

ANNOUNCEMENT OF FEDERAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Federal Agency Name(s): National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce

Funding Opportunity Title: NOAA Fisheries West Coast Regional Leadership Development Program

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: NOAA-NMFS-WCRO-2019-2005782

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 11.008, NOAA Mission-Related Education Awards

Dates: Applications must be received at <http://www.Grants.gov> under the competition link “NMFS, West Coast Region Education and Outreach Grant Program” by 11:59:59 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on October 16, 2018. Use of Grants.gov is preferred. If Grants.gov cannot reasonably be used, U.S. Mail or another delivery service may be used and documented with a receipt indicating the date/time the package was mailed; private metered postmarks are not acceptable. Postmarked applications received more than (5) business days following the closing date will not be accepted. No facsimile or electronic mail applications will be accepted.

Funding Opportunity Description: Implement a cohort-based leadership development program (LDP) to train emerging leaders for NOAA Fisheries’ West Coast Region. After completion of the one-year program, these new leaders will be able to advance sound stewardship of trust resources and work with partners to find science-based solutions to complex ecological and resource management issues.

FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Program Objective

NOAA is soliciting competitive grant proposals from eligible applicants to support the management objectives of NOAA that fit within the intent of the National CESU Network Program: to provide research, technical assistance, and education to federal land management, environmental, and research agencies and their partners in biological, physical, social, cultural, and engineering disciplines needed to address natural and cultural resource management issues at multiple scales and in an ecosystem context.

NOAA Fisheries is dedicated to protecting and preserving our nation's living marine resources through scientific research, fisheries management, enforcement, and habitat conservation. Leadership and partnership capabilities that will foster conservation, recover Endangered Species Act (ESA)-listed species, and sustainably manage fishery resources are a critical need for the agency. By participating in a leadership development and training course, NOAA Fisheries emerging leaders will be able to advance sound stewardship of trust resources and leverage their partnerships with tribes, local, state and federal agencies, our stakeholders, and other partners to find science-based solutions to complex ecological and resource management issues.

To accomplish this, NOAA Fisheries West Coast Region (WCR) seeks to implement a cohort-based leadership development program (LDP) to train future leaders. The initial cohort will: include between 8 and 12 students; take place over the course of a year; and be conducted from its Portland, Oregon office.

B. Program Priorities

The NMFS, WCR Education and Outreach grant competition seeks to solicit proposals for projects and activities that address leadership and development programs.

This leadership development program will focus on the three main levels of leadership development: personal leadership development, organizational leadership and culture, and understanding the larger policy and partnership environment within which the agency

operates.

Module

- A. Personal Leadership Development (12 hrs)- Leadership Level: Personal
- B. NOAA Fisheries Organizational History and Mission (12 hrs) - Leadership Level: Organization and Environment
- C. Science-Policy Interface (9 hrs) - Leadership Level: Organization and Environment
- D. Policy, Partners, and the Environment (9 hrs) - Leadership Level: Organization and Environment
- E. Negotiation and Collaboration (8 hrs) - Leadership Level: Organization and Environment
- F. Project Management (6 hrs) - Leadership Level: Organization and Environment
- G. Wicked Problems, Strategic Thinking, and Vision (6 hrs) - Leadership Level: Personal, Organization and Environment'

These three areas are then connected to the seven modules to provide a structure for the entire program. The modules are depicted and mapped to the leadership levels. Each module builds on previous modules throughout the yearlong program. However, many modules overlap and will be visited several times over the year.

The program also includes three non-module activities. These are an initial program introduction; a mentorship program; and an integrative capstone project.

C. Program Authority

The mission of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is to understand and predict changes in the Earth's environment and conserve and manage coastal and marine resources to meet our Nation's economic, social, and environmental needs. NOAA's authorities to participate in and conduct activities through the Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Units Network include a number of statutes.

Under 33 U.S.C. § 893a(a), the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is authorized to conduct, develop, support, promote, and coordinate formal and informal educational activities at all levels to enhance public awareness and

understanding of ocean, coastal, Great Lakes, and atmospheric science and stewardship by the general public and other coastal stakeholders, including underrepresented groups in ocean and atmospheric science and policy careers. In conducting those activities, the Administrator shall build upon the educational programs and activities of the agency.

