plan (see VIII.C), Outreach and Education Plan, Diversity, Inclusion, and Broader Impacts Statement, Literature Cited, Current and Pending Support, Curriculum Vitae, Letters of Commitment, and Required Forms (e.g., NEPA).

Project Narrative Requirements:

i. Project's scientific, technical, historical, cultural, or socioeconomic importance and merit.

ii. Project's goals and objectives and the proposed methodology.

iii. Anticipated contributions of participating personnel.

iv. Description of any complementary funding.

v. Dates of field operations and any operational constraints.

vi. If a ship (or other seagoing asset) is required, the applicant must state that they have assured that the ship (or other asset) is available when needed and that the host institution would, if provided with the funding, have the administrative means to arrange and pay for it.

vii. Anticipated outputs from the proposed project (e.g., potential discoveries, knowledge and impact, published papers, reports, meetings, and/or education and outreach material).

viii. The value to NOAA and the Nation and how the project's anticipated outcomes will benefit our understanding of the ocean, the science community, and society.

ix. Applicants for marine archaeology proposals must consult with the appropriate State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and indicate whether SHPO staff provided an opinion of your project's potential to affect historic resources under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

d. Data and Information Sharing Plan: Proposals submitted in response to this announcement must include a Data Management Plan (up to 2 pages). See Section VI.B, Administrative and National Policy Requirements, for additional information.

e. Outreach and Education Plan: In one page or less, describe how the proposed work will be used to support education and outreach efforts. Also state a willingness to participate in OER's education and outreach programming.

f. Statement of Diversity and Inclusion: OER recognizes that it has a particular and unique opportunity to support NOAA's commitment to diversity and inclusion by taking an intentional step that encourages program applicants to consider diversity and inclusion as part of their scientific projects. This action has the potential to make an impact on not only the diversity and inclusion in science at NOAA, but also beyond the agency. In this section,

describe how well the proposed activity broadens the participation of underrepresented groups (e.g., gender, ethnicity, disability, geographic, etc.). Examples could include, but are not limited to, full participation of women, persons with disabilities, and underrepresented minorities in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). Diversity is defined as a collection of individual attributes that together help organizations achieve objectives. Inclusion is defined as a culture that connects each employee to the organization. Promoting diversity and inclusion improves creativity, productivity, and the vitality of the ocean exploration community in which OER engages. NOAA OER values the advancement of scientific knowledge and activities that contribute to the achievement of societally relevant outcomes. Such outcomes include, but are not limited to: full participation of women, persons with disabilities, and underrepresented minorities in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM); increased public scientific literacy and public engagement with science and technology; improved well-being of individuals in society; development of a diverse, globally competitive STEM workforce; increased partnerships between academia, industry, and others; improved national security; increased economic competitiveness of the United States; and enhanced infrastructure for research and education.

g. Previous Significant Results: A concise summary of previous significant results and achievements from any prior, or ongoing, NOAA Office of Ocean Exploration and Research funding. This summary should include publications and outputs, and data and information sharing experience.

h. Summary of Current Funding Support: Applicants must provide information on all their current and pending federal support for ongoing projects and proposals, including potential subsequent funding in the case of continuing grants. The proposed project and all other projects or activities using federal assistance or that requires a portion of time of the Principal Investigator or other senior personnel should be included. The relationship between the proposed project and these other projects should be described, and the number of person-months per year to be devoted to the projects must be clearly stated.

i. Resumes: A maximum of two pages for each Principal and Co-Principal Investigator(s), including a list of relevant recent publications.

j. Budget Justification and Budget Table: These must adhere to the guidance and templates provided in the NOAA Grants Management Division’s Budget Narrative Guidance which can be found at: ago.noaa.gov/grants/training.html (select: Budget Narrative Guidance). All expenses should be rounded to the nearest dollar.

The budget must include, and justify, sufficient resources to analyze, interpret, publish, and

archive data (in accordance with the Data and Information Sharing Plan) and results of the project. Applicants must describe the scope of work and budget for each year of support being sought (not to exceed two years), and a summary budget table for the entire award period.

