

NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

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Executive Summary

Federal Agency Name

NOS National Center for Coastal Ocean Science (NCCOS)

Funding Opportunity Title

Advancing coastal flood protection through public-private partnerships, innovative insurance products, and improved sediment management.

Announcement Type

Competitive

Funding Opportunity Number

NOAA-NOS-NCCOS-2026-32934

Assistance Listing Number(s)

11.478

Dates

The required letters of intent (LOI) should be sent by e-mail to nccos.grant.awards@noaa.gov and must be received by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on November 9, 2026. Responses to LOIs should be expected within two weeks of LOI submission, no later than November 23, 2026. The deadline for receipt of a full proposal is 11:59 p.m., Eastern Time on February 12, 2027. The full proposal should be submitted electronically through [Grants.gov](https://grants.gov). After the application is validated by Grants.gov, please send an email to nccos.grant.awards@noaa.gov to notify us of your submission.

An informational webinar on this solicitation will be offered on October 20, 2026 from 3 to 4 p.m. Eastern Time. Program Manager office hours will be listed on the NCCOS Funding Opportunities webpage. The Program Manager can also be contacted directly (see Section VII for contact information). Information regarding this Announcement, including the webinar and additional background information, is available on the NCCOS Funding Opportunities webpage (<https://coastalscience.noaa.gov/about/funding-opportunities/>).

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. Refer to Section IV.G. of this Announcement for details.

Funding Opportunity Description

The purpose of this document is to advise the public that NOAA/NOS/National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science (NCCOS)/Competitive Research Program (CRP) [formerly Center for Sponsored Coastal Ocean Research (CSCOR)/Coastal Ocean Program (COP)], is soliciting proposals for projects that will support state-of-the-art information and products to advance the use of natural infrastructure for coastal flood protection through one or more of the following focal areas: public-private partnerships, innovative insurance products, or improved sediment management. This short-term investment supports research teams that include regional users to ensure practical, efficient, and cost-effective cross-sector implementation that advances long-term flood and storm preparedness capacity that is led by states and localities. Funding is contingent upon the availability of Federal appropriations. If funds are available for this program, one to six projects are expected to be supported for up to four years in duration, with an approximate annual budget for each project up to \$500,000, not to exceed \$2,000,000 per project.

Electronic Access: Proposals should be submitted through [Grants.gov](https://grants.gov). Sign up to receive any potential amendments to this Announcement via [Grants.gov](https://grants.gov).

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Program Objective

The Competitive Research Program (CRP), part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science (NCCOS), supports development of actionable information, tools and products enabling implementation of management and policy strategies for protection of public health, ecosystems, and the economic vitality of communities. To accomplish this, NCCOS/CRP funds research with clear objectives using a competitive, peer-reviewed process involving scientists, resource managers and impacted stakeholders as research project partners or advisors working together to achieve effective outcomes. [NCCOS/CRP](#) has an over 30 year track record of delivering results addressing our Nation's most pressing issues and needs, including coastal flood and storm preparedness as authorized under the Coastal Zone Management Act (16 U.S.C. §§ 1451-1452) and Public Law 102-567, §201(c).

CRP supports science-based research and product development focused on protecting coastal businesses, communities, and infrastructure from coastal flooding and life-threatening storm surge events. Related projects advance predictive flood models and tools in collaboration with coastal decision-makers to assess how various flood management actions will perform, ultimately providing coastal decision-makers with information that will help improve safety and reduce damages and economic losses from coastal flooding and inundation. Projects evaluate the potential for natural infrastructure (e.g., barrier islands, wetlands, hybrid systems - dunes with buried sea walls, etc.) to reduce coastal inundation, and develop best practices for their inclusion in coastal protection strategies. In many cases, fostering natural coastal features provides a long-term cost-effective alternative to rigid hardened structures that may not be as effective in reducing flood risk. Consistent with Executive Order [14239](#): Achieving Efficiency through State and Local Preparedness, the goal is to empower state and local preparedness through informing flood and storm community planning, flood mitigation projects, infrastructure prioritization, and storm response and recovery with scientifically sound, risk-informed solutions.

B. Program Priorities

This Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) will support projects utilizing state-of-the-art methods to advance long-term, comprehensive coastal flood protection with the use or consideration of natural infrastructure within three priority areas: 1) public-private partnerships, 2) innovative insurance products, and 3) improved sediment management. Funded projects will enhance engagement between advanced academic and governmental modeling teams, where CRP has a strong record of support, and private sector experts that play a key role in reducing coastal community flood risk. Private sector engagement is only required for Priority 1, though it is relevant and valued in all three priority areas. Collaboration with intended users is required to maximize utility of developed tools and products, translate outputs for use in other sectors (e.g., engineering, planning, and resource management), and for enhancing efforts at state and local levels. Proposed projects must address at least one of the three program priority areas.

Priority 1: Improve product delivery through the private sector

Interorganizational and interdisciplinary teams are key to improving implementation of natural infrastructure for innovative coastal flood mitigation design. To advance science in this area, improved collaboration between those running flood models, those engaging decision makers, and those securing resources for project implementation is needed. The private sector plays a key role in implementing flood mitigation projects and has not consistently been part of past CRP teams. Therefore, this funding opportunity will incentivize partnerships that advance the science-to-management framework through inclusion of private sector team members throughout the life of the project and in support of project planning, design, and implementation. While NCCOS/CRP funds cannot be used for construction, funds from other sources may be used by a private sector entity to carry out construction activities based on the proposed work. We expect to support 1–2 projects that include a private entity and that leverage the strengths of multiple organization types.

Priority 2: Innovating insurance mechanisms for natural coastal flood defense

Projects within this priority should apply scenario-based modeling to examine insurance improvements or innovative funding mechanisms that maintain and restore natural systems for adaptive coastal flood protection of communities, while offering other co-benefits. These benefits could include economic and ecological or other considerations, like improvements to a fishery or reduction in coastal erosion or flood risk for infrastructure or homes, which could potentially be monetized to help finance the project. These could be monetized through local fees, revenue from tourism, aquaculture or fisheries, and could support a reduction in insurance premiums for towns that are part of the Community Rating System for the National Flood Insurance Program (FEMA, 2025) or that are interested in community-based parametric insurance. Projects should be capable of offering comparisons of approaches under varying scenarios. We expect to support 1–2 projects that connect advanced coastline change modeling focused on natural infrastructure with associated returns on investment relevant to insurance and reinsurance industry improvements, or to emerging concepts such as parametric insurance concepts or natural capital investment by industry (e.g., tourism, aquaculture). Partnership with the risk management sector is desirable and may include insurers, reinsurers, risk modeling companies, or engineering firms.

Priority 3: Supporting sediment management practices

The efficient beneficial use of dredged material remains a challenge due to several factors. One major obstacle is effectively matching dredge material sources with appropriate placement sites. Another challenge is the permitting process, where decision-makers often lack a clear understanding of the movement of placed sediment or of its ecological value. Projects that advance approaches that integrate models with consideration of coastal processes to predict how sediment moves, how natural systems establish or respond to material, and how sediment interacts with waves and water levels, are desired. We expect to support 1–2 projects that develop approaches to deliver project-specific cost-benefit information to dredgers and permittees to help them make better decisions faster. Project teams that incorporate a range of experts that can contribute to the effectiveness of beneficial use projects are encouraged.