II. Award Information

A. Funding Availability

Under this announcement, NOAA anticipates that approximately \$100,000 may be available in FY 2019 to fund a new application. NOAA anticipates making a single award under this program. The project period may be up to 4 funded years with a final year for project completion, but funding beyond the first increment of one year is subject to the availability of appropriations. There are no restrictions on minimum funding requests, but there is a limit of \$400,000.00 as the maximum amount requested by any applicant over the lifetime of the award. The award period may be extended to a maximum of five years. Funding per year will be dependent upon need and available funding.

B. Project/Award Period

The project start date will not be earlier than November 1, 2018. Applications should cover a project period of between one and 5 years. Projects that request multi-year funding must include in their submission a full description of the activities and estimated budget by line item (e.g. personnel, equipment, supplies, etc.) for all proposed work for each year. We recommend that your project description include a flexible requested start date.

If an application for a multi-year award is approved, funding will usually be provided only for the first year of the project, and the award will be subject to incremental funding, usually annually. Once an incremental or multi-year project is awarded, the multi-year scope of work and budget is approved but funding beyond an initial increment is not provided.

C. Type of Funding Instrument

The funding instrument will be a cooperative agreement. A cooperative project involves substantial NOAA Federal scientific or programmatic involvement. Substantial involvement means that, after award, NOAA scientific or program staff will assist, guide, coordinate, or participate in project activities in a partnership role. NOAA will not assume direction, prime responsibility, or a dominant role in the activities. The dominant role and prime responsibility reside with the grantee for the project as a whole, although specific tasks and activities may be shared between the grantee and NOAA. Examples of substantial NOAA involvement may include non-compensated collaboration in research or approval of key stages in the project before subsequent steps are undertaken. 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 applicant and NOAA/NMFS representatives.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants must be partners in the Pacific Northwest Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit.

Applicants will be located in the targeted geographical region specified in the program objectives (i.e., West Coast Region States of California, Washington, Oregon or Idaho) and must focus the proposed work on target audiences that reside in this geographical region in order to be considered a qualified applicant.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

Cost-sharing is not required for this program.

C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility

Federal agencies and their personnel are not permitted to receive funding under this competition; however NOAA Fisheries employees can serve as uncompensated partners on proposals. Partnering with a NOAA Fisheries employees requires, a written agreement detailing the employee's involvement, signed by the employee's supervisor. NOAA Fisheries involvement could include planning, scheduling, conducting, and evaluating proposed project activities and frequent contact with the applicant to help solve technical problems/situations as they arise during performance of the award.

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Address to Request Application Package

The standard application package, consisting of the standard forms, i.e., SF-424, SF-424A, SF-424B, SF-LLL, and the CD-511, is available at <http://www.grants.gov/> Federal Funding Opportunity (Grants.gov). Users of Grants.gov will be able to download a copy of the application package, complete it off line, and then upload and submit the application via the Grants.gov site. If an applicant has problems downloading the application forms from Grants.gov, contact Grants.gov Support at 1-800-518-4726 or support@Grants.gov. If you do not have internet access, contact Sheryl Robinson @ sheryl.robinson@noaa.gov or 503-230-5421 to request an application package.

B. Content and Form of Application

1. Format Requirements.

All pages should be single-spaced and composed in at least 11-point font with one-inch margins on 8 ½" x 11" paper. The project description may not exceed 15 pages, exclusive of title page, project synopsis, literature cited, budget information, resumes of investigators, and letters of support (if any). Failure to follow the requirements may result in the rejection of the application and its subsequent return.

Any PDF or other attachments that are included in an electronic application must meet the above format requirement when printed out.