The summary budget table must reflect the object classes contained in the SF-424A form, which is the Grants.gov official budget form, included with the submission. The table must reflect the computations and basis used in the development of costs and justifications for: salary and travel (travel must be itemized to include destination, airfare, per diem, lodging, and ground travel); contracts for analyses or cataloging; publications; rentals; supplies; equipment; sub-awards to other parties for services; and non-standard items, including ship time and submersible assets being requested from OER for support. The summary budget table must also show how costs for ship time and submersible costs were developed and whether agreement has been reached for their use. Cost sharing or in-kind contributions must be clearly identified and given a value.

k. Indirect Cost Rate Memo (IDC): A copy of the institution's Indirect Cost Rate Agreement used to calculate indirect costs is to be included as a separate document. If the agreement is in the process of being renegotiated, indicate the status of the IDC application in an attached letter. See Section VI.B.10 for more information on Indirect Cost Rate.

l. NEPA Statement: Applicants are required to submit answers to questions 1 through 19 of the NOAA National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) questionnaire (https://www.nepa.noaa.gov/docs/NOAA-Grants-Questionnaire-final.pdf). See Section VI.B.9, Administrative and National Policy Requirements, below for additional NEPA information.

m. Letter of Support (optional): e.g., support from SHPO

n. Forms: Non-federal applicants must submit a complete NOAA grant application package from Grants.gov. The required OMB Standard Forms are:

i. Standard Form 424 (SF-424) - Application for Federal Assistance

ii. Standard Form 424A (SF-424A) - Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs - When applying for a multi-year award , the non-federal entity must submit a line item budget (SF-424A) and corresponding budget narrative for each of the funding periods anticipated.

iii. Standard Form 424B - Assurances - Non-Construction Programs

iv. Standard Form LLL - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (by lead PI institution)

v. Form CD-511 - Certification Regarding Lobbying (by lead PI institution)

vi. Unpaid Tax Liability Form - Part I must be submitted for grant applications of less than $5 million from all for-profit and nonprofit organizations. The form can be found at: http://www.ago.noaa.gov/grants/forms.html.

Federal applicants do not submit OMB forms with their proposal.

o. A list of suggested reviewers (optional): The application may include a list of suggested reviewers (names, email addresses, and phone numbers) of five unconflicted potential peer reviewers. Applicants may also identify individuals recommended for exclusion from the review process (including justification for any such recommendation).

Failure to comply with the foregoing requirements will result in disqualification of the proposal application.

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 Part 25, which may be accessed at: https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CFR-2018-title2-vol1/xml/CFR-2018-title2-vol1-part25.xml. In order to submit an application through Grants.gov, an applicant must register for a Grants.gov user ID and password. Note that this process can take between three to five business days or as long as four weeks if not completed correctly. To avoid delays, applicants are strongly encouraged to start early to register, log in, review the application instructions, and apply. Information about the Grants.gov registration process for organizations can be found at: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html.

Please note that organizations already registered with Grants.gov do not need to re-register; however, all registered organizations must keep their Grants.gov password and SAM database (which now incorporates Central Contractor Registration [CCR]) registration up-to-date or their applications will not be accepted by Grants.gov. Note that your CCR username will not work in SAM. You must create a new SAM user account to renew or update your registration. Registration on SAM is a requirement. To obtain additional information and to

verify that all required registrations are current, please visit: https://www.sam.gov/SAM/.

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

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

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

a. Complete the required registration.

b. Ensure that a registered Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) submits the application.

c. Read an email message with guidance from Grants.gov.

D. Submission Dates and Times

Completed pre-proposals are required and must be submitted by email to oer.ffo2021@noaa.gov by 11:59 pm (EDT) on July 8, 2020. A complete pre-proposal is a prerequisite for submission of a full proposal.

Applicants will receive an email encouraging or discouraging a full proposal submission on or about August 14, 2020. If you have not received a reply by August 19, 2020 contact OER at: oer.ffo2021@noaa.gov or (301) 734-1021 as soon as possible.

Full proposals must be received by 11:59 pm (EST) on October 22, 2020.

For applicants without internet access who must submit hard copies of the pre- and full proposal applications by mail or courier services, please allow sufficient time for delivery to OER by the deadline.

Pre-proposals and full proposals received after their respective cutoff dates and times will not be considered.

