

## **NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY**

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## Executive Summary

### Federal Agency Name

Fisheries Alaska Region Program Office (AK)

### Funding Opportunity Title

Alaska Native Organization Comanagement Grant Program

### Announcement Type

Competitive

### Funding Opportunity Number

NOAA-NMFS-AK-2025-29367

### Assistance Listing Number(s)

11.439

### Dates

Full Proposals must be received by 7:59 Alaska Standard Time on April 2, 2025.

### Funding Opportunity Description

The National Marine Fisheries Service (hereinafter, "NMFS") recognizes the unique importance of marine mammals to Alaska Native Organizations (hereinafter, "ANOs") and values ongoing efforts by Alaska Native Tribes and ANOs to conserve and protect subsistence species under NMFS' jurisdiction. Pursuant to 16 U.S.C. §1388, NMFS may provide Federal assistance to ANOs to conserve marine mammals and to promote co-management of Alaska Native subsistence use of such mammals under NMFS' jurisdiction. This assistance, provided in the form of cooperative agreements, may be used to support conservation of marine mammals utilized for subsistence purposes by Alaska Natives. Funded activities may include development and implementation of species management, subsistence harvest monitoring, subsistence harvest sampling, scientific research, and public education and outreach. Proposed activities should address priority actions identified in an Endangered Species Act Recovery Plan or Marine Mammal Protection Act Conservation Plan where applicable and the priorities identified within this federal funding opportunity. Proposals focusing on marine mammals under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will not be considered for funding under this grant program. This announcement should be read in its entirety, as some information has changed from the previous year.

# Full Text of Announcement

## I. Funding Opportunity Description

### A. Program Objective

The objective of the Alaska Native Organization Comanagement Grant Program is to provide technical and financial assistance for the development and implementation of programs that: Encourage local participation supporting marine mammal science and management; Provide for sustainable use of marine mammals for subsistence purposes; and Promote conservation and/or recovery of marine mammals.

### B. Program Priorities

Applicants should ensure that their applications address one or more of the following priorities, which are listed in no particular order (i.e., no one factor carrying a higher priority than any other). Proposals should list all priorities being addressed. The program priorities are as follows :

- **HARVEST MONITORING:** Work with subsistence users and hunters to monitor subsistence use of marine mammals through collection and dissemination of harvest information to support co-management.
- **INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE:** Convey Indigenous/Traditional Knowledge to support co-management research and goals.
- **RESEARCH PROJECTS:** Design and implement research projects on subsistence marine mammal species (e.g., bio-sampling projects, tagging projects) that improve or inform management decisions.
- **FOOD SECURITY:** In light of climate change and threats from development and commercial activities, work collaboratively with NMFS and others to protect food resources for Alaska Native communities by ensuring the availability of marine mammals for subsistence use.
- **SUBSISTENCE USE MANAGEMENT:** Manage subsistence use of marine mammals with Alaska Native hunters to address regional or local differences, and, when practical or necessary, collaboratively develop measures to understand and reduce the number of marine mammals struck and lost.
- **EDUCATION AND OUTREACH:** Co-develop or align with existing education, outreach, and mentoring programs (includes efforts for capacity building) and materials related to marine mammals and associated co-management, research, and subsistence use.
- **INTERNATIONAL PRIORITIES:** Developing and sharing information to support international goals related to subsistence harvest quotas, developing and implementing programs consistent with international efforts related to subsistence harvest quotas, and collaborating with NMFS on mutual interests related to international goals supporting marine mammals.
- **COOPERATIVE MANAGEMENT:** Initiate and promote projects and exchanges between Alaska Native subsistence users and NMFS for the cooperative management and conservation of marine mammals in Alaska, consistent with signed co-management agreements. Improve and/or revise existing co-management agreements as needed. Co-produce knowledge between NMFS and Alaska Native marine mammal users and hunters regarding marine mammals and the ecosystems on which we all depend.

### C. Program Authority

16 U.S.C. § 1388

## II. Award Information

### A. Funding Availability

Total funding available under this notice is anticipated to be approximately \$1,500,000 per year. Actual funding for this program is contingent upon FY25 Federal appropriations. Award amounts will be determined by the content of the proposals and the availability of funds for each year. Publication of this notice does not obligate NOAA to make an award to any specific project or to obligate any funding. If an application is selected for funding, NOAA has no obligation to provide any additional funding beyond the first year. There is no guarantee that sufficient funds will be available to make awards to all qualified projects. The exact amount of funds, the scope of work, and terms and conditions of a successful award will be determined in pre-award negotiations between the successful applicant and NOAA program official. NOAA reserves the right to partially fund proposals by funding discrete portions of phases of a proposed project. Projects partially funded must stand alone, and be maintained and/or completed without the need for additional funding. If NOAA decides to partially fund a proposal, it will do so in a manner that does not prejudice any applicant or affect the basis upon which the proposal, or portion thereof, was evaluated or selected for award. In so doing, the agency maintains the integrity of the competition and selection process. If an applicant incurs any costs prior to receiving an award agreement signed by an authorized NOAA official, the applicant would do so solely at its own risk of these costs not being reimbursed by the government or not receiving an award. Pre-award costs over 90 days are not allowed under the award unless approved by the NOAA Grants Officer in accordance with 2 C.F.R. Parts 200.308(e)(1) and 200.458.