2. Content Requirements.

The following information must be included:

- a. Signed SF-424: The SF-424 must be signed by the Authorized Representative. Electronic signatures submitted through Grants.gov satisfy this requirement.
- b. Title Page (1-page limit): The title page identifies the project's title, total budget, start and end dates; and the Principal Investigator's (PI's) and co-PI's names, affiliations, complete mailing addresses, email addresses, telephone numbers and fax numbers.
- c. Project Synopsis (1-page limit): It is critical that the project synopsis accurately describes the project being proposed and conveys all essential elements of the activities. Potential applicants must tie their applications to one of the NMFS WCR Program Priorities described in Section I.B. of this announcement and state it here in the synopsis.
- d. Project Description (15-page limit): The applicant should describe and justify the project being proposed and address each of the evaluation criteria as described below in Section V. Project descriptions should include clear objectives and specific approaches to achieving those objectives, including methods, timelines, and expected outcomes.
- e. Literature Cited: If applicable
- f. Assurances: The SF-424B must be completed and submitted for all non-construction applications, and the SF-424C must be completed and submitted for all construction applications.
- g. Completed Form CD-511, Certification Regarding Lobbying.

- h. Resumes for each major participant: Key Personnel; Principal Investigator(s).
- i. Standard Application Forms: Please refer to the application package available through Grants.gov. Please review each form to determine which are required with submission. Each applicant may not be required to submit all forms listed, depending on the project type or applicant type.
- j. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Questionnaire: NOAA has a NEPA policy applicable to funding applicants, described in Section VI of this announcement. NOAA has a NEPA Questionnaire that may be applicable to some projects, but applicants do not need to provide answers to the NOAA NEPA Questionnaire at this time. However, NOAA may require additional information from the applicant regarding potential environmental impacts prior to reviewing the application.
- k. Permits and Approvals: The recipient will obtain any necessary permits on projects funded under this announcement. This includes, but is not limited to, any necessary permits or consultations required under the ESA, Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, or Marine Mammal Protection Act, as well as NEPA compliance.
- l. Data Management Plan: A data sharing plan must be provided. Refer to Section I.
- m. Budget and Budget Justification: The SF-424A must be completed, and there should be a detailed budget justification accompanying the SF-424 budget forms (SF-424A non-construction or SF-424C construction, as appropriate). Indicate matching funds if provided in a separate column. Provide justifications for all budget items in sufficient detail to enable the reviewers to evaluate the appropriateness of the funding requested. The budget justification should be broken out and detailed using the same budget categories as the SF-424 budget form (SF-424A or SF-424C). Budget Narrative Guidance can be found at: <http://www.ago.noaa.gov/grants/training.html>.
- n. Indirect Costs: The CESUs are governed by the CESU Network Council, which includes administrators and senior scientists from each of the participating Federal agencies. The Network Council establishes the policies for the CESU s, including the indirect cost rate that is charged by member organizations. Since the CESUs were envisioned as a way to cost share on interdisciplinary work that may benefit multiple parties, the Council has historically established a flat rate across the network. The Network Council monitors the rate and makes adjustments as needed. NOAA, as a member of the Network Council, will abide by the established rates for any projects funded under the program.

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 of 2006, 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; available online at: www.sam.gov/portal/SAM) and Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System and be subject to reporting requirements, as identified in Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidance published at 2 CFR Parts 25 and 170 (available online at www.gpo.gov/fdsys).

D. Submission Dates and Times

Proposals must be received by <http://www.Grants.gov>, postmarked, or provided to a delivery service by 11:59 p.m., Eastern Time, on October 16, 2018. Use of Grants.gov is preferred. If Grants.gov cannot reasonably be used, 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. No facsimile or electronic mail applications will 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 19 on SF-424 regarding clearance by the State Single Point of Contact (SPOC) established as a result of EO 12372. To find out about and comply with a State's process under EO 12372, 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.

F. Funding Restrictions

Allowable Costs: Federal funds cannot necessarily pay for all costs a recipient incurs in the course of project implementation. Generally, allowable costs include salaries, equipment, and supplies, as long as these are "necessary and reasonable" specifically for the purpose of the award. For allowable costs, see 2 CFR Part 200, "Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards". All sub-awards (sub-grants, subcontracts, etc.) are also subject to the Federal Cost Principles in 2 CFR Part 200, effective December 26, 2014.

Pre-award costs are generally not allowed. Any costs incurred before NOAA's Grants

Officer issues a notice of award approval are assumed at your own risk.