Please note: Applicants may have to register or renew their CCR prior to submitting to

Grants.gov. Grants.gov will not accept submissions if the applicant has not been authorized or if credentials are incorrect. Authorizations and credential corrections can take several days to establish. Please plan your time accordingly to avoid being disqualified for a late submission. For further information please visit the SAM website: https://www.sam.gov. For questions please visit the Federal Service Desk website: https://www.fsd.gov.

E. Intergovernmental Review

Applications under this office's announcement are subject to Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs." Applicants must contact their State's Single Point of Contact (SPOC) to find out about and comply with the State's process under EO 12372. The names and addresses of the SPOCs are listed on the Office of Management and Budget's website: https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/spoc_1_16_2020.pdf.

F. Funding Restrictions

For the purpose of this opportunity, costs for ship time and/or other ocean data collection platform support (remotely operated vehicles, autonomous underwater vehicles, etc.) are considered rental costs and therefore are not included in Modified Total Direct Cost (MTDC). The exception is for institutions with a federal negotiated Indirect Cost (IDC) Rate agreement that covers these charges.

OER funding will not be provided to hire and/or fund the salaries and associated overhead costs of any permanent federal or state government employee. OER will not pay Facilities and Administrative (F&A or "overhead") fees to federal and state agencies for subawards such as ship time or other ocean data collection platform support. Federal and state award recipients may use funding to cover travel, equipment, supplies, and contractual personnel costs associated with the proposed work.

Title and future use of equipment acquired under an awarded grant will be negotiated and agreed upon by NOAA/OER and the grantee in accordance with 15CFR14.34.

G. Other Submission Requirements

Pre-proposal submissions must be submitted by email to: oer.ffo2021@noaa.gov. Please put your last name in the subject heading, along with the words "ocean exploration pre-proposal," e.g., "Jones ocean exploration pre-proposal." Adobe PDF format is preferred.

Full proposals from non-federal applicants must be submitted through Grants.gov and will have an associated official date and time of receipt. Federal applicants cannot submit their

applications through Grants.gov. Applications from federal agencies must be submitted by email to: oer.ffo2021@noaa.gov. The official time recorded for the receipt of federal applications is the time-stamp on the email when it arrives in OER with the attached proposal. Arrival can be delayed so allow sufficient time for transmission.

For applicants without internet access, please submit application packages to OER Program Lead Amanda Netburn by mail at NOAA Office of Ocean Exploration (R/OER), SSMC3, Room 10238, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910.

V. Application Review Information

A. Evaluation Criteria

Pre- and full proposals will be evaluated as follows:

1. Pre-Proposal Evaluation Criteria

Pre-proposals will be evaluated by the OER program using the following criteria to either encourage or discourage submission of full proposals:

a. Relevance to NOAA and OER missions and goals;
b. Scientific and technical merit;
c. Qualifications and competencies of the applicants, including past performance on prior OER awards; and
d. Costs for specific items as well as the overall project cost including value of cost-sharing and/or in-kind contributions.

Given a discourage assessment, the decision of whether or not to submit a full proposal is left to the applicant(s).

2. Full Proposal Evaluation Criteria

Full proposals will be evaluated and rated individually by no fewer than three independent peer mail reviewers and a peer-review panel with collective expertise in the relevant disciplines. All peer reviewers are required to sign confidentiality and non-disclosure agreements. The review will consist of a determination and analysis of strengths, weaknesses, deficiencies, and risks associated with each proposal.

The following are the criteria and corresponding weight values to be used to evaluate the full proposals:

a. Importance/Relevance and applicability of proposal to NOAA’s and OER’s missions

and goals (30%): This criterion ascertains whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and/or relevance to NOAA, federal, regional, state, or local activities. For the OER program, this includes: 1) Is the proposed project germane to NOAA's mission goals, 2) Is the proposal exploration focused (expanding the breadth of knowledge) versus being research focused (expanding the depth of knowledge on any particular topic), and 3) Could the anticipated results have high downstream impact;

b. Scientific and technical merit (35%): This criterion assesses whether the approach is technically sound and/or innovative, if the methods are appropriate, and whether there are clear project goals and objectives. For the OER program this includes: 1) Is the proposed approach scientifically and technically feasible, 2) Is the proposal innovative, 3) Are there clear project goals and objectives, 4) Is the project interdisciplinary, 5) Are the methods commensurate with the goals and objectives, and 6) Are the plans for documentation, archival, and sharing of data, multimedia and specimen collections adequately outlined;