## **B. Project/Award Period**

A project period will be at minimum 12 months in duration and extend up to a maximum of three years. For multi-year proposals, applicants must include project plans and separate budgets for each year of the project. Multi-year projects may be funded in one-year or greater increments depending on available funds and terms of the award. In either case, multi-year awards do not compete for funding in subsequent budget periods within the approved award period. Rather, any funding required for subsequent years is added to the multi-year award incrementally, provided demonstration of satisfactory performance by the recipient and provided funds to support the continuation of the project are available. If a grant recipient wishes to continue work on a funded project beyond the project period and obligated award funds have not been expended by the end of this period, the recipient can notify the assigned Federal Program Officer no later than 30 days prior to the end of the award period to determine eligibility for a no-cost extension. If, however, the money is expended and funds are needed to continue the project, the applicant should submit another proposal during the next competitive award cycle (e.g. FY 2026) or seek an alternate source of funding.

Project start dates should be no earlier than September 1, 2025, unless an earlier start date request is approved by the Program Office. The requested award start date must begin on the first day of the month and end on the last day of the month.

## **C. Type of Funding Instrument**

Successful proposals will be funded through a cooperative agreement. Cooperative agreements are Federal financial assistance awards that include substantial involvement by NOAA in the management of the project. Examples of substantial involvement may include, but are not limited to, assisting in the development of outreach materials; collaboration between NOAA scientists and a recipient scientist; input into organizational structure, mode of operations, and programmatic activities; review and revision of draft objectives; regularly scheduled monitoring; and/or programmatic data collection.

# **III. Eligibility Information**

## **A. Eligible Applicants**

Eligible applicants are limited to Alaska Native Organizations (ANOs) (defined as a group designated by law or formally chartered which represents or consists of Indians, Aleuts, or Eskimos residing in Alaska) and or Federally recognized tribes with an established marine mammal agreement for comanagement with NOAA Fisheries. All applicants must have a signed comanagement agreement in place with NOAA Fisheries at the time of application. In a case where an ANO has authorized another entity to serve as the fiduciary agent of the organization, a copy of the agreement between the ANO and fiduciary agent must be provided with the application. This agreement must outline a thorough description of the relationship and responsibilities of both parties. The ANO will be listed as the lead entity/organization on the application as reflected in the agreement. Any ANO not holding an existing agreement for co-management with NMFS may collaborate with and be listed on the application as a sub-recipient under an eligible applicant. The legal status of the ANO must be identified (see verification below) and a copy of the sub-recipient agreement between the ANO and sub-recipient must be provided with the application. This agreement must outline a thorough description of the relationship and responsibilities of both parties. Eligibility must be met at the time of application.

### **B. Cost Share or Matching Requirement**

No cost sharing or matching is required under this program.

### **C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility**

In order to be considered for an award in this funding cycle, the applicant must provide proof of eligibility documents. Proof of eligibility will be a copy of the current signed agreement for co-management between NMFS and the ANO.

## **IV. Application and Submission Information**

### **A. Address to Request Application Package**

For the full application, the standard application package, consisting of the standard forms, i.e., Project Abstract, SF-424, SF-424A, SF-424B, and the CD-511, is available at <https://www.grants.gov>.

**NOTE: Project Abstract is a \*new form\* that MUST be included for your application to be considered complete.**

If an applicant has problems with Grants.gov, contact the Grants.gov Customer Support at 1- 800-518-4726 or [support@Grants.gov](mailto:support@Grants.gov). If you do not have Internet access, a full proposal application package may be received by contacting Kristin Cieciel, Competition Manager, email: [Kristin.Cieciel@noaa.gov](mailto:Kristin.Cieciel@noaa.gov).

### **B. Content and Form of Application**

Federal employees (whether full-time, part-time, or intermittent) are not permitted to assist in the preparation of an application. However, they may provide information on program goals, funding priorities, application procedures, and completion of application forms. Since this is a competitive program, Federal employees will not provide assistance in conceptualizing, developing, or structuring proposals, or write letters of support for a proposal. Applications must adhere to the requirements under the Applications and Required Elements subsection and submit applications by the posted deadline. Failure to follow these provisions will result in proposals being rejected and returned to the applicant without review.

#### **1. Application Format**

A complete standard NOAA grant application package is required in accordance with the guidelines in this document. Applications that are not complete on the closing date of this announcement will not be reviewed. Applications must contain all required documents and forms; if these forms are not signed via the [www.Grants.gov](https://www.Grants.gov) application process, they MUST be signed in ink. Paper applications without inked signatures on their forms will be considered incomplete and will not be reviewed. An incomplete application or one that does not follow the format requirements will not be reviewed and will be withdrawn from the competition.

Each application must include:

The specific priority or priorities to which they are responding. Applicants should not assume prior knowledge on the part of NMFS as to the relative merits of the project described in the application.

Federal application forms, including:

- SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance
- Project Abstract Form
- SF424A, Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs
- SF424B, Assurances - Non-Construction Programs
- CD-511, Certification Regarding Lobbying
- SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (if applicable)
- NEPA Questionnaire, <http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/questionnaire.pdf>
- Data Sharing Plan (described in Section VI. B. 8)
- Title Page (described below, 1 page limit)
- Project Summary (described below, 2 page limit)
- Project Narrative (described below, 27 page limit )
- Budget Narrative (described below)
- Signed Co-Management Agreement between ANO and NMFS
- Verification of Legal Status
- ANO's By-laws
- Name, organizational position, term length of organization's board members, officers, commissioners or principals
- ANO's Policies and Procedures, including personnel, travel, procurement, etc.
- Other supporting documentation and relevant attachments the applicant deems important to the overall understanding and evaluation of the proposed project, such as: references, curricula vitae (not to exceed two pages each), letters of support received from relevant partners involved in the project, etc. Other supporting documentation should be combined into one PDF document. The supporting documentation does not count against the 27 page limit for the Project Narrative.