Overall Considerations: A key objective for this NOFO is the application of scenario-based modeling

through a collaborative process with an advisory group of intended users to develop transferable and scalable approaches for coastal flood protection. To the extent possible, approaches should be pursued that leverage existing, accessible resources such as the National Ocean Service (NOS) Modeling Strategy (NOS, 2023-2028) and Strategic Plan (2024-2033). The creation of new models, rather than utilizing existing models, should come with substantial justification. Proposals should advance models capable of predicting shoreline change and quantifying the vulnerability of coastal communities, infrastructure, and ecosystems to inundation and evolving shoreline conditions. Shoreline conditions may include geomorphic setting, health of the natural systems, and anthropogenic changes made to the study area. Outputs of actionable information and products should inform coastal decision-makers to help them make sound, long-term decisions. Incorporating outputs into existing resources is preferred, while the creation of viewers and interactive tools should come with clear justification, technical expertise to support product development, and support from an intended user. Projects are encouraged to consider natural infrastructure not merely as a substitute for traditional flood barriers, but as a component of comprehensive, long-term coastal investments aimed at ultimately reducing flood risk. Projects must be located in the coastal area of the U.S. states (including the Great Lakes), U.S. territories, commonwealths or freely associated states.

Proposal budgets should incorporate adequate funding for the proposed level of participation of private sector partners and/or leverage private sector investments. Additionally, publications (including journal articles) model code, and outputs resulting from publicly funded research must be made public. This can be accomplished by publishing in open-source publications or by providing a pre-publication version without publisher formatting. It is preferable for applicants to request appropriate financial resources in the proposal budget for making articles public or publishing in journals that do not charge for article access.

Potential Collaboration: Proposals are encouraged to complement existing and anticipated geospatial data and research, including but not limited to past efforts involving state, local, or tribal resources, nongovernmental organizations, NOAA Sea Grant, U.S. Integrated Ocean Observing System, U.S. Geological Survey, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and Department of Transportation. Projects should not duplicate existing visualization applications if developing interactive tools. Leveraging current investments at sites that are likely to apply results is encouraged, including NOAA's National Estuarine Research Reserves, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Wildlife Refuges, coastal Department of Defense sites, National Park Service, U.S. Coast Guard, and other federal and state managed lands.

Engagement with Intended Users: Application of research results by intended users is a central objective of NCCOS/CRP. Proposals should clearly articulate outcome-based goals of the project and a continuous engagement process with relevant intended users. At a minimum, the Lead Principal Investigator (PI) must establish an advisory group composed of intended users of the research project outputs. The research team must meet with this advisory group at least once a year. The purpose of the advisory group is to maximize collaboration between the PIs and the intended users, and to develop research outputs that maximize utility for the greatest number of users. The intended users should be able to use the outputs to inform policies and projects that reduce the impacts of coastal flooding without additional conversion of the output in terms of unit or data type, ensuring a smooth transition from outputs to desired outcomes. Applicants should include all costs associated with the annual meetings and engagement (except travel costs for federal employees) in the proposal budget.

Research products and outputs may include:

Advanced predictive approaches that are designed in collaboration with intended users to enable an interested party the ability to better evaluate the short- and long-term vulnerability of ecosystems, communities and infrastructure to inundation. (Note: that predicting future flood vulnerability alone is usually an insufficient output).

Models and information that enable the evaluation of regional implications for various policy options

(e.g., insurance, innovative investments) and facilitate the design, construction, and adaptive management of restoration and/or natural infrastructure projects for coastal inundation mitigation, including comparative analysis with conventional flood mitigation approaches or infrastructure realignment under diverse inundation scenarios.

Improved understanding of the costs and benefits of different coastal flood mitigation actions in terms of the effectiveness, services, and sustainability of natural infrastructure under varying scenarios of application, and inundation.

Guidance and strategies for regional transition and application of natural infrastructure and/or metrics for objective evaluation of performance.

Advanced predictive approaches linking coastal modeling and economic investment strategies that assess flood risk over time and incorporate consideration of natural infrastructure.

Expected Outcomes:

Priority 1:

Improved coastal flood mitigation and community plans that take into account flood risk while considering the cost-effectiveness and incorporation of natural systems.
Execution of effective coastal flood mitigation projects that incorporate natural systems and leverage private sector capacity.

Reduced risk of coastal flooding and damage to transportation infrastructure and loss of coastal habitat due to inundation of roads.

Improved connection of NOAA monitoring and modeling enterprises to landscape modeling to reduce coastal flood risk.

Priority 2:

A change in operations by risk management sectors, including insurers, reinsurers, risk modeling companies, or engineering firms that leads to healthy long term investment in infrastructure at the coast.

Individual property owners and communities attain resources and implement approaches that reduce coastal flood risk and leverage natural infrastructure.

Reduced coastal flood risk and use of natural infrastructure in response to incentives from insurance companies or other risk reduction reward concepts.

Improved flood insurance premium setting practices to recognize coastal flood hazard reduction of natural infrastructure.

Priority 3:

Higher utilization of dredge material suitable for placement to complete land building or elevation increases that protect infrastructure while creating or transporting sediment to natural systems.

Innovation of Beneficial Use of Dredged Materials (BUDM) processes to ensure effective use of dredge material nationally.

Improved leveraging of natural processes that reduce costs of BUDM.

Reduced flood risk and habitat vulnerability through elevation increases and an improved understanding of how natural coastal systems respond to dredge material over time.

Placement of dredge material that creates essential habitat for fishery species.

An improved permitting process that allows for fast, effective decisions that could include progress towards single-point-of-contact, state-led permitting systems or information to guide effective placement of dredged sediment.

Key Definitions:

Coastal Decision-Maker/Intended User: The term “coastal decision-makers” or “intended user” will be used throughout to reference those that can utilize science to reduce coastal flood risk while considering the value of natural infrastructure, including those that take part in planning, emergency management, foreshore and tidal land management, natural resource management, structural engineering, investment, insurance, or policy implementation.

Model Advancement: Advancements could include dynamic model integration or downscaling, enhanced parameterization, improved uncertainty estimates, expanded model utility in new locations, and/or module development required to assess and evaluate possible approaches to mitigate inundation. Novel application of existing approaches is encouraged, when appropriate. Novel modeling approaches will require significant justification and explicit intended-user demand for funding consideration. Highly local or specialized models are discouraged.

Natural Infrastructure (NI): NI refers to a spectrum of systems that provide communities with protection and environmental benefits. At its core, NI encompasses either engineered hybrid systems or naturally-occurring ecosystems like forests, wetlands, floodplains, dune systems, seagrasses, barrier islands, reefs, sea ice, tundra, coastal marshes, beach systems, and coastal rivers. Beyond purely natural systems, hybrid shorelines combine both natural (“green”) and human-engineered (“grey”) features and processes. Examples of these engineered systems include living shorelines or dunes with buried seawalls. NI can also involve the strategic realignment of built structures to allow space for natural coastal processes to resume. This approach can be the most economically effective long-term solution in certain regions. NI offers crucial services such as storm protection (through wave attenuation and flood storage) and enhanced water quality. For purposes of this funding opportunity, “Natural Infrastructure,” is considered interchangeable with other terms like “natural and nature-based features or infrastructure” and “nature-based solutions.”

C. Program Authority

16 U.S.C. §§1456c; Public Law 102-567, §201(c), Coastal Ocean Program.

II. Award Information

A. Funding Availability

Funding is contingent upon availability of Federal appropriations. If funds become available, one to six projects are expected to be supported for up to four years, with an approximate annual budget for each project up to \$500,000, not to exceed \$2,000,000 per project.

B. Project/Award Period

Full applications may cover a project/award period up to four years, but shorter-term project proposals are encouraged. Projects funded under this Announcement will have a September 1, 2027 start date. The start date should always begin on the first day of the month and the end date should always end on the last day of any given month when making a projection for the award start and end dates.