G. Other Submission Requirements

Full Applications should be submitted through www.grants.gov. If you do not have internet access, an application package may be submitted to Sheryl Robinson, Federal Programs Officer, NOAA/NMFS/WCRO, 1201 NE Lloyd Blvd., Suite 1100, Portland, Oregon, 97232.

Registration Process

1. Required registrations: You must complete and maintain the following registrations to be eligible to submit an application using the Grants.Gov website. All registrations must be completed prior to the application being submitted. Registration can take between 3 days to 4 weeks or more, so applicants should begin the registration process as soon as possible.

(a) Grants.Gov: The first step in submitting an application online is to complete a onetime registration process. Individuals wishing to submit a grant application, using Grants.Gov, are required to complete this one time registration process. Neither a Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number nor the System for Award Management (SAM) registration is necessary for Individual Registration.

(b) Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) - All Applicant Organizations (optional for Individual Applicants) must be issued a DUNS number. A DUNS number is a unique nine-digit identification number provided by Dun and Brad Street. It will be used as the Universal Identifier when applying for federal awards or cooperative agreements. You may request a DUNS number by calling 1-866-705-5711 (toll free) or through the internet at <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>. Your DUNS Number assignment is free.

(c) System for Award Management (SAM) – All Applicant Organizations (optional for Individual Applicants) must complete and maintain an active registration. New registrations take an average of fourteen (14) business days. The renewal process may require as much time as the initial registration. SAM registration includes the assignment of a Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) Code for domestic organizations which have not already been assigned a CAGE Code. To register, go to: <http://www.SAM.gov>. Registration is free. You must renew and revalidate your entity's registration at least every

12 months from the date you last certified to and submitted the registration in SAM - and sooner, if your entity's information changes. The primary point of contact email address will receive a message alerting them to the entity's/entities' renewal requirements at 60 days, 30 days and 15 days prior to expiration. If you do not renew your registration, it will expire. You must have an active SAM registration in order to be eligible to receive contract awards or payments, submit assistance award applications via Grants.gov, or receive certain payments from some federal government agencies.

2. Only authorized individual(s) will be able to submit the application, and the system may need time to process a submitted application. After you electronically submit your application, you will receive from Grants.gov 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 THREE automated responses (the first confirms receipt; the second confirms that there are no errors with an application submission; and the third validates that the application has been forwarded to NOAA for further processing). You should save and print the proof of submission. If all notifications are not received, applicants should follow up with both the Grants.gov help desk and the NOAA Pacific Islands Regional Office, Federal Programs Office staff to confirm NOAA receipt of the complete submission. You must obtain a Grants.gov support number.

3. Federal employees are not allowed to assist in the preparation of an application or proposal, except that these individuals may provide you with information on program goals, funding priorities, application procedures, and completion of application forms. Because this is a competitive program, Federal employees will not provide assistance in conceptualizing, developing, or structuring proposals, or write letters of support for an application or proposal.?

V. Application Review Information

A. Evaluation Criteria

Reviewers will assign scores to applications ranging from 0-100 points based on the following five standard NOAA evaluation criteria. The maximum score for each criterion is indicated in parentheses. Each criterion also includes the factors that the reviewers will consider to determine how well an application meets the criterion. We encourage applicants

to make explicit connections to the evaluation criterion and factors in their applications.

Written comments are required to justify provided scores in each section of the review. Applications that best address these criteria will be most competitive.

1. Importance and/or Relevance and Applicability of Proposed Project to the Program

Goals (25 points). This criterion ascertains whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and/or relevance to NOAA, Federal, regional, state, or local activities.

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

2. Technical/Scientific Merit (20 points). 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.

Proposals should provide a clear definition of the project design, strengths and/or weaknesses and the means that are to be employed for securing productive results. Are the conceptual framework, design, methods, and analyses adequately developed, well integrated, and appropriate to the aims of the project? Are the objectives in the proposal clearly defined and focused, realistic and can be reached within the proposed project period? Does the applicant acknowledge potential problem areas and consider ways to resolve the issues or implement alternative tactics? Does the project challenge existing paradigms or develop new methodologies or technologies? Is sufficient detail provided in the proposal about the methods proposed for monitoring and evaluating the success of the project, and are they appropriate? Does the project demonstrate support, cooperation and/or collaboration with the fishing industry?