If an applicant does not have internet access or if Grants.gov is inaccessible, paper applications will be accepted. Paper applications must be submitted with completed, signed, inked signatures, with original forms in hard copy (only one copy necessary). The Authorized Representative MUST sign and date these forms (SF-424, SF-424B and CD-511) in the space reserved for electronic signature. Signatures (electronic or ink) must match the name printed in the "Authorized Representative" section of the SF-424 Block 21. Another Authorized Representative may not sign on behalf of the individual noted in Block 21. Paper applications should not be bound in any manner.

## 2. Content Requirements

Proposals should be limited to 30 pages. The format may vary, but must include:

### a. Title Page (One page limit)

This page shall provide the project title, project duration, applicant name(s), name(s) of the Principal Investigator (or Project Manager) and any Co-Investigators (or Co-Managers), complete contact information (address, telephone, email, and phone number) of the applicant(s), and a statement regarding the Federal, non-Federal, and total costs of the project.

### b. Project Summary (Two page limit)

Provide a clear description of proposed project goals, activities, tasks, objectives, and products to achieve. Include connection to the specific funding priority being identified, the geographic area where the project would occur, and expected outcomes and benefits of the proposed activities. This summary may be posted on NOAA's website if the project is funded.

### c. Project Narrative (27 page limit)

The project narrative should closely follow the evaluation criteria outlined in this solicitation (see Section V. A. Evaluation Criteria). The narrative must be detailed enough for reviewers to make a clear connection between the proposed activities and the proposed project costs. The major part of the narrative should be devoted to a description and justification for the proposed project, including details of the method being used. It should include a timeline for major activities of the proposed project, and should indicate who will be responsible for which activities. There should be no ambiguity about who will perform particular parts of the project, and the time at which these activities take place. The project narrative may not exceed 27 pages. Multi-year proposals must include a project narrative that covers each year of the proposed award period. If multiple projects are included in the proposal, the information listed below must be included for each project. The 27-page limit does not change if a proposal includes multiple projects. The following do not count towards the 27- page limit: standard application forms, project summary, budget and justification, letters of support, resumes/curriculum vitae; lists of permits, NEPA questionnaire; and data sharing plan. Each project must be completely and accurately described, and include project and administrative objectives. The narrative should demonstrate your knowledge of, and convey the need for the project, and show how your proposal builds upon any past and current work. You should not assume that we already know the relative merits of the project you describe.

You must describe your project as follows:

(1) Project Goals and Objectives: Identify the specific program priority (described in Section I. B. Program Priorities) the project intends to address and describe its significance. Identify the problem/opportunity you intend to address and describe its significance. Identify the administrative and/or project objectives, which should: be simple and understandable, as specific and quantitative as possible; clear as to the "what and when"; and attainable within the time, funding, and resources available. State what you expect the project to accomplish. Administrative objectives should be described in a similar fashion. The main body of the narrative should clearly state how the administrative and project work will be undertaken to meet the priorities.

**Project Design:** Describe specific work, activities, procedures, statistical design, or analytical methods that are being undertaken and what will be accomplished during the period of the project. Applications should be accomplishment-oriented and identify specific performance measures and the products or other outcomes that will result from the project. Project performance measures could be due dates for draft and final technical and monitoring reports, dates for field seasons/data collection, or percentage of harvest sampled. Administrative performance measures could be dates, agendas, or minutes of board of directors, council, or commissioners meetings, dates for website updating, or dates and contents of outreach and education materials from camps or hunter meetings. Milestones should also be listed describing the specific activities and associated timelines to conduct the scope of work. Describe the timelines in increments (e.g. month 1, month 2), rather than by specific dates. Describe products of the project, such as a manual, video, handbook, or newsletter, summary of harvest or biological data, or piece of equipment. Indicate how project results will be disseminated to potential subsistence users, stakeholders, or community members. Include performance measures setting forth the process of assessing progress toward achieving predetermined goals, including timeliness, quality, outcomes, and effectiveness. Performance management involves developing measurable performance goals, prioritizing staff time or resources to meet those goals, communicating regularly with NMFS about the effectiveness of meeting goals, and reporting progress, delays, completion, and unanticipated outcomes as outlined in the proposal.

**NOTE:** If you are applying to continue a project we previously funded under the Alaska Native Co-Management Funding Program, describe in detail the project(s), product(s), and accomplishment(s) to date and provide justification for the continuation of the project(s) beyond the original period of performance. Provide a justification for additional funding to continue the project(s) and the benefits expected by continuing the project(s) in 2025. We will consider this information in evaluating your current application.