Awards may be funded incrementally, generally on an annual basis. Once approved, full applications are not required for the continuation out years. While applicants are not required to divide Federal assistance project activities into annual increments based on appropriations law, this approach may be constructive given the possibility that funding may not be available in subsequent years.

Funding for each year's activity is contingent upon the availability of appropriations, satisfactory performance, and is at the sole discretion of the agency.

During the implementation phase of research projects funded under this Announcement, regardless of the funding mechanism used, NCCOS/CRP Program Managers will analyze financial statements and progress reports for each continuing award, and will have dialogue with the PIs and Signing Officials of the recipient institutions to discuss research progress and expected timelines for the remaining award period. If NOAA experiences budget fluctuations in future fiscal years, the amount of funding provided in any given fiscal year will be determined on a project-specific basis by the remaining tasks to be completed, the overall pace of the research and the length of time remaining on the award and/or across the board reductions or increases based on the overall funds available.

C. Type of Funding Instrument

In an effort to maximize the use of limited resources, applications from non-Federal and Federal applicants (including NOAA) will be evaluated in the same competition, with different funding instruments applicable to the type of applicant. Support may be solely through NCCOS/CRP or partnered with other Federal offices and agencies. Unfunded proposals may be shared with other NOAA offices or other Federal Agencies for the purposes of collaboration and eliminating duplication.

Non-Federal Applicants. The funding instrument for non-Federal applicants is expected to be a cooperative agreement. A cooperative agreement is used when substantial Federal government involvement is anticipated. This means that the recipient can expect substantial agency collaboration, participation, and intervention in project performance. Substantial involvement exists when: responsibility for the management, control, direction, or performance of the project is shared by the assisting agency and the recipient; or the assisting agency has the right to intervene (including interruption or modification) in the conduct or performance of project activities. "Substantial involvement" will be coordinated and communicated by NCCOS/CRP Program Managers, and can include collaboration and participation by NOAA (but see section III.A.5-6), as well as NCCOS/CRP Program Manager involvement in PI meetings, site visits, in situ sampling, setting up management advisory groups, development of management transition plans, and communication of project results.

NOAA Cooperative Institutes. If the non-Federal applicant is at an institution that has a NOAA Cooperative Institute (CI, <https://ci.noaa.gov/>), it is allowed to submit applications that reference the CI by attaching a cover letter to the application stating its desire to have the application associated with the CI. This letter should specify the name of the CI, the CI cooperative agreement number, and the NOAA-approved research theme and task that applies to the proposal. The application will use the Facilities & Administrative (F&A, or indirect cost) rate associated with the main CI agreement. If the application is selected for funding, NOAA will notify the university that a separate award will be issued with its own award number. However, the award will include two Special Award Conditions (SACs): (1) the existing University/NOAA Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) would be incorporated by reference into the terms of the competitive award, and (2) any performance report(s) for the competitive project must follow the timetable of the funding program and be submitted directly to the funding program. Report(s) will be copied to the CI's administrator when due, to be attached to the main cooperative agreement progress report as an appendix. This will allow the CI to coordinate all the projects submitted through the CI, since the terms of these awards will specify that this is a CI project via the MOA.

Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit. If the non-Federal applicant is at an institution that has a NOAA approved Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit (CESU), <https://www.nps.gov/nature/cesu.htm>, and meets the criteria described below for using that status, they may include a cover letter with their application stating their desire to have the application associated with that CESU. This letter should specify the name of the CESU. Of the 17 CESUs across the nation, NOAA is a member of 10: North and West Alaska, California, Hawaii-Pacific Islands, South Florida-Caribbean, Gulf Coast, Piedmont-South Atlantic Coast, Chesapeake Watershed, North Atlantic Coast, Pacific Northwest, and Great Plains.

The following criteria must be met for NOAA to use the established partnerships with CESUs:

- 1. The proposed project must fit within the objectives of the National CESU Network Program, which are to provide research, technical assistance, and education to Federal land management, environmental, and research agencies and their partners in biological, physical, social, cultural, or engineering disciplines needed to address natural and cultural resource management issues at multiple scales and in an ecosystem context.
- 2. The proposed project must fit the intent of the CESU's existing cooperative and joint agreement, which means (a) the research partnership will carry out or stimulate an activity (e.g., data, products, or services) for a public purpose, and (b) NOAA will be significantly involved in the work.
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Federal Applicants. The intra- and inter-agency transfers of funds are not Federal assistance (grants or cooperative agreements), and the policies described in this Announcement applicable to Federal assistance awards do not apply to Federal entities receiving intra- and inter-agency transfers of funds. In the agreements implemented in these situations, NOAA will be substantially involved in the projects in a manner similar to the cooperative agreements with non-federal parties. Contact the NCCOS Grants Administrator for more information (refer to Section VII).

1. *NOAA Federal Applicants.* The funding instrument for a selected application from an eligible NOAA Federal applicant will be an intra-agency transfer of funds, if authorized.

2. *Federal Applicants (except NOAA).* The funding instrument for a selected application from a non-NOAA Federal applicant will be through an inter-agency transfer of funds, provided legal authority exists for the Federal applicant to receive funds from another agency. Non-NOAA Federal applicants that intend to be the lead institution should contact the NCCOS Grants Administrator (refer to Section VII) to discuss how to structure budgets and prepare required documentation.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants for Federal financial assistance in this competition are U.S. institutions of higher education, non-profits, state and local governments, tribal government entities, U.S. Territories, U.S. Affiliated Pacific Islands institutions, and for-profit organizations. Federal applicants (including NOAA) are eligible provided legal authority exists for the Federal applicant to receive funds from another agency.

Please note that:

1. PIs must be employees of an eligible entity listed above; and applications must be submitted through that entity. Non-Federal researchers should comply with their institutional requirements for application submission.

2. Non-Federal researchers affiliated with NOAA-University CIs will be funded through cooperative agreements.

3. Foreign researchers must apply as subawards or contracts through an eligible U.S. entity.

4. Federal applicants are eligible to submit applications for intra- or inter-agency funds transfers through this competition. Non-NOAA Federal applicants will be required to submit certifications or documentation showing that they have specific legal authority to accept funds for this type of research.

5. An eligible U.S. entity may propose Federal agency researchers as funded or unfunded collaborators. If Federal agency researchers are proposed as funded collaborators, the applicant should present the collaborator's funding request in the application in the same way documentation is provided for a subrecipient for purposes of project evaluation, even though intra- or inter-agency funding transfers will generally be used if the project is selected.

6. NOAA/NCCOS researchers may apply through an eligible U.S. entity as funded or unfunded collaborators, but cannot be the lead PI on the application. Federal employees, including NOAA, with the exception of NOAA/NCCOS employees, may serve as lead PI on the application. NOAA Federal salaries will not be paid.

B. Cost Share or Matching Requirement

None.

C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility

Each application must substantially comply with the 12 elements listed under Section IV.B.4 Content and Form of Application: Required Elements (a)–(l), or it will be returned to sender without further consideration. A checklist with the required and requested application elements can be found in Section VIII.

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Address to Request Application Package

Proposal materials are available at <http://www.grants.gov> as part of the electronic proposal package, which includes the federal forms. Please contact the NCCOS Grants Administrator should you have an issue accessing the materials (see Section VII for contact information).