3. Overall Qualifications of the Applicants (15 points). This criterion ascertains whether the applicant possesses the necessary education, experience, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project.

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

4. Project Costs (15 points). This criterion evaluates the budget to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time-frame. This includes reviewing the reasonableness of the costs associated with the required tasks to be performed, and the overall relationship with the cost effectiveness for successfully completing the project.

Is the proposed budget cost-effective and realistic based on the applicant's stated objectives, time frame, and amount of overall project budget already secured from other sources? Is the proposed budget sufficiently detailed, with appropriate budget breakdown and justification of costs by object class? Does the project include the required non-federal matching funds?

5. Outreach and Education (25 points). This criterion assesses whether the project provides a focused and effective education and outreach strategy regarding NOAA's mission to protect the Nation's natural resources.

Does the proposal identify anticipated benefits, potential users, indicators of success, and methods of disseminating results? Is an effective method proposed for dissemination of project results? Are the various target audiences, such as the fishing community or the general public, identified? Will the outreach methods acknowledge NOAA Fisheries support of the project?

B. Review and Selection Process

An initial administrative review is conducted on each timely received application to assure that it is eligible, responsive, and complete. NOAA, in its sole discretion, may continue the review process for applications with non-substantive issues that may be easily rectified or cured.

Proposals that are cleared for meeting minimum requirements will be moved into merit review and evaluated as described below.

Technical Merit Review:

The purpose of the technical review is to evaluate each proposal's technical merit via individual evaluations of the proposals. Each application will be reviewed by a minimum of three reviewers. Merit reviewers will be individuals with appropriate subject-matter expertise and may be from Federal or state agencies, academic institutions, or non-profit organizations. Reviewers provide comments (which can be shared with applicants after the competition has concluded) and assign scores to the applications based the evaluation criteria in Section V.A. of this federal funding opportunity.

The merit reviewers' ratings will be used to produce a rank order of the proposals. If, as a result of the initial screening and evaluation process, an application does not meet the requirements of this solicitation, it will not receive further consideration.

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

Selecting Official:

If the Selecting Official accepts a proposal and/or a grant application for a project not in accordance with the rank given or the recommendation of the reviewer panel, the Selecting

Official will consult with the Federal Program Officer and provide a detailed written explanation of the reasons for the action based on the selection factors below.

C. Selection Factors

In implementing the selection process described above in section V of this Announcement, the Selecting Official may select a proposal out of rank order if justified based upon the following factors:

1. Availability of funding
2. Applicants prior award performance

3. Adequacy of information necessary for NOAA staff to make a NEPA determination and draft necessary documentation before recommendations for funding are made to the Grants Officer.

D. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

Subject to the availability of funds, review of proposals should occur during November of 2018. December 1, 2018 is the earliest recommended start date to be used on proposals, unless otherwise directed by the NOAA Program Officer.

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 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 use of Grants Online 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 that 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 be destroyed. 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.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

1. 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.

2. 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 <http://www.ago.noaa.gov> and at <http://go.usa.gov/hKbj>.

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

4. Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements - 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>.

5. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) - NOAA must analyze the potential environmental impacts, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), for applicant projects or proposals which are seeking NOAA federal funding opportunities. Detailed information on NOAA compliance with NEPA can be found at the following NOAA NEPA website: <http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/>, including our NOAA Administrative Order 216-6 for NEPA, http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/NAO216_6.pdf, and the Council on Environmental Quality implementation regulations, <http://energy.gov/sites/prod/files/NEPA->

40CFR1500_1508.pdf. Consequently, as part of an applicant's package, and under their description of their program activities, applicants are required to provide detailed information on the activities to be conducted, locations, sites, species and habitat to be affected, possible construction activities, and any environmental concerns that may exist (e.g., the use and disposal of hazardous or toxic chemicals, introduction of non- indigenous species, impacts to endangered and threatened species, aquaculture projects, and impacts to coral reef systems). In addition to providing specific information that will serve as the basis for any required impact analyses, applicants may also be requested to assist NOAA in drafting an environmental assessment, if NOAA determines an assessment is required. Applicants will also be required to cooperate with NOAA in identifying feasible measures to reduce or avoid any identified adverse environmental impacts of their proposal. Failure to do so shall be grounds for not selecting an application. In some cases if additional information

is required after an application is selected, funds can be withheld by the Grants Officer under a special award condition requiring the recipient to submit additional environmental compliance information sufficient to enable NOAA to make an assessment on any impacts that a project may have on the environment.