**(2) Project Management:** Describe how the project will be organized and managed. Describe how the necessary experience, facilities, and administrative resources are in place to successfully meet the responsibilities associated with managing a federal financial assistance award. The principal investigator may or may not be the applicant; however, if the applicant is not the principal investigator, there must be an explanation of the relationship between the applicant and principal investigator (e.g., the applicant may be responsible for managing the grant funds and the principal investigator will be responsible for completing the work). The PI is responsible for all technical oversight and implementation of the approved work plan as delineated in the proposal. Please also include information about the specific responsibilities and time commitments of other personnel funded through the proposal, including technical and administrative points of contact as appropriate. Include the curricula vitae or resume and job description of the principal investigator(s) and all other personnel funded through this proposal. Include copies of any agreements between you and the participants describing the specific tasks to be performed. Project participants or organizations that will have a significant role in conducting the project should be listed as co-investigators or co-managers. Organizations or individuals that support the project, for example, researchers contributing data or materials, should be referred to as Cooperators. Agreement documents, and resumes/curricula vitae (2 page maximum for each), should be included in the supporting documentation. This information does not count toward the project narrative's 27 page limitation. If any portion of the project will be conducted through consultants, subcontracts and/or subawards, you must follow guidance in the requirements set out at 2 C.F.R., as applicable. If you select a consultant, subcontractor and/or sub-awardee prior to submitting an application, indicate the process that you used for selection and provide a statement of their qualifications and experience (e.g., resume or curriculum vitae).

**(3) Benefits or Results Expected:** Identify the outcomes and effort planned to achieve the results or benefits anticipated from the proposed work. Describe how these expected outcomes will be applied and/or made available to NMFS, identified user groups, or other Alaska Native Organizations. Describe the effort planned to achieve a particular goal/task/activity and measures the value of a project or program's activity.



(4) Need for Government Financial Assistance: Explain why you need NOAA financial assistance for the proposed work, and why other funding sources, if applicable, cannot fund the proposed work. List all other sources of funding that are or have been sought for the program or project proposed.

(5) Participation by Persons or Groups other than the Applicant: Describe how any entities other than the applicant will participate in the project, and the nature (sub-award, subcontract, volunteer, etc.) of their participation, particularly members of ANO communities.

(6) Federal, State, and Local Government Activities: List any plans or activities this project would affect and describe the relationship between the proposed project and those plans or activities. Describe any coordination with other agency programs. Describe any other proposals or outside activities that are essential to the success of this proposal.

(7) Permitting: It is your responsibility to obtain all necessary Federal, State, and local government permits and approvals where necessary for the proposed work to be conducted. You must note whether or not permits are required. If no permits are required, this section must indicate no permits are required. If permits are required, provide a list of all applicable permits needed to perform the proposed work and an indication of the status of any permits needed.

d. Budget Narrative (does not count towards page limit)

Each application must include clear and concise budget information, both on the required federal forms and as described here. In order to allow reviewers to fully evaluate the appropriateness of proposed costs, the budget narrative must explain and justify all Federal and non-Federal costs by object class category, as listed on the SF-424A under Section B, Budget Categories. Provide detailed narrative descriptions of all costs, and explain each calculation for all budget categories. Multi-year applications must include budget information for each year of the proposed activity. All budget costs should be **ROUNDED** to the nearest dollar. The budget narrative should be sufficiently detailed to enable a clear understanding of the cost breakdown and calculations used to derive the line item subtotals in each object class of the SF-424A budget form. All proposed costs must be reasonable, allowable, allocable, and necessary to the supported activity. Additional Budget Narrative Guidance may be found at [https://coast.noaa.gov/data/coasthome/funding/\\_pdf/forms/budget-narrative-guidance-for-NOAA-grants.pdf](https://coast.noaa.gov/data/coasthome/funding/_pdf/forms/budget-narrative-guidance-for-NOAA-grants.pdf)

It is strongly recommended to include a budget spreadsheet that details costs by category, this aids in final grant review and application processing. The budget narrative must include the following:

(1) Personnel costs, including salary and wages, should be broken out by named principal investigator (PI) and number of months requested per year, per staff member, etc., as a percentage of their normal salary rate. Support for each person should be commensurate of the person's stated involvement, which may or may not correspond to the person's current position. Any unnamed personnel should be identified by their job title, and their personnel costs explained similar to staff or PI personnel costs above. Fringe benefits should be identified separately from salary and wages; fringe benefit rates should be applied consistently, and should apply equally to both Federal and non-Federal funds, if applicable. Funds for salaries and fringe benefits may be requested only for those personnel who are directly involved in implementing the proposed project and whole salaries and fringe benefits are directly related to specific projects or outcomes of the proposed project. All funds must be estimated to the nearest dollar; do not submit budgets containing cents. Note: No cost sharing or matching is required under this program.

(2) Travel costs should be broken out by number of people traveling, destination and purpose of travel, and projected costs per person. Projected travel costs should be inclusive of transport costs, lodging costs, and per diem expenses for all travelers, which are to be described in detail in the Budget Narrative. If travel details for a particular trip are unknown, explain the basis for estimating proposed costs. Domestic travel is to be justified separately from foreign travel, since the latter may require additional clearances. You must adhere to the provisions of the Fly America Act.

(3) "Equipment" is non-expendable, tangible personal property with a unit cost of \$5,000 or more and useful life of more than one year. Items that do not meet the equipment definition must be included under supplies. List each piece of equipment separately and reference the type/model to be purchased and its contribution to the achievement of the project goals. General use equipment must be used 100% for the project if charged directly to the award; if the equipment will be used for multiple projects, only a portion of the expense that is commensurate with the actual use of the equipment during the project may be requested.

(4) Supplies should be itemized to the level of detail known or may be based on established historical costs. Whenever possible, you should include the quantity/number of units and cost per unit to justify expenses listed in the supplies category and relevance to the project.

(5) Contractual costs should be itemized separately, according to standard budget categories that appear in the SF-424A; all types of contractual costs should be included in the Contractual line of the SF-424A and explained in detail in the Budget Narrative. You must indicate the basis for each contract's cost estimate and specify the products and services to be obtained through all contracts.