B. Content and Form of Application

1. Required Letter of Intent (LOI)

LOIs are required before a full application is submitted. The LOI should be sent by e-mail to nccos.grant.awards@noaa.gov and must be received by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on November 9, 2026. Any full proposals submitted without a prior timely LOI submission will not be considered. The purpose of the LOI process is to provide information to potential applicants on the relevance of their proposed project and the likelihood of it being competitive in advance of preparing a full application. Full applications will be encouraged only for LOIs deemed relevant; however, the final decision to submit a full proposal is made by the PI. The LOI should provide a concise description of the proposed work and its relevance to this NOFO. The LOI should be no more than two pages (front only) in length, single spaced in 12-point font with 1-inch margins and should include in order the components listed below. If all these components are not included or the LOI is late, the LOI will not be considered.

NCCOS/CRP Program Managers will review each LOI to determine whether it is responsive to the program's goals, as advertised in this NOFO. Letters or emails to encourage or discourage a full application are scheduled to be sent out approximately two weeks after the LOI due date. If all these components are not included, the LOI will not be considered:

- a. Tentative project title.
- b. Name(s), phone number(s), email address(s), and institution(s) of all PIs, and specification of which individual is the Lead PI.
- c. Priority Area (public-private partnerships, innovative insurance products, or improved sediment management; multiple priority areas are okay if strongly relevant).
- d. Approximate total cost of the project.
- e. Statement of the problem and its relevance.
- f. Brief summary of work to be completed, methodology to be used, and the plan for engaging with the coastal decision makers.
- g. Brief description of relevant outputs that can be delivered by methodology and targeted outcomes.

2. Sample Full Application

A sample application package and other guidance can be found under "Information for Applicants" located on the NCCOS website at: <https://coastalscience.noaa.gov/about/funding-opportunities/application-forms/>.

3. Collaborative Proposals

If more than one institution is collaborating in a project awarded funds, the lead institution will be the only institution to directly receive funds from NOAA and will be responsible for distributing funds to the partner institutions except for Federal agency partners. Federal agencies will be funded with either intra- or inter-agency agreements initiated by NCCOS. Only one full proposal per project must be submitted via Grants.gov. Collaborating institutions expected to receive funds must be budgeted as subawards or contracts in the submitted proposal and provide the lead institution with their documents for submission by the lead. Unfunded collaborators may also participate.

4. Required Elements for Full Applications

Each application must substantially comply with the following 12 elements (a–l) to be forwarded for merit review. The Summary Title Page, Abstract, Project Description, References, Biographical Sketch, and Budget Narrative must be single spaced in 12-point font with one-inch margins. The Collaborators List must use an Excel spreadsheet and be submitted by email to nccos.grant.awards@noaa.gov. The 12 elements are as follows:

a. *Standard Form 424*. The applicant must submit the Standard Form, SF-424, "Application for Federal Assistance," to indicate the total amount of funding proposed for the whole project period.

b. *Summary Title Page*. One-page maximum. The Summary Title Page identifies the project's title and the PI's name, affiliation, complete address, phone, and email information. The requested funding amounts for each fiscal year should be included on the Summary Title Page. If this proposal is a resubmission from a previous NCCOS competition, indicate the former competition on the Summary Title Page.

c. *One-page Abstract/Project Summary*. The Project Summary (Abstract) should appear on a separate single page, headed with the proposal title, institution(s), investigator(s), total proposed cost, and budget period. It should be written in the third person and in plain language. The Abstract should include an introduction of the problem, project objectives, and a brief summary of work to be completed and outcomes. The summary Abstract allows the respondents to summarize key points in their own words. Abstracts of applications that receive funding may be posted on program-related websites.

d. *Project Description*. The description of the work proposed must include three Project Description narrative sections: the Proposed Research, its Application to Management, and a Data Management Plan. The proposal shall not exceed more than: 15 pages for the description of the Proposed Research and Application to Management; two additional pages may be used for the Data Management Plan. Any Project Description narrative beyond the page limits will not be reviewed or considered. The three Project Description sections must include the information as described below.

(1) *Proposed Research*

The Proposed Research narrative section should be thorough and explicitly indicate its relevance to the program goals and scientific priorities by:

(a) Identifying the topic that is being addressed by the proposal;

(b) Describing the proposed scientific objectives and research activities in relation to the present state of knowledge in the field and, if appropriate, in relation to previous and current work by the proposing PI(s);

(c) Discussing how the proposed project lends value to the program goals; and

(d) Identifying the function of each PI. The Lead PI will be responsible for communicating with the NCCOS/CRP Program Manager on all pertinent verbal or written information.

Note: If the proposal is a resubmission from a previous competition, any concerns identified with the Project Description in the previous review process and provided to the applicant(s) should be addressed in the resubmitted proposal.

(2) *Application to Management*

The Application to Management Narrative should establish the connection to relevant information needs by explicitly identifying the intended user group(s) including evidence of the linkage between the scientific questions and management needs. The format and role of the advisory group (see Section I.B) should be included in this section. The narrative should provide the management justification for the research by:

(a) Articulating the coordination with one or more intended users.

(b) Discussing the expected significance of the project to priorities and needs. Specific information needs, with proposed outputs and outcomes, should describe how this project will improve the region's capabilities to avoid flooding while leveraging natural infrastructure. Outputs are defined as products (e.g., publications and models) or activities that lead to outcomes (i.e., changes in management knowledge or action). Definitions and examples of outputs and outcomes are provided in Section I.B with additional examples at <https://coastalscience.noaa.gov/about/funding-opportunities/outputs-and-outcomes/>. The timeline for achieving outputs should be included in the Milestone Chart (below).

(c) Describing specific activities, such as workshops or development of outreach materials, that will enhance information transfer from project scientists to relevant management entities, other intended users, or the public.

(d) Describing the structure, size, and activities of the advisory group of intended users, particularly by including a plan for how the group will engage with project PIs. Members of the advisory group should be named, when possible. Letters may be included, but are not required, to indicate that they have agreed to serve on the advisory group; these letters do not count against the page limits.

(3) *Data Management Plan*

NOAA requires that grant-produced data be made publicly available, preferably with open data licenses. Proposals must provide a detailed Data Management Plan that describes how metadata and data collected as part of the project will be openly disseminated to the broader community, and plans for longer term archiving of these data. PIs that propose to collaborate with data centers or networks, except the NOAA/National Center for Environmental Information (NCEI), are advised to obtain letters of commitment that affirm the collaboration. Where possible, all PIs are strongly encouraged to use existing data centers and data portals to archive and disseminate their data. Costs associated with use of data centers, or data archiving, should be included in the application budget. Proposed Data Management Plans should reflect archiving Option A, B, and/or C as stated below. Note: non-digital data (e.g., laboratory notebooks, preliminary analyses, drafts of scientific papers, plans for future research, peer review reports, communications with colleagues, or physical objects, such as laboratory specimens) are not required to be made publicly accessible.

Option A: For the majority of oceanographic and ecological data, except non-digital data as described above, funding recipients are expected to submit data to the NOAA/NCEI for long-term preservation, which will provide public access, archiving, discovery metadata meeting NOAA standards and formats, and a Digital Object Identifier (DOI).

Option B: For any other data not appropriate for submission to NOAA/NCEI, funding recipients are expected to submit data to an appropriate long-term data facility (e.g., National Institutes of Health's GenBank for genomics data) that preserves data, properly manages archived data to assure their quality, mints DOIs, and makes archived data and related information available to users in a timely and efficient manner. Funding recipients should submit discovery metadata meeting NOAA standards and formats documenting these non-NOAA data archives to the NCCOS/CRP Program Manager (see Section VII for contact information).

Option C: For limited-release data that are limited by law, regulation, policy, security requirements, commercial or international agreements, or valid technical considerations, funding recipients may request permission not to make data publicly accessible from the NCCOS/CRP Program Manager.