c. Overall qualifications of applicants (15%): This criterion asks the reviewers to ascertain whether the applicant(s) possesses the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project. For the OER review process this includes evaluating: 1) The qualifications of the applicant(s) and 2) The strength, breadth, and depth of any partnership to accomplish the work proposed. If the applicant has previously received OER funding, this criterion also asks the reviewers to assess the applicant's prior OER award performance (e.g., timely publication of results and sharing of data);

d. Project costs (15%): This criterion asks the reviewers to evaluate the proposal budget to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the proposed project needs and timeframe.

e. Outreach and Education and Diversity and Inclusion (5%): 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 and provides opportunity to broaden the participation of underrepresented groups (e.g., gender, ethnicity, disability, geographic, etc.). For the OER program, this includes the evaluation of the proposal budget to determine if the proposal includes an outreach and education plan that will target diverse future generations of explorers.

B. Review and Selection Process

Once a full proposal has been received by NOAA, an initial administrative review will be conducted to determine compliance with requirements and completeness of the

application. When a proposal is determined to be in compliance and complete, the proposal will be subjected to peer review.

Peer reviewers will rate the individual proposals using the evaluation criteria and percentage weights provided above and will provide summary comments. Both federal and non-federal experts in the field may be used in the peer-review process, including both external mail reviews and/or a peer-review panel. Peer-review panelists will not be asked to reach consensus on individual proposals nor to rank the proposals.

The OER Selecting Official, in consultation with OER scientific and technical staff, will make the final decision based on external mail reviewer scores, summary comments, and summaries and scores from review panelists. Mail reviews are provided to panel reviewers, and mail review and panel review scores are both factored into the final ranking.

C. Selection Factors

In making final selections, the OER Selecting Official will award in rank order unless the proposal is justified to be selected/deselected out of rank order based upon one or more of the following factors:

1. Availability of funding;

2. Balance/distribution of funds;
   a. Geographically
   b. By type of institutions
   c. By type of partners
   d. By research priorities
   e. By project types

3. Duplication of other projects funded or considered for funding by NOAA/federal agencies;

4. Program priorities and policy factors described in Section I.A and B including, but not limited to, logistical feasibility and scientific discipline areas.

5. Applicant’s prior award performance, including data and information sharing;

6. Partnerships and/or participation of diverse groups;

7. Adequacy of information necessary for NOAA staff to make a NEPA determination and

draft necessary documentation to advance funding recommendations to the Grants Officer.

D. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

OER's intent is to notify all applicants of the results of the peer review of their proposal, as well as OER's final recommendation to award or decline funding, by email, approximately 180 days after receipt of the full proposal. Progress of the peer-review process as well as timing of budget allocation to OER may affect this timeline. Applicants should factor in this time when proposing starting dates for exploration activities. Project/award start dates are expected to be on or around September 1, 2021.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

1. Notification of Acceptance

Successful non-federal applicants will receive notification that their proposals have been funded from the NOAA Grants Management Division. Successful federal applicants will be notified by the OER Selecting Official. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified by the OER Selecting Official that their application was not selected for funding recommendation.

For non-federal applicants, project activities should not be initiated in the expectation of grant funding until a notice of award document is received from the NOAA Grants Management Division. Any spending prior to an official notice of award will be at the recipient's risk.

2. Modification to Applications

Successful applicants may be asked to modify objectives, work plans, or budgets prior to final approval of an award. The exact amount of funds to be awarded, the final scope of activities, the project duration, and specific NOAA substantial involvement in the activities of each grant will be determined in pre-award negotiations between the applicant and OER.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

1. Department of Commerce (DOC) 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 https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=bd58a13de66200ce25c4fa5f6fdbf197&node=pt2.1.200&rgn=div5.

3. DOC Terms and Conditions
Successful applicants who accept a NOAA award under this solicitation will be bound by Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions. This document will be provided in the award package in NOAA's Grants Online system at: https://www.noaa.gov/organization/acquisition-grants/financial-assistance and at http://go.usa.gov/hKbj.