(6) Other costs should be listed by type of material or nature of expense (e.g. sub-award) and should be broken down by quantity/number of units and cost per unit, if applicable.

(7) The budget may include an amount for indirect costs if the applicant has an approved indirect cost rate agreement with the federal government. Indirect costs are essentially overhead costs for basic operational functions (e.g., lights, rent, water, and insurance) that are incurred for common or joint objectives and therefore cannot be identified specifically within a particular project. A copy of the current, approved negotiated indirect costs agreement with the Federal government must be included with the application.

8) NOAA/NMFS will not consider fees, fundraising activities, or 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 consist of all allowable costs incurred in accomplishing project activities during the project period. A project begins on the effective date of an award agreement between the applicant and the Grants Officer and ends on the date specified in the award. 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.

9) All vehicle and equipment maintenance costs must be based on the actual costs of operating and maintaining the equipment listed for the financial assistance award project and cannot be based on predetermined flat rates. In accordance with 2 CFR 200.452, allowable costs for equipment maintenance are limited to insurance, necessary maintenance, repair, or upkeep of equipment, which neither add to the permanent value of the property nor appreciably prolong its intended life, but keep it in an efficient operating condition. Furthermore, per 2 CFR 200.403(g), costs must be adequately documented in order to be allowable under Federal awards. If the vehicles or equipment will also be used for other projects, any relevant operation and maintenance expenditures must be allocated to the projects based on the proportional benefit. Given the unique geographic location of Alaska, we encourage applicants to use actual historic procurement, shipping, operation and maintenance costs for estimating budgets.

e.) Appendices or Supporting Documentation (does not count towards page limit): This section should include the supporting documentation not included in the project narrative such as: qualifications of the primary project personnel, e.g., curriculum vitae or resumes of PM/PI and any Co-Managers/Co-Investigators (limit two pages each); position descriptions, agreements with key partners; copy of established indirect cost rate agreement; letters of support received from relevant representatives, partners or communities supporting the project; letters of cooperation between the Principal Investigator and all named participants in the project, describing and agreeing to the specific activities each participant would perform (e.g., participants/collaborators receiving marine mammal samples/specimens); organization's policies and procedures; by-laws; and travel policies. Applicants requiring scientific research permits must also include evidence of such a permit (i.e., the permit number) or evidence they have submitted a permit application. Additional material, documents and information necessary or useful to the description of the project will help us to understand the project and the priority you seek to address. Letters of support and/or cooperation are strongly recommended. The Data/Information Sharing Plan (described in Section VI. B. 8) should also be attached as an appendix.

#### 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 an application; (ii) Provide a valid unique entity identifier (UEI) in their application; and (iii) Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which they have an active Federal award or an application under consideration by a Federal awarding agency. NOAA may not make a Federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable UEI and SAM requirements 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. 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://sam.gov/content/home>.

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

NOAA NEPA Questionnaire (<https://www.nepa.noaa.gov/docs/NOAA-Grants/Questionnaire-final.pdf>). If your project is expected to generate NEPA/environmental data, applicants are strongly recommended to submit answers to questions 1-30 in your application. A completed NOAA NEPA Questionnaire should be uploaded as its own file and not included in any other attachment.

#### 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

Complete proposals/applications must be received by <https://www.Grants.gov> under the Alaska Native Comanagement Grant Program competition link, or postmarked on or before 7:59 pm, Alaska Standard Time (AST), April 2, 2025. Proposals received after the established deadline will be rejected and returned to the sender without consideration. For proposals submitted through Grants.gov, a date and time receipt indication will be the basis of determining timeliness. The proposal must be validated by Grants.gov in order to be considered timely. It may take Grants.gov up to two (2) business days to validate or reject the application. Please keep this in mind in developing your submission timeline. For those without access to the Internet, one signed original application must be postmarked or received by the established due date. Use of U.S. mail or another delivery service must be documented with a receipt, private metered postmarks are not acceptable. Postmarked applications received more than 5 business days following the closing date will not be accepted.

### **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 16 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, the names, addresses and phone numbers of participating SPOC's are listed in the Office of Management and Budget's home page at: [http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants\\_spoc](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc).

### **F. Funding Restrictions**

None

### **G. Other Submission Requirements**

Applicant organizations must complete and maintain three registrations to be eligible to apply for or receive an award. These registrations include SAM.gov, Grants.gov, and eRA Commons. All registrations must be completed prior to the application being submitted. The complete registration process for all three systems can take 4 to 6 weeks, so applicants should begin this activity as soon as possible. If an eligible applicant does not have access to the internet, please contact the Agency Contacts listed in Section VII for submission instructions.

Prior to registering with eRA Commons, applicant organizations must first obtain a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) from SAM.gov, if needed (refer to Section IV. Applications and Submission Information, Section C). Organizations can register with eRA Commons in tandem with completing their full SAM and Grants.gov registrations; however, all registrations must be in place by time of application submission. eRA Commons requires organizations to identify at least one Signing Official (SO) and at least one Program Director/Principal Investigator (PD/PI) account in order to submit an application.

The first PD/PI listed on the application must include their eRA Commons ID in the "Credential, e.g. agency login" Applicant Identifier field on the SF424 form. Failure to register in the Commons and to include a valid PD/PI Commons ID in the Applicant Identifier field will prevent the successful submission of an electronic application.