For additional information regarding Data Management Plans, see <https://coastalscience.noaa.gov/about/funding-opportunities/data-management-plan> and the NOAA Data Sharing Plan policy statement below in Section VI.B., Administrative and National Policy Requirements. For questions regarding data management and implementing this guidance: refer to Section VII for the contact information for the NCCOS Data Coordinator.

e. *References cited.* Reference information is required. Each reference should include the names of all authors in the same sequence they appear in the publication, the article title, the journal or book title, volume number, page numbers, and year of publication. While there is no established page limitation, this section should include bibliographic citations only and should not be used to provide parenthetical information outside of the Project Description.

f. *Milestone chart.* Provide timelines of major tasks covering the duration of the proposed project.

g. *Biographical sketch.* All PIs and co-PIs must provide summaries of up to two pages that include the following:

(1) A listing of professional and academic credentials and mailing address; and

(2) A list of up to five publications most closely related to the proposed project and five other significant publications.

h. *Standard Form (SF) 424A.* The lead applicant is required to provide a SF-424A Budget Form that identifies the budget for each fiscal year of the proposal. Place each fiscal year in separate columns in Section B of page one on the SF- 424A by filling in the fiscal years 1-4 in Section A Budget Summary - Grant Program Function or Activity column. (Note that this revised SF-424A Section B format is a NOAA requirement that is not reflected in the Instructions for the SF-424A). The budget figures must correspond with the descriptions contained in the Budget Narrative.

The lead institution should list the total subaward costs under line item 6.h. Other category and contractor costs under line item 6.f. Contractual category on the SF-424A. Signed approval from the institution of each identified subaward and contractor should be provided. All ship costs belong in the "h: Other" category and are not subject to indirect costs.

Each subaward must include a detailed budget table that corresponds to the form SF424A, but the official form does not need to be used. A separate column should be used for each budget year.

Example Budget Table for Subawards:

Object Class Category	Year X	Total
A. Personnel	\$0	\$0
B. Fringe Benefits	\$0	\$0
C. Travel	\$0	\$0
D. Equipment	\$0	\$0
E. Supplies	\$0	\$0
F. Contractual	\$0	\$0
G. Construction	\$0	\$0
H. Other	\$0	\$0
I. Total Direct Charges	\$0	\$0
J. Indirect Charges	\$0	\$0
K. Total (sum of I + J)	\$0	\$0

i. *Budget Narrative*. In order to allow reviewers to fully evaluate the appropriateness of costs, all applications must include a detailed budget narrative to support all proposed budget categories for each fiscal year, for the recipient and any subrecipients. There is no specific page limit for the budget narrative. For additional budget guidance, see <https://coastalscience.noaa.gov/about/funding-opportunities/requirements/>.

--- Personnel costs should be broken out by named PI, total annual salary, number of months, and percentage of time requested per year per PI. Support for each PI should be commensurate with their stated involvement in the project's goals and objectives. Any unnamed personnel (graduate students, post-doctoral researchers, and technicians) should be identified by their job title, and their personnel costs explained similar to PI personnel costs. The contribution of any personnel to the project goals should be explained.

--- Travel costs should be broken out by number of people traveling, destination and purpose of travel, and projected costs per person (i.e., hotel rate, meals and incidentals, and transportation). Note: Conference registration fees belong in the "h. Other" category in the SF424A and budget narrative.

--- Equipment costs should describe the equipment to be purchased, and its contribution to the achievement of the project goals.

--- Any ship time needs must be clearly identified in the proposed budget. The applicant is responsible for requesting ship time through appropriate channels and for meeting all requirements to ensure the availability of requested ship time. If any NOAA personnel will be present during ship operations, vessel safety clearances must be obtained through the NOAA Office of Marine and Aviation Operations (OMAO) in advance of the cruise. Required information and procedures are detailed in [NOAA Administrative Order 209-115: NOAA Employees Aboard Non-NOAA Vessels](#).

If more than one institution is collaborating in a project recommended for funding, the lead institution will be the only institution to directly receive funds from NOAA unless a Federal agency is a funded collaborator. Federal agencies may be funded directly by NOAA. The lead institution is responsible for sending funds to the other subaward institutions. A separate budget table and budget narrative is required for each subaward (including Federal collaborators receiving funds) and must be provided to the lead institution for submission. Signed approval from each identified subaward institution is required. For acquisition contracts, the purpose and cost or price must be fully justified and the contract must fully comply with 2 C.F.R. 200.317-.327.

Applicants are encouraged to include the costs of project-level data management, including: coordinating, organizing, documenting, formatting, or otherwise preparing datasets for submission to NOAA or non-NOAA data facilities; establishing and maintaining data access tools and services and related metadata; and managing non-digital data that are not required to be made publicly accessible, including laboratory notebooks, preliminary analyses, drafts of scientific papers, plans for future research, peer review reports, communications with colleagues, or physical objects, such as laboratory specimens.

An applicant requesting funds for indirect costs in its proposal budget that has a current Federally approved rate should submit documentation of the indirect cost rate agreement as an attachment to its application submission. An applicant without a Federally approved rate should refer to Section IV.F. of this Announcement regarding options.

j. *CD-511. Certification Regarding Lobbying.* Lead institutions can submit these forms through the Grants.gov CD-511 document placeholder without a hard signature because electronic signatures are allowed on documents from the submitting institution.

k. *Standard Form (SF) 424B. Assurances - Non-Construction Programs.* Lead institutions can submit these forms through the Grants.gov SF-424B document placeholder without a hard signature because electronic signatures are allowed on documents from the submitting institutions.

l. *List of Collaborators.* The List of Collaborators must use an Excel spreadsheet and be submitted by email to nccos.grant.awards@noaa.gov. Do not submit it with your application through Grants.gov as this will cause an error when the application is transferred to NOAA's grant system, eRA.

Provide one list that includes all (U.S. and Foreign) collaborators, advisors, and advisees for each investigator (PI, co-PIs, post-docs, and subawardees), complete with corresponding institutions. This list must include the names of each PI and co-PI. Submit only one, combined and alphabetized list per application in an Excel spreadsheet using First Name, Last Name, and Institution for the column headings. Collaborators are individuals who have participated in a project or publication within the last 48 months with any investigator. Collaborators also include those persons with which the investigators may have ongoing collaboration negotiations. Advisees and Advisors do not have a time limit. Advisees are persons with whom the individual investigator has had an association as thesis or dissertation advisor or postdoctoral sponsor. Advisors include an individual's own graduate and postgraduate advisors. Unfunded participants in the proposed study should also be listed (but not their collaborators). This information is critical for identifying potential conflicts of interest and avoiding bias in the selection of reviewers.

4. Application Format and Assembly

An application should be submitted electronically through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). If use of Grants.gov is not feasible, contact the NCCOS Grants Administrator (see section VII for contact information).

If you experience submission problems, send an email to support@grants.gov and call the Grants.gov help desk (800-518-4726). The NCCOS/CRP Program Manager for this Announcement will use programmatic discretion in accepting applications due to documented electronic submission problems. Note: If more than one submission of an application is performed, the last application submitted before the due date and time will be the official version.

In addition to the 12 required elements (a–l), applicants may provide letters from unfunded collaborators, verifying their contribution to the project. These letters do not count against the page limit for the Project Description. The letters can be uploaded into the Optional Form box under Other Attachments in Grants.gov.

Applications containing known subawards must provide a Budget Table, a Budget Narrative, and signed approval from the institution of each subaward and contractor. We also request submission of the indirect rate agreement for subawards, if applicable. Applicants may provide additional information similar to that requested in this section for an acquisition contract if it may help NOAA assure compliance of the contract with 2 C.F.R. 200.317-.327.