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: http://www.ago.noaa.gov/grants/forms.html.

6. 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. 200.205. 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.

7. Data and Information Sharing Plan

a. Environmental data and information collected or created under NOAA grants or cooperative agreements must be made discoverable by and accessible to the 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. All 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 (ISO) which include quality control (QC) procedures.

b. Proposals submitted in response to this Announcement must include a Data Management Plan of up to two pages describing how these requirements will be satisfied. The contents of the Data Management Plan and past performance regarding such plans will be considered as part of proposal review. 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 should be considered in the proposal budget unless otherwise stated in the Guidance. Accepted submission of data to the NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI) is one way to satisfy data sharing requirements; however, NCEI is not obligated to accept all submissions and may charge a fee, particularly for large or unusual datasets.

c. NOAA may, at its own discretion, make publicly visible the Data Management Plan from funded proposals, or use information from the Data Management Plan to produce a formal metadata record and include that metadata in a Catalog to indicate the pending availability of new data.

d. Proposal submitters are hereby advised that the final pre-publication manuscripts of

scholarly articles produced entirely or primarily with NOAA funding will be required to be submitted to NOAA Institutional Repository after acceptance, and no later than upon publication. Such manuscripts shall be made publicly available by NOAA one year after publication by the journal.

Please refer to Section VIII.C. of this NOFO, Data and Information Sharing Requirements, for a more thorough discussion on the requirements for managing and sharing data collected or created under NOAA grants and cooperative agreements

8. 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.

9. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires NOAA to include in its decision-making processes appropriate and careful consideration of all environmental effects of proposed actions, analyze the potential environmental effects of proposed actions and their alternatives, avoid or minimize adverse effects of proposed actions, and restore and enhance environmental quality to the extent practicable for applicant projects or proposals 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 NOAA Administrative Order 216-6A for NEPA, https://www.nepa.noaa.gov/docs/NOAA-Grants-Questionnaire-final.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). These specifics 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 project specifics and environmental details sufficient to enable NOAA to make an assessment on any impacts that a project may have on the environment.

10. 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 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 Section B.06. 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, Maryland 20910 Email: lamar.revis@noaa.gov

11. Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

In the event that an application contains information or data that you do not want disclosed prior to award for purposes other than the evaluation of the application, you should 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 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 FOIA. Based on the information provided by you, 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 Applicable to Financial Assistance Awards. 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: http://www.ago.noaa.gov/grants/facilities_assault_policy.html.

If the use of a vessel(s) under NOAA contract, order, grant, or cooperative agreement is involved in any awards funded under this announcement where the non-Federal entity employees are anticipated to be crew members aboard the vessel(s), such awards are subject

to the NOAA Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Prevention and Response Policy Applicable to Financial Assistance Awards Involving the use of a Vessel(s) under NOAA Contract, Order, Grant, or Cooperative Agreement (May 2018) found at: http://www.ago.noaa.gov/grants/vessel_assault_policy.html.

C. Reporting

Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act, 31 U.S.C. 6101 note, includes a requirement for awardees of applicable Federal grants to report information about first-tier subawards and executive compensation under Federal assistance awards. All awardees of applicable grants and cooperative agreements are required to report to the Federal Subaward Reporting System (FSRS) available at https://www.fsrs.gov/ on all sub-awards over $25,000. Refer to 2 CFR Parts 170. Note that all final reports may be made available to the public, and thus are required to be compliant with Section 508, an amendment to the United States Workforce Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This federal law mandates all federal agencies make their electronic and information technology (such as publications, presentations, software, and websites) accessible to people with disabilities. Refer to below references 6 and 7 in Section VIII.C, Data and Information Sharing Requirements, for more information on Section 508.

Grants, cooperative agreements, and intra- or interagency agreements have the same reporting requirements. A member of OER's staff will serve as a point of contact for each grant and will work with awardees to facilitate reporting requirements described here and in Section VIII "Other Information".

1. An expedition/field work plan must be submitted to OER prior to the start of field work in time to meet ship/platform requirements, but no later than 30 days prior to the beginning of the expedition/field work.

2. Within 90 days of the completion of an expedition/fieldwork, recipients must provide a Cruise Report. This requirement will be waived for projects with no field component.