### **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.

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/programs/gems/applicant-and-grantee-training>

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 1<sup>st</sup> 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, you may receive automated email notifications 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. Once an electronic application is accepted in eRA Commons, you will receive an additional automated notification that the completed application was received and that an application number will be assigned. 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 agency contact listed in VII to confirm NOAA's receipt of the complete submission.

## H. Address for Submitting Proposals

If you do not have internet access, the application package may be submitted to Kristin Cieciel, Competition Manager, NOAA/NMFS.

Mailing Address: PO Box 21668, Juneau Alaska 99802-1668 (USPS); 709 9th Street, Suite 323A, Juneau Alaska 99801 (FedEx/UPS).

## V. Application Review Information

<b>1. Importance/relevance and applicability of proposed projects to the program goals</b>	<b>Maximum Points: 30</b>
Proposals will be evaluated on clear identification of proposed project objectives and the applicant's ability to link those objectives to the priorities within the ANCFP.	
<b>2. Technical/scientific merit</b>	<b>Maximum Points: 20</b>

This criterion assesses whether the approach is technically sound and/or innovative, if the methods are appropriate, and whether there are clear project objectives. Proposals should provide a clear identification of objectives, clear definition of the project design, strengths or weakness, and the means to measure and evaluate performance. Special emphasis will be given to proposals that foster and improve cooperative interactions with NMFS. Are the objectives in the proposal clearly defined and focused? Does the applicant demonstrate that the objectives are realistic and can be reached within the proposed project period? Are the conceptual framework, design, methods, and analyzes adequately developed, well-integrated, and appropriate to the aims of the project? Does the applicant acknowledge potential problem areas and consider ways to resolve the issues or implement alternative tactics? Is sufficient detail provided in the proposal about the methods proposed for monitoring and evaluating the success of the project? Are they appropriate? Reviewers will carefully consider the likelihood of meeting milestones and achieving anticipated results specified in the statement of work. Is a data sharing plan attached and applicable?

<b>3. Project Management</b>	<b>Maximum Points: 20</b>
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This criterion assesses whether the applicant, and team members, possess the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project. Reviewers will consider previous related experience and qualifications of the project's PM or PI, Co-Manager(s) or Co-Investigator(s) and other personnel, including designated contractors, consultants, and cooperators. Reviewers will also consider past award performance of the applicant(s) and PM/PI. Does the applicant have adequate administrative capability and experience in successfully completing similar projects? Does the applicant provide position descriptions of staff being funded through the proposal? Does the proposal include resumes and/or curricula vitae of the PM/PI or staff funded through the proposal? Successful past performance will be considered during evaluation regarding the applicant's overall qualifications and their ability to meet their proposed objectives and tasks within the project period. Reviewers will consider the past performance of the applicant when considering the likelihood of meeting milestones, producing objectives, or achieving results.

<b>4. Project costs</b>	<b>Maximum Points: 30</b>
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This criterion evaluates the budget to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time frame. The itemized costs and the overall budget must be justified, clear to the reviewer, cost-effective, and appropriately allocated. Applicants should include the organization's personnel policies and procedures, by-laws, travel, airfare, and rental car policies and rates. Applicants should include the organization's equipment, supplies, and transportation policy. The proposed costs and overall budget of the project will be evaluated according to the proposed work. Note that all project costs, including administrative costs, must be limited to species of marine mammals that are managed by NMFS. Is the budget cost-effective and realistic based on the applicant's stated objectives, time frame, and amount of overall project budget? Is the proposed budget sufficiently detailed, with appropriate budget breakdown and justification of costs by object class?

## Evaluation Criteria

Technical/Merit reviewers will evaluate applications by assigning scores based on the following standard evaluation criteria, associated questions, and respective weights specified below. Written comments are required to justify provided scores in each section of the review. Applications that best address these criteria and associated questions 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 NOAA/NMFS Regional Administrator or their designee).



### 1. Initial Screening

An initial administrative review is conducted on each application to determine compliance with application requirements and completeness of application materials. Applications determined to be ineligible, incomplete, or non-responsive will be eliminated from further review. When applications are received, they will be screened to ensure that they were received by the deadline (see Section IV. C. Submission Dates and Times); the applicant is eligible to apply; the proposed project addresses at least one of the funding priorities; and that the application includes a project summary, project description, budget, and supporting documentation as outlined in Section IV.B. Content and Form of Application. We do not have to screen applications before the submission deadline in order to identify deficiencies that would cause your application to be rejected so that you would have an opportunity to correct them. However, should we do so and provide you information about deficiencies, or should you independently decide it is desirable to do so, you may correct any deficiencies in your application before the deadline. After the deadline, the application must remain as submitted; no changes can be made to it. If your application does not conform to the requirements listed above, and the deadline for submission has passed, the application will be rejected without further consideration.

### 2. Panel Review

After the initial screening, each application will be reviewed by three or more appropriate federal personnel with subject matter expertise. The reviewers will meet and evaluate each proposal individually based on its own merit against the evaluation criteria described in Section Evaluation Criteria. All applications, regardless of priority, will be reviewed in this manner. Prior to the Panel meeting or webinar, each reviewer will independently evaluate each project and provide an individual score prior to the panel meeting or webinar. During the panel meeting or webinar, reviewers may revise their scores and comments. Reviewers will submit their final proposal scores to the competition manager by the end of the panel meeting or webinar. After the panel scores are submitted, a compilation of all proposals in rank order is developed based on the average score from the reviewer scores.

### 3. Selection

After applications have undergone the panel review, the Selecting Official will make the final decision regarding which applications will be recommended for funding based upon the numerical rankings and evaluations of the applications.