Biographical sketches and lists of collaborators should be supplied to the lead institution in order for them to be combined within the lead application information.

5. Environmental Compliance and Permits

It is the applicant's responsibility to obtain all necessary Federal, state, and local government, tribal, and/or private landowners permits and approvals where necessary for the proposed work to be conducted. In addition, applicants are strongly encouraged to engage tribal interests at the earliest stage of scoping or planning activities and familiarize themselves with the NOAA Tribal Consultation Handbook 2023 (https://www.noaa.gov/sites/default/files/2023-07/NOAA_Tribal_Consultation_Handbook_2023_FINAL.pdf).

Applicants are expected to design their proposals so that they minimize potential adverse impacts on the environment. If applicable, documentation of requests or approvals of environmental permits should be received by the NCCOS/CRP Program Manager prior to funding. Applications will be reviewed to ensure that they have sufficient environmental documentation to allow program staff to determine whether the proposal is categorically excluded from further National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis, or whether an Environmental Assessment is necessary in conformance with requirements of NEPA. For those applications needing an Environmental Assessment, affected applicants will be informed after the peer-review stage, and will be requested to assist in the preparation of a draft assessment (prior to award). Failure to apply for and/or obtain Federal, state, and local government, tribal, and/or private landowners permits, approvals, letters of agreement, or failure to provide environmental analysis where necessary (e.g., NEPA Environmental Assessment) may delay the award of funds if a project is selected for funding. In some cases, if additional permits and approvals are required after an application is awarded, funds may be withheld by the NOAA Grants Officer under a Special Award Condition requiring the recipient to submit required permits and approvals.

Applicants to be recommended for funding will be required to answer relevant questions from the "Environmental Compliance Questionnaire for NOAA Federal Financial Assistance Applicants:" <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1WVoZ-HPMIBu8Web6ITxAJlmg2tepoTEb/view?usp=sharing>. The NCCOS/CRP Program Manager will determine which questions are relevant to each specific proposal. Answers must be provided before the application can be submitted for final funding approval.

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.

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

Any applicant 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/SAM/>. SAM enables the use of a universal entity identifier and to build 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.

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

LOIs are required and must be submitted by e-mail to nccos.grant.awards@noaa.gov by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on November 9, 2026. Applicants will receive an email verification of receipt. Responses to LOIs should be expected by approximately two weeks after the LOI deadline or November 23, 2026.

Full applications must be received and validated by Grants.gov by 11:59 pm Eastern Time on February 12, 2027. Applications received by Grants.gov after the deadline will be rejected by Grants.gov and returned to the sender without further consideration.

Important: All applicants should be aware that adequate time must be factored into applicant schedules for delivery of the application. See Section IV.G for further instructions on eRA timing and process. Applicants are advised that volume on Grants.gov is currently extremely heavy, and if use of Grants.gov is not feasible, contact the NCCOS Grants Administrator (see Section VII for contact information) as soon as possible and no later than a week before the due date to assess whether alternative arrangements can be made.

E. Intergovernmental Review

Applications under this program are not subject to Executive Order 12372 "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs." It has been determined that this notice is not significant for purposes of Executive Order 12866. Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553(a)(2), an opportunity for public notice and comment is not required for this notice relating to grants, benefits, and contracts. Because this notice is exempt from the notice and comment provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act, a Regulatory Flexibility Analysis is not required, 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.

F. Funding Restrictions

Indirect Costs: Any non-Federal entity that does not have a current negotiated (including provisional) rate with a Federal agency may choose to use the de minimis indirect cost rate of 15% of Modified Total Direct Cost as allowable under 2 C.F.R. §200.414 or negotiate a rate with DOC. Please note, if 2 C.F.R. 200 is revised prior to an award of funds, which may include changes to indirect cost rate policies, the requirement in effect at the time of award will govern. The negotiation and approval of such a new rate is subject to the procedures required by NOAA and the DOC Standard Terms and Conditions, Section B.06. The NOAA contact for indirect or facilities and administrative costs is: Jennifer Jackson, Grants Officer, NOAA Grants Management Division, 1325 East West Highway, 9th Floor, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910, jennifer.jackson@noaa.gov.

NCCOS/CRP will not fund start-up or operational costs for private business ventures and neither fees nor profits will be considered as allowable costs. NCCOS/CRP will not pay for ship overhead expenses. Ship costs may not be included in indirect cost calculations unless specified within the indirect cost rate agreement of the institution. If indirect costs are applied, an approved indirect cost agreement or budget revision will be required before an application can be recommended for funding.

G. Other Submission Requirements

Applications previously submitted to NCCOS/CRP Notice of Funding Opportunities and not recommended for funding must be revised to address any reviewer or panel concerns before resubmission. Resubmitted applications that have not been revised to address identified concerns may be returned without review.

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), i.e., an individual authorized to legally bind their organization in grants administration matters, and at least one Program Director/Principal Investigator (PD/PI) account in order to submit an application. Please note, the UEI must be updated annually, which may take several weeks in some cases.

The first PD/PI listed on the application must include their eRA Commons ID in the "Credential, e.g., agency login" Applicant Identifier field of 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.

After electronic submission of the proposal through Grants.gov, the person submitting the proposal will receive up to three email messages from Grants.gov updating them on the progress of their proposal. In the first 24 to 48 hours after submission, the first email will confirm receipt of the proposal by the Grants.gov system, and the second will indicate that the proposal has either been successfully validated by the system before transmission to the grantor agency or has been rejected because of errors. Only validated proposals are sent to NOAA for review. After the proposal has been validated, this same person will receive a third email, generally within two days, when the proposal has been received and downloaded by NOAA.

H. Address for Submitting Proposals

Proposals should be submitted using Grants.gov. Proposal materials are available at [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) as part of the electronic proposal package, which includes the federal forms. Please contact the NCCOS Grants Administrator should you have an issue accessing the materials (see Section VII for contact information).

V. Application Review Information

Evaluation Criteria Instructions

The evaluation of each proposal is based on four overarching criteria.

1. Importance/relevance and applicability of proposed projects to the program goals	Maximum Points: 35
This criterion ascertains whether the research addresses the priorities stated in Section I.B of this Announcement. Are relevant research products clearly identified, including how they will be developed and used to achieve outcomes, such as the effective use of natural infrastructure or insurance incentives that guide outcomes that reduce coastal flood impacts? Will private and public entities at the local and state level clearly utilize the work?	
2. Technical/scientific merit	Maximum Points: 35
This criterion assesses whether the approach is technically sound and/or innovative. The proposed work should have focused objectives and a complete and technically sound strategy for project design, methodologies, data analysis, and development of products to support outcomes that meet the objectives of this funding opportunity.	
3. Overall qualifications of applicants	Maximum Points: 15

This criterion ascertains whether the applicant(s) possesses the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project. Is the team capable of effectively interacting with intended users to share findings, data, and other research products? Are all necessary experts present and does the team leverage the strengths of multiple organization types? Is there a clear process for sharing data and data management?	
4. Project costs	Maximum Points: 15
This criterion evaluates the budget to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time frame. Are costs reasonable? Are there any unexplained costs?	

Review and Selection Process

Once a full application has been received by NOAA, an initial administrative review is conducted to determine compliance with requirements and completeness of the application. Ineligible, incomplete, and/or non-responsive applications may be eliminated from further review. NOAA, in its sole discretion, may continue the review process for applications with non-substantive issues that can easily be rectified or cured. All applications that pass this initial review will be evaluated and scored individually by an independent peer panel review. An independent peer mail review may be used before the independent peer panel review.