6. 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.

7. 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.

8. Paperwork Reduction Act - This collection of information contains requirements subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act. The use of Standard Forms 424, 424A, 424B, and SFLLL and CD-346 has been approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under control numbers 0348-0040, 0348-0044, 0348-0043, 0348-0046 and 0605-0001. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall any person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with, a collection of information subject to the requirements of the PRA unless that collection of information displays a currently valid OMB control number.

9. Administrative Procedure Act/Regulatory Flexibility Act - Prior notice and an opportunity for public comment are not required by the Administrative procedure Act or any other law for rules concerning public property, loans, grants, benefits, and contracts (5 U.S.C. 553(a)(2)). Because notice and opportunity for comments are not required pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553 or any other law, the analytical requirements of the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) are inapplicable. Therefore, a regulatory flexibility analysis has not been prepared, and none has been prepared. It has been determined that this notice does not contain policies with Federalism implications as that term is defined in Executive Order 13132.

10. Executive Order 12866 - It has been determined that this notice is not significant for purposes of Executive Order 12866.

11. 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>.

12. 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, mark each page containing such information or data with the words "Privileged, Confidential, Commercial, or Financial Information - Limited Use" at the top of the page to assist NOAA in making disclosure determinations. DOC regulations implementing the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C 552, are found at 15 C.F.R. Part 4, which sets forth rules for DOC to make requested materials, information, and records publicly available under FOIA. The contents of funded applications may be subject to requests for release under the FOIA. Based on the information provided by the applicant, the confidentiality of the content of funded applications will be maintained to the maximum extent permitted by law.

C. Reporting

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 Grants Online system.

2. The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act, 31 U.S.C. 6101 note, includes a requirement for awardees of applicable Federal grants to report information about first-tier subawards and executive compensation under Federal assistance awards. All awardees of applicable grants and cooperative agreements are required to report to the Federal Sub-award Reporting System (FSRS) available at <https://www.fsrs.gov/> on all sub-awards over \$25,000. Refer to 2 CFR Parts 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 Grants Online. Semi-annual progress reports should describe the tasks scheduled for the reporting period (from the proposal and amendments) and the tasks that were actually accomplished in the period. The report should also explain any special problems or differences between the scheduled and accomplished work.

a. Report title, author, organization, grant number, date

b. Executive Summary: a brief and succinct summary of the project.

c. Purpose:

- 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:

- 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.

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.
- 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 PIRO. 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

Questions regarding this announcement should be directed to Sheryl Robinson, Federal Program Officer, NMFS West Coast Region at (503) 230-5421 or sheryl.robinson@noaa.gov.

VIII. Other Information

A. Permits and Approvals

The recipient will obtain any necessary permits on projects funded under this announcement. This includes, but is not limited to, any necessary permits or consultations required under the ESA, Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, or Marine Mammal Protection Act, as well as NEPA compliance.

Specifically regarding ESA, a grant award under this funding announcement does not imply any authorization of incidental take of listed species under the ESA. Section 7 consultations will be undertaken by NMFS on projects and activities that may adversely affect ESA listed species. The recipient will obtain necessary permits on any projects and will provide all necessary information to NMFS for ESA consultation, including stipulations in each sub-agreement that the activity should not commence unless and until an ESA consultation has been completed and all necessary permits have been granted.

B. Paperwork Reduction Act

This collection of information contains requirements subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA). The use of Standard Forms CD-346, 424, 424A, 424B and SF-LLL has been approved by the OMB under control numbers 0605-0001, 0348-0043 (4040-0004), 0348-0044 (4040-0006), 0348-0040, 0348-0046 and 0605-0001. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall any person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with, a collection of information subject to the requirements of the PRA unless that collection of information displays a currently valid OMB control number.