### **Selection Factors**

The Selecting Official (Alaska Regional Administrator or his/her delegate) will review the funding recommendation and comments of the reviewers to determine which applications will be recommended to the NOAA Grants Officer. The Selecting Official shall recommend proposals to the Grants Officer for funding 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 listed in no order of significance:

1. 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 competitive selection process and subsequent notification of applications being considered for funding are expected to be complete by June 2025. The earliest start date for projects will be September 1, 2025, 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**

Upon completion of the review and selection process, successful applicants will receive notification from a NMFS Regional representative that the application has been recommended for funding selection to the NOAA Grants Management Division. This notification is not an authorization to begin performance of the project, and it is not a guarantee of funding. Official notification of funding, signed by the NOAA Grants Officer, is the authorizing document that allows the project to begin. This notification will be issued to the Authorizing Representative of the project either electronically through the use of NOAA's electronic grants management system or in hard copy. Projects should not be initiated in expectation of Federal funding until the Applicant's Authorized Representative has received official notice of the award from the NOAA Grants Officer and has reviewed and accepted the terms of the award.

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified if their proposal was not recommended for funding or was not reviewed because it did not meet the minimum requirements described in IV.B (Content and Form of Applications). Unsuccessful paper applications will not be returned to the applicant. 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 cooperative involvement with the activities of each project will be determined in pre-award negotiations among the applicant, the NOAA Grants Office, and NOAA program staff.

Award documents provided by the Grants Officer may contain special award conditions limiting the use of funds for activities that have outstanding environmental compliance requirements. These special award conditions may also include other compliance requirements for the award, as applicable, and will be applied on a case-by-case basis. Applicants are strongly encouraged to review award documents carefully before accepting a Federal award so they are fully aware of the relevant Standard Terms and Conditions as well as any Special Award Conditions that have been placed on the award.

**PRE-AWARD COSTS.** Per 2 CFR 200.458, NOAA authorizes award recipients to expend pre-award costs up to 90 days before the period of performance start date at the applicant's own risk without approval from NOAA 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 oblige NOAA to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds.

### **B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

#### **UNIFORM ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS, COST PRINCIPLES, AND AUDIT REQUIREMENTS.**

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

**RESEARCH TERMS AND CONDITIONS.** For awards designated on the CD-450 as Research, the Commerce Terms, and the Federal-wide Research Terms and Conditions (Research Terms) as implemented by the Department of Commerce, currently, at <https://www.nsf.gov/awards/managing/rtc.jsp>, both apply to the award. The Commerce Terms and the Research Terms are generally intended to harmonize with each other; however, where the Commerce Terms and the Research Terms differ in a Research award, the Research Terms prevail, unless otherwise indicated in a specific award condition.

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

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

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

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

**NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (NEPA).** NOAA must analyze the potential environmental impacts, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), for applicant projects or proposals which are seeking NOAA federal funding opportunities. Detailed information on NOAA compliance with NEPA can be found at the following NOAA NEPA website: <http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/>, including our NOAA Administrative Order 216-6 for NEPA, [http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/NAO216\\_6.pdf](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](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.

**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.

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

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

[https://nosc.noaa.gov/EDMC/documents/Data\\_Sharing\\_Directive\\_v3.0\\_remediated.pdf](https://nosc.noaa.gov/EDMC/documents/Data_Sharing_Directive_v3.0_remediated.pdf) and at NAO 212-15 Management of Environmental Data and Information:

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

**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 <http://nrc.noaa.gov/ScientificIntegrityCommons.aspx>. 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.

**REQUIRED USE OF AMERICAN IRON, STEEL, MANUFACTURED PRODUCTS, AND CONSTRUCTION**

**MATERIALS.** If applicable, and pursuant to the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act ("IIJA"), Pub.L. No. 117-58, which includes the Build American, Buy American (BABA) Act, Pub. L. No. 117-58, §§ 70901-52 and OMB M-22-11, recipients of an award of Federal financial assistance from the Department of Commerce (DOC) are hereby notified that none of the funds provided under this award may be used for a project for infrastructure unless: 1) all iron and steel used in the project are produced in the United States—this means all manufacturing processes, from the initial melting stage through the application of coatings, occurred in the United States; 2) all manufactured products used in the project are produced in the United States—this means the manufactured product was manufactured in the United States; and the cost of the components of the manufactured product that are mined, produced, or manufactured in the United States is greater than 55 percent of the total cost of all components of the manufactured product, unless another standard for determining the minimum amount of domestic content of the manufactured product has been established under applicable law or regulation; and 3) all construction materials<sup>1</sup> are manufactured in the United States—this means that all manufacturing processes for the construction material occurred in the United States. The Buy America preference only applies to articles, materials, and supplies that are consumed in, incorporated into, or affixed to an infrastructure project. As such, it does not apply to tools, equipment, and supplies, such as temporary scaffolding, brought to the construction site and removed at or before the completion of the infrastructure project. Nor does a Buy America preference apply to equipment and furnishings, such as movable chairs, desks, and portable computer equipment, that are used at or within the finished infrastructure project but are not an integral part of the structure or permanently affixed to the infrastructure project.