Guides will be provided by OER that must be used along with suggested items to be addressed. These two documents will be made publicly available along with the cruise datasets no later than two years following completion of the expedition.

3. Progress reports are due semi-annually and cover 6-month periods that begin with the start date of the project. Progress reports are submitted electronically to OER through Grants Online no later than 30 days after each 6-month project period. A final report is due no later than 90 days after the expiration date of an award. Progress reports should detail grant

related activities that have occurred during the reporting period that correspond with the goals and objectives identified in the narrative, as well as provide specific, project related information, including a summary budget table of expenses for that period.

4. Within 60 days of completion of the expedition/fieldwork (or annually if the work is multi-year) grant recipients must provide:

a. An updated collection level metadata record identifying completed collections and including Digital Object Identifiers (if assigned);

b. A data inventory identifying data types collected, data release dates, and/or documents with specific proposed exceptions to the open data access policy (e.g., data that may have homeland/national security, cultural heritage, or protected resources value in accordance with NAO 212-151; https://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/ames/administrative_orders/chapter_212/212-15.pdf);

c. Expedition/fieldwork location data (e.g., ship navigation track or area of operations for public GIS display).

For continuing observations, data inventories should be submitted periodically if there is a significant change in location, type, or frequency of such observations.

VII. Agency Contacts

For further information and for applicants without internet, contact the NOAA Office of Ocean Exploration and Research at (301) 734-1014 or oer.ffo2021@noaa.gov. Email inquiries should include the Principal Investigator's name in the subject heading. Inquiries can also be mailed to: NOAA Office of Ocean Exploration and Research, ATTN: OER FFO 20210, SSMC3, Rm 10316, 1315 East West Highway, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910.

VIII. Other Information

By receiving funding from OER, all applicants agree to expectations for sample collection, education and outreach, data management, and website requirements described below. To help meet these requirements, one or more NOAA staff or NOAA designee(s) may become members of, and assist, the at-sea science party serving roles as Expedition Coordinators, Data Managers and/or Web Coordinators.

A. Sample Collection

Cultural heritage materials will only be collected after consultation with the appropriate State Historic Preservation Office and adhering to Section 106 of the Historic Preservation Act and other relevant regulations that may apply. The applicant must have the appropriate permits and must make accommodation for conservation and curating as described in the Annex Rules of the UNESCO Convention for the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage.

B. Education and Outreach

1. The lead Principal Investigator(s) for funded projects is required to provide an explanation on how they are following their proposed outreach and education plan.

2. All funded applicants and collaborators are strongly encouraged to cooperate with OER in facilitating education and outreach activities associated with their projects. NOAA OER's website (https://oceanexplorer.noaa.gov/) is the principal vehicle for chronicling and documenting all missions supported by OER. OER will assess and provide support for education and/or outreach activities in collaboration with the applicant, as warranted. Web content may include accompanying education materials. OER Education team members will facilitate development of materials and activities. Principal Investigators may be asked to contribute to NOAA's education and outreach activities, such as through development of lesson plans, accommodation of a teacher/educator-at-sea, participation in a media event or press conference to describe the expedition and its findings, or at-sea media participation.

3. The lead Principal Investigator(s) for funded projects is required to provide a summary article for the website following completion of the fieldwork or project. A project may be selected by OER to be fully documented on the OER website during the expedition. An OER Web Coordinator will work with the applicant and science party to determine the content of web offerings, and to develop and implement a web production plan for these select projects. A berth on the host research vessel should be dedicated for the Web Coordinator if feasible. The Web Coordinator is typically an OER federal employee or affiliate, and costs of their participation will be covered by NOAA OER.

C. Data and Information Sharing Requirements

OER is subject to NOAA Public Access to Research Results (PARR) (https://repository.library.noaa.gov/view/noaa/10169) policy and the implementing guidance contained in NOAA Environmental Data Management Committee (EDMC) Procedural

Directives (https://nosc.noaa.gov/EDMC/PD.all.php). The PARR policy is NOAA's response to the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) memorandum, dated February 22, 2013, Increasing Access to the Results of Federally Funded Scientific Research (https://repository.library.noaa.gov/view/noaa/13809).