Both Federal and non-Federal experts may be used in this process. The peer mail reviewers will be several individuals with expertise in the subjects addressed by particular applications. Each mail reviewer will see only certain individual applications within their area of expertise, and score them individually on a scale of one to five, where scores represent respectively: Excellent (5), Very Good (4), Good (3), Fair (2), Poor (1). Both whole and ½ scores will be acceptable. Reviewers will consider the relative weighting of each of the evaluation criteria in providing an overall proposal score.

The peer panel will be composed of several individuals, with each individual having expertise in a separate area, so that the panel, as a whole, covers a range of relevant scientific expertises. The panel will have access to all mail reviews of proposals and will use the mail reviews in discussion and evaluation of the proposals. The peer panel shall rate the proposals using the evaluation criteria and scoring method provided above (and used by the mail reviewers). Individual peer panel reviewers will consider the relative weighting of the evaluation criteria in providing their individual score. The individual peer panelists' scores shall be combined, using one or more methods, to obtain a numerical ranking of the proposals. If both a mail review and a panel review are conducted, only the panel scores shall be used to rank each proposal. If any non-Federal reviewer participates, no consensus advice is used and no consensus advice will be given by the independent peer mail review or the review panel.

The NCCOS/CRP Program Managers will neither vote or score applications as part of the independent peer review panel nor participate in discussion of the merits of the applications other than to ask/answer questions. Those applications receiving an average pre-panel score of "Fair" or "Poor" may not be sent to the Panel for discussion, this determination will be at the discretion of the NCCOS/CRP Program Manager. Those applications receiving an average panel score of "Fair" or "Poor" will not be given further consideration, and applicants will be notified of non-selection.

For the applications rated "Excellent," "Very Good," or "Good," the NCCOS/CRP Program Manager will (a) rank applications for funding using the panel scores; (b) recommend funding duration for each application; and (c) recommend funding amounts for each application. Recommendations for funding are forwarded from the NCCOS/CRP Program Manager to the NCCOS/CRP Director for development of the final recommendation to the Selecting Official, the Director of NCCOS or designee, for the final funding recommendation decision. Recommendations will be made using the rank order generated by the peer-review process unless justification is provided to select a proposal out of rank order. Justification must be based on one or more of the selection factors listed below under "Selection Factors."

NOAA reserves the right to negotiate the budget with the applicants that have been selected to receive awards, which may include requesting that the applicant remove certain costs, combine budgets into a single application, add/subtract expertise, or change the lead or subaward institution. Additionally, NOAA may request that the applicant modify objectives or work plans and provide supplemental information required by the agency prior to award. NOAA may select some, all, or none of the applications, or part(s) of any particular application, and may request that applicants combine projects. In addition, applications rated by the panel as either "Excellent," "Very Good," or "Good" that are not funded in the current fiscal period, may be considered for funding in another fiscal period without having to repeat the competitive review process.

The Selecting Official will make recommendations to the NOAA Grants Management Division, and the final approval of selected applications and issuance of awards will be by the NOAA Grants Officer. The award decisions of the NOAA Grants Officer are final.

The NOAA Grants Officer will review financial and grants administration aspects of a proposed award, including conducting an assessment of the risk posed by the applicant in accordance with 2 C.F.R. 200.206. In addition to reviewing repositories of government-wide eligibility, qualifications or financial integrity information, the risk assessment conducted by NOAA may consider items such as the financial stability of an applicant, quality of the applicant's management systems, an applicant's history of performance, previous audit reports and audit findings concerning the applicant and the applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on non-Federal entities. See also "Review of Risk" in Section VI.B of this Announcement.

Applicants should be in compliance with the terms of any existing NOAA grants or cooperative agreements and otherwise eligible to receive Federal awards, or make arrangements satisfactory to the NOAA Grants Officer, to be considered for funding under this competition. All reports due should be received and any concerns raised by the agency should be timely addressed in order to receive a new award. Upon review of these factors, if appropriate, specific award conditions that respond to the degree of risk may be applied by the NOAA Grants Officer pursuant to 2 C.F.R. 200.208. In addition, NOAA reserves the right to reject an application in its entirety where information is uncovered that raises a significant risk with respect to the responsibility or suitability of an applicant. The final approval of selected applications and issuance of awards will be by the NOAA Grants Officer.

When a decision has been made (whether an award or declination), verbatim anonymous copies of reviews and summaries of review panel deliberations, if any, will be made available to the applicant. Declined applications will be held in NCCOS/CRP for three years in accordance with current retention policies, and then destroyed.

Selection Factors

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

1. Availability of funding.
2. Balance/distribution of funds:
 - 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

Subject to the availability of funds, review of the applications will begin upon receipt. Applicants may be notified of award or declination by September 2027, and applicants should use a start date of September 1, 2027.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

The Notice of Award (NoA) is the official grant award document notifying the recipient that an award has been made. The NoA is issued by the NOAA Grants Officer electronically through NOAA's electronic grants management system, eRA to the appropriate business office of the recipient organization.

The NoA provided by NOAA may contain Special Award Conditions unique to the proposed work that will be applied on a case-by-case basis. For example, the award may include conditions that limit the use of funds for activities that have outstanding environmental compliance requirements or stating other compliance requirements for the award as applicable. The applicant is strongly encouraged to review award documents carefully before accepting a federal award to ensure they are fully aware of the relevant terms 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>.

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

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

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

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, and the Council on Environmental Quality implementation regulations, http://energy.gov/sites/prod/files/NEPA-40CFR1500_1508.pdf. Consequently, as part of an applicant's package, and under their description of their program activities, applicants are required to provide detailed information on the activities to be conducted, locations, sites, species and habitat to be affected, possible construction activities, and any environmental concerns that may exist (e.g., the use and disposal of hazardous or toxic chemicals, introduction of non- indigenous species, impacts to endangered and threatened species, aquaculture projects, and impacts to coral reef systems). In addition to providing specific information that will serve as the basis for any required impact analyses, applicants may also be requested to assist NOAA in drafting an environmental assessment, if NOAA determines an assessment is required. Applicants will also be required to cooperate with NOAA in identifying feasible measures to reduce or avoid any identified adverse environmental impacts of their proposal. Failure to do so shall be grounds for not selecting an application. In some cases if additional information is required after an application is selected, funds can be withheld by the Grants Officer under a special award condition requiring the recipient to submit additional environmental compliance information sufficient to enable NOAA to make an assessment on any impacts that a project may have on the environment.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT. Department of Commerce regulations implementing the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. Sec. 552, are found at 15 C.F.R. Part 4, Public Information. These regulations set forth rules for the Department regarding making requested materials, information, and records publicly available under the FOIA. Applications submitted in response to this Notice of Funding Opportunity may be subject to requests for release under the Act. In the event that an application contains information or data that the applicant deems to be confidential commercial information that should be exempt from disclosure under FOIA, that information should be identified, bracketed, and marked as Privileged, Confidential, Commercial or Financial Information. In accordance with 15 CFR § 4.9, the Department of Commerce will protect from disclosure confidential business information contained in financial assistance applications and other documentation provided by applicants to the extent permitted by law.