**WAIVERS.** When necessary, recipients may apply for, and DOC may grant, a waiver from these requirements. DOC will notify the recipient for information on the process for requesting a waiver from these requirements. 1) When DOC has made a determination that one of the following exceptions applies, the awarding official may waive the application of the domestic content procurement preference in any case in which DOC determines that: a. applying the domestic content procurement preference would be inconsistent with the public interest; b. the types of iron, steel, manufactured products, or construction materials are not produced in the United States in sufficient and reasonably available quantities or of a satisfactory quality; or c. the inclusion of iron, steel, manufactured products, or construction materials produced in the United States will increase the cost of the overall project by more than 25 percent. A request to waive the application of the domestic content procurement preference must be in writing. DOC will provide instructions on the format, contents, and supporting materials required for any waiver request. Waiver requests are subject to public comment periods of no less than 15 days and must be reviewed by the Made in America Office. There may be instances where an award qualifies, in whole or in part, for an existing waiver described at [whitehouse.gov/omb/management/made-in-america](https://whitehouse.gov/omb/management/made-in-america).



DEFINITIONS. "Construction materials" includes an article, material, or supply—other than an item of primarily iron or steel; a manufactured product; cement and cementitious materials; aggregates such as stone, sand, or gravel; or aggregate binding agents or additives<sup>2</sup>—that is or consists primarily of: non-ferrous metals; plastic and polymer-based products (including polyvinylchloride, composite building materials, and polymers used in fiber optic cables); glass (including optic glass); lumber; or drywall.

"Domestic content procurement preference" means all iron and steel used in the project are produced in the United States; the manufactured products used in the project are produced in the United States; or the construction materials used in the project are produced in the United States. "Infrastructure" includes, at a minimum, the structures, facilities, and equipment for, in the United States, roads, highways, and bridges; public transportation; dams, ports, harbors, and other maritime facilities; intercity passenger and freight railroads; freight and intermodal facilities; airports; water systems, including drinking water and wastewater systems; electrical transmission facilities and systems; utilities; broadband infrastructure; and buildings and real property. Infrastructure includes facilities that generate, transport, and distribute energy. "Project" means the construction, alteration, maintenance, or repair of infrastructure in the United States. – 1 Excludes cement and cementitious materials, aggregates such as stone, sand, or gravel, or aggregate binding agents or additives. 2 IIJA, § 70917(c)(1).

**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](mailto:jennifer.jackson@noaa.gov).

### 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.

1. Award recipients will be required to submit financial and performance (technical) reports. Financial Status Reports (SF-425) are required to be submitted to the Grants Officer semi-annually, or as outlined in the award conditions. Financial Status Reports should be entered directly into the NOAA's electronic grants management system.
2. The 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 Sub-award Reporting System (FSRS) available at <https://www.fsrs.gov/> on all sub-awards over \$30,000. Refer to 2 CFR Part 170.

### 3. Performance Progress Reports

Basic information that should be in all report submissions includes the project title, award number, dates of the award period, dates of the reporting period, and the name(s) of the grantee and the principal investigator. Inclusion of media such as photography and statistics (tables, graphs, etc.) to help document programmatic activities in report submissions is also encouraged. Pertinent, captioned photographs of project activities are requested, and may be included within the progress report document submitted via NOAA's electronic grants management system. Semi-annual progress reports should describe the tasks accomplished within the reporting period (from the proposal and amendments) and the tasks that were actually accomplished in the period, using the evaluation criteria (metrics) for each objective as outlined in your Project Description (see section IV.B.3.c). The report should also explain any special problems or differences between the scheduled and accomplished work.

(a) Report title, reporting period, organization, project manager/investigator, grant number, date.

(b) Executive Summary: A brief and succinct summary of the project.

(c) Purpose:

- Detailed description of problems or impediments that were addressed by the project.

- Objectives of the project.

(d) Approach: Detailed description of the work that was performed.

(e) Project Management: List individuals and/or organizations actually performing the work and how it was done.

(f) Findings/Results:

- Actual accomplishments and findings.

- If significant problems developed which resulted in less than satisfactory or negative results, these should be discussed.

- Description of need for additional work, if any.

- Collected data during the course of the performance period should be included in tabular format (e.g., spreadsheet). Final reports must include a complete dataset of data collected during the performance period.

(g) Evaluation:

- Describe the extent to which the project goals and objectives were attained. This description should address the following: Were the goals and objectives attained? How? If not, why? Were modifications made to the goals and objectives? If so, explain.

(h) Dissemination of project results:

- Explain, in detail, how the project's results have been and will be disseminated..

### 4. Publications, Videos, and Acknowledgement of Sponsorship

Publication of the results or findings of the funded award activities in appropriate professional journals, outreach materials, or press releases, and production of video or other media is encouraged as an important method of recording and reporting scientific information. These are also constructive means to expand access to Federally funded research. The recipient is required to submit a copy of any publication to the funding agency, and when releasing information related to a funded project, include a statement that the project or effort undertaken was or is sponsored by NOAA Fisheries Service. The recipient is also responsible for assuring that every publication of material (including internet sites and videos) based on or developed under an award, except scientific articles or papers appearing in scientific, technical or professional journals, contains the following acknowledgement and disclaimer: "This project received funding under award [number] from NOAA Fisheries AKRO. The statements, findings, conclusions, and recommendations are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of NOAA Fisheries." The final report is a public document and may be posted, partially or in its entirety, on the NOAA Fisheries website.

## VII. Agency Contacts

If you have any questions regarding this solicitation, please contact Kristin Cieciel, at the NOAA NMFS Alaska Regional Office, Phone: (907) 957-2594; or Email: Kristin.Cieciel@noaa.gov. Mailing Address: PO Box 21668, Juneau Alaska 99802-1668

## VIII. Other Information