The Data and Publication Sharing Directive for NOAA Grants, Cooperative Agreements, and Contracts (https://nosc.noaa.gov/EDMC/documents/Data_Sharing_Directive_v3.0.pdf) is the procedural directive specific to competitive awards. This procedural directive requires OER to consider, in advance, how to ensure public accessibility and long-term preservation of NOAA-funded data, to provide guidance for applicants to use in developing a plan for data access, and to track and enforce conditions imposed on grant recipients.

Refer to section VI.B.7.a of this document for requirements regarding potential data and information collected or created with NOAA funding. The deadline for data submission or access is defined herein as the soonest of the following:

- Publication of a manuscript based on data and information collected or created under this award;
- Two years from the time the data are collected and verified;
- Two years from the end of the award period.

Data should be discoverable and accessible except where limited by law, regulation, policy (such as those applicable to personally identifiable information or protected critical infrastructure information or proprietary trade information) or security requirements (http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/ames/administrative_orders/chapter_212/212-15.html).

Proposals submitted in response to this funding announcement must include a Data Management Plan of up to two pages describing how OER's requirements for environmental data and information will be satisfied. For reference, a Data Management Plan guide is provided at the end of this section. Direct links to the data should be provided to OER. Please be aware that NOAA may, at its own discretion, use information from the Data Management Plan to produce and make available a formal metadata record. This may also be used to indicate the pending availability of new data in an online catalog.

Applicants are hereby advised that scholarly publications on work partially or fully funded by NOAA must be submitted to the NOAA Institutional Repository. The final pre-publication manuscript of articles should be submitted to the repository after acceptance by the journal, and no later than upon publication. Such manuscripts are also required to be

compliant with Section 508 (https://Section508.gov), an amendment to the United States Workforce Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Manuscripts will be made publicly available by the NOAA Institutional Repository one year after publication by the journal. Grant recipients are encouraged to publish in open-access journals, where appropriate.

Data Management Plan Guide

Further information is provided as a guide for developing a Data Management Plan at https://oceanexplorer.noaa.gov/about/funding-opps/media/fy19-data-management-plan.pdf and https://www.ngdc.noaa.gov/wiki/index.php/FAQ_for_Data_Sharing_for_NOAA_Grants_PD.

Patentable ideas, trade secrets, and privileged or confidential commercial or financial information, disclosure of which may harm the proposer, should be included in proposals only when such information is necessary to convey an understanding of the proposed project.

Such information should be clearly marked in the proposal or included as a separate statement accompanying the proposal and should be appropriately labeled with a legend such as, “The following is [proprietary or confidential] information that [name of proposing organization] requests not be released to persons outside the Government, except for purposes of review and evaluation.” While NOAA will make every effort to prevent unauthorized access to such material, it is not responsible or in any way liable for the release of such material.

D. Proprietary or Privileged Information

Patentable ideas, trade secrets, and privileged or confidential commercial or financial information, disclosure of which may harm the proposer, should be included in proposals only when such information is necessary to convey an understanding of the proposed project.

Such information should be clearly marked in the proposal or included as a separate statement accompanying the proposal and should be appropriately labeled with a legend such as, “The following is [proprietary or confidential] information that [name of proposing organization] requests not be released to persons outside the Government, except for purposes of review and evaluation.” While NOAA will make every effort to prevent unauthorized access to such material, it is not responsible or in any way liable for the release of such material.

E. Release of Grantee Proposal Information

A proposal that results in a NOAA award will be available to the public on request, except for privileged information or material that is personal, proprietary, or otherwise exempt from disclosure under law. Appropriate labeling in the proposal aids identification of what may be specifically exempt. Such information will be withheld from public disclosure to the extent permitted by law, including the Freedom of Information Act. Without assuming any liability for inadvertent disclosure, NOAA will seek to limit disclosure of such information to its employees and to outside reviewers only when necessary for merit review of the proposal or as otherwise authorized by law.

Portions of proposals resulting in grants that contain descriptions of inventions in which either the Government or the grantee owns a right, title, or interest (including a non-exclusive license) will not normally be made available to the public until a reasonable time has been allowed for filing patent applications. NOAA will notify the grantee of receipt of requests for copies of funded proposals so the grantee may advise NOAA of such inventions described, or other confidential, commercial, or proprietary information contained in the proposal.