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

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

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

SCIENCE INTEGRITY. 1. Maintaining Integrity. The non-Federal entity shall maintain the scientific integrity of research performed pursuant to this grant or financial assistance award including the prevention, detection, and remediation of any allegations regarding the violation of scientific integrity or scientific and research misconduct, and the conduct of inquiries, investigations, and adjudications of allegations of violations of scientific integrity or scientific and research misconduct. All the requirements of this provision flow down to subrecipients. 2. Peer Review. The peer review of the results of scientific activities under a NOAA grant, financial assistance award or cooperative agreement shall be accomplished to ensure consistency with NOAA standards on quality, relevance, scientific integrity, reproducibility, transparency, and performance. NOAA will ensure that peer review of "influential scientific information" or "highly influential scientific assessments" is conducted in accordance with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Final Information Quality Bulletin for Peer Review and NOAA policies on peer review, such as the Information Quality Guidelines. 3. In performing or presenting the results of scientific activities under the NOAA grant, financial assistance award, or cooperative agreement and in responding to allegations regarding the violation of scientific integrity or scientific and research misconduct, the non-Federal entity and all subrecipients shall comply with the provisions herein and NOAA Administrative Order (NAO) 202-735D, Scientific Integrity, and its Procedural Handbook, including any amendments thereto. That Order can be found at <https://www.noaa.gov/organization/administration/nao-202-735d-2-scientific-integrity>. 4. Primary Responsibility. The non-Federal entity shall have the primary responsibility to prevent, detect, and investigate allegations of a violation of scientific integrity or scientific and research misconduct. Unless otherwise instructed by the grants officer, the non-Federal entity shall promptly conduct an initial inquiry into any allegation of such misconduct and may rely on its internal policies and procedures, as appropriate, to do so. 5. By executing this grant, financial assistance award, or cooperative agreement the non-Federal entity provides its assurance that it has established an administrative process for performing an inquiry, investigating, and reporting allegations of a violation of scientific integrity or scientific and research misconduct; and that it will comply with its own administrative process for performing an inquiry, investigation, and reporting of such misconduct. 6. The non-Federal entity shall insert this provision in all subawards at all tiers under this grant, financial assistance award, or cooperative agreement.

REVIEW OF RISK. After applications are proposed for funding by the Selecting Official, the Grants Office will perform administrative reviews, including an assessment of risk posed by the applicant under 2 C.F.R. 200.206. These may include assessments of the financial stability of an applicant and the quality of the applicant's management systems, history of performance, and the applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on non-Federal entities. Special conditions that address any risks determined to exist may be applied. Applicants may submit comments about any information concerning organizational performance listed in the Responsibility/Qualification section of SAM.gov for consideration by the awarding agency.

REVIEWS AND EVALUATION. The applicant acknowledges and understands that information and data contained in applications for financial assistance, as well as information and data contained in financial, performance and other reports submitted by applicants, may be used by the Department of Commerce in conducting reviews and evaluations of its financial assistance programs. For this purpose, applicant information and data may be accessed, reviewed and evaluated by Department of Commerce employees, other Federal employees, and also by Federal agents and contractors, and/or by non-Federal personnel, all of whom enter into appropriate conflict of interest and confidentiality agreements covering the use of such information. As may be provided in the terms and conditions of a specific financial assistance award, applicants are expected to support program reviews and evaluations by submitting required financial and performance information and data in an accurate and timely manner, and by cooperating with the Department of Commerce and external program evaluators. In accordance with §200.303(e), applicants are reminded that they must take reasonable measures to safeguard protected personally identifiable information and other confidential or sensitive personal or business information created or obtained in connection with a Department of Commerce financial assistance award.

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 materials¹ 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.

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—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).

GOLD STANDARD SCIENCE. In performing activities under Federal awards, applicants should commit to complying with administration policies, procedures, and guidance respecting Gold Standard Science. As detailed in Executive Order 14303, Restoring Gold Standard Science (May 23, 2025), Gold Standard Science refers to science conducted in a manner that is:

- Reproducible
- Transparent
- Communicative of error and uncertainty
- Collaborative and interdisciplinary
- Skeptical of its findings and assumptions
- Structured for falsifiability of hypotheses
- Subject to unbiased peer review
- Accepting of negative results as positive outcomes
- Without conflicts of interests

TERMINATION. In accordance with 2 CFR § 200.340(a), this federal award may be terminated in part or in its entirety as follows:

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

b. By DOC or the pass-through entity with the consent of the recipient or subrecipient, in which case the two parties must agree upon the termination conditions. These conditions include the effective date and, in the case of partial termination, the portion to be terminated.

c. By the recipient or subrecipient upon sending DOC or the pass-through entity a written notification of the reasons for termination, the effective date, and, in the case of partial termination, the portion to be terminated. If DOC or the pass-through entity determines that the remaining portion of this federal award will not accomplish the purposes for which this federal award was made, DOC or the pass-through entity may terminate this federal award in its entirety.

d. By DOC or the pass-through entity to the extent authorized by law, if the award no longer effectuates the program goals or agency priorities.

PROHIBITION ON USING FEDERAL AWARDS TO PROMOTE OR SUPPORT THEORIES OF DISPARATE-IMPACT LIABILITY. In accordance with Executive Order 14281, Restoring Equality of Opportunity and Meritocracy (April 23, 2025), it is the policy of the Federal Government to eliminate the use of disparate-impact liability in all contexts to the maximum possible and permitted by law.

Executive Order 14173: Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity. This award term implements Executive Order 14173, 90 FR 8633 (Jan. 21, 2025), Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity. By accepting this U.S. Department of Commerce financial assistance award, the recipient: (1) agrees that compliance in all respects with all applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws is material to the government's payment decisions for purposes of section 3729(b)(4) of Title 31 United States Code; and (2) certifies to the Department that it does not operate any programs promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion that violate any applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws.

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, Grants Officer, NOAA Grants Management Division, 1325 East West Highway, 9th Floor, Silver Spring, MD 20910, or 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 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.fsr.gov/> on all subawards over \$30,000. Refer to 2 CFR Part 170.

Performance Measures. NOAA will evaluate project performance based on alignment with administration priorities, including but not limited to, domestic economic expansion, infrastructure modernization, capacity building, and national food security, alongside adherence to Executive Orders and 'Gold Standard Science.' These overarching criteria are assessed through a framework that measures a project's contribution to fishery economic optimization, domestic seafood utilization, infrastructure capacity, supply chain resilience, and national maritime strategy. To ensure effective implementation, NOAA reserves the right to incorporate specific quantitative and qualitative metrics into the award agreement (i.e. Notice of Award; Specific Award Conditions). These metrics will be focused on the project's objectives and its ability to foster industry growth, technical modernization, and workforce readiness.

VII. Agency Contacts

Technical Program Information: Trevor Meckley, Program Manager, Trevor.Meckley@noaa.gov; and Sarah Pease, Program Manager, Sarah.Pease@noaa.gov.

Grants Administration Information: NCCOS Grants Administrator, nccos.grant.awards@noaa.gov.

Data Management Information: Lauren Jackson, NCCOS Scientific Data Coordinator, nccos.data@noaa.gov.

Indirect or Facilities and Administrative Costs Information: Jennifer Jackson, Grants Officer, NOAA Grants Management Division; jennifer.jackson@noaa.gov.

VIII. Other Information

A. Checklist for Required and Requested Documents:

1. SF-424
2. Summary Title Page
3. Abstract/Project Summary
4. Project Description
5. References
6. Milestone Chart
7. Biographical Sketch (for each PI and co-PI)
8. SF-424A (One for the lead institution and each subaward/subcontract)
9. Budget Narrative (One for the lead institution and each subaward/subcontract)
10. CD-511
11. SF-424B
12. Alphabetized Collaborator List (ONE Excel spreadsheet for all PIs emailed to nccos.grant.awards@noaa.gov)

B. Additional Documentation (if applicable):

1. Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (for each institution requesting funding)
2. Signed Approval from subaward/subcontractor institutes
3. Disclosure of Lobbying Activities Form (SF-LLL)
4. Letters from unfunded collaborators, verifying their contribution to the project