

United States Geological Survey

National and Regional Climate Adaptation Science Centers Program (NRCASC)

<https://www.usgs.gov/casc>



**Northeast, Pacific Islands, and South Central
Climate Adaptation Science Centers**

Notice of Funding Opportunity - Fiscal Year 2025

Funding Opportunity Number (FON) G25AS00457

Closing Date: 02/03/2025

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A. Program Description

A1. Authority

Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2008, Div. F, Title I, P.L. 110-161 and 43 USC 36d

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number

[15.820](#)

A2. Background, Purpose and Program Requirements

Program Description, Background, and Overview

A. Purpose of this Announcement

1. This Announcement seeks to identify applicant organizations that propose to host and, as applicable, serve as consortium partners for a U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Climate Adaptation Science Center (CASC) in the regions indicated below, and to determine if their proposed science, partnership, and program support activities and strategies are appropriate to serve in the following roles:
 - **Northeast, Pacific Islands, and South Central Climate Adaptation Science Centers.** The geographic footprints for potential hosts of these CASCs are indicated in the map below (see [Attachment A](#)). The high-level climate science focus areas anticipated for these CASCs are described in [Attachment C](#).
2. Once selected, the recipient will be established as the Host Institution for the respective regional CASC. As a Host, an institution will be the sole entity eligible to receive funding to conduct follow-on research/science projects anticipated as a part of this Program Announcement. Host Institutions may engage with other institutions, including by subaward, as part of these projects.

B. Program Description - The USGS Climate Adaptation Science Center Network

1. USGS has established a network of geographically dispersed Climate Adaptation Science Centers (CASC) (see [Learn About the Regional CASCs | U.S. Geological Survey \(usgs.gov\)](#)). The USGS, through the National Climate Adaptation Science Center (NCASC), manages the CASCs (see [Climate Adaptation Science Centers | U.S. Geological Survey \(usgs.gov\)](#)). CASCs are based at organizations (hereafter termed Hosts or Host Institutions) that provide suitable facilities, partnerships, science, capacity building, communications, and programmatic capabilities, either alone or in combination with other partners (“consortium partners”). At the national level, USGS (through the National CASC) provides executive staffing and administrative support, conducts a program to link and synthesize CASC research activities, and provides communication data management, and information technology strategy coordination.

2. The goal of each CASC is to work with regional managers of land, water, fish and wildlife, as well as nearshore, coastal, and cultural heritage resources in order to identify high priority resource management and decision needs for which information on climate change, impacts, and adaptation is needed. As an objective, each CASC works to deliver scientific information and tools that can help resource managers develop strategies, policies, programs, and activities for responding to climate change.
3. Each regional CASC has a Host institution component and a federal component. They have distinct funding, personnel, and work plans but work together with a collaborative approach towards a common mission. In general, the federal component's focus is on developing science priorities and a science agenda, as well as longer-term research and synthesis activities – especially when these span multiple funding cycles. The Host institution component's focus is generally on science implementation, communications, and outreach. Specifically, the primary functions of CASCs – including the Host institutions and the federal component together – are to:
 - a. Identify priority management needs through ongoing interactions with resource management entities within the region and identify scientific information and tools that may inform these management challenges. Wherever possible, this should involve an appropriate level of co-development, which entails processes and relationship-building to frame management questions, understand the objectives of managers and other key stakeholders, develop science/research plans to address management questions, and ensure the appropriate transfer and use of information to improve management of natural and cultural resources in a changing climate.^[1]
 - b. Identify impacts of climate change and current management strategies on priority species, habitats/ecosystems, ecosystem goods and services, and other natural and cultural resources within the region, as guided by the management priorities identified above.
 - c. Translate, integrate, aggregate, and synthesize existing or new scientific information to meet key information needs identified in conjunction with natural and cultural resource managers.
 - d. Work with partners to identify, evaluate, and provide science to design, implement, and evaluate adaptation strategies to address identified climate impacts (along with other stressors such as land use or land cover change) on priority resources.
 - e. Provide student researchers or post-doctoral researchers at each CASC experiences that help them understand high-priority resource management challenges, the management objectives of key stakeholders, how science can provide information about the impacts of potential policies on these management challenges and objectives, and how to interface with a broad variety of community and resource related groups.
 - f. Foster development and use of research products by conducting capacity-building activities.

- g. Provide science translation, leading communities of practice, holding scientific workshops and forums, and developing scientific outreach materials for or with resource managers and relevant partners in the region.
 - h. Provide information management capacity and infrastructure for the Center's research activities. This does not include the development of regionally specific data portals, repositories, or online data management systems. CASCs should leverage the infrastructure developed and supported by NCASC (See [Section D2.2.B. Proposal Contents – Technical Proposal Narrative](#), for details).
4. CASCs operate in a highly partnership-oriented governance environment, including the following critical partnerships:
- a. The USGS Director for each CASC convenes an “Advisory Committee” that includes representatives of government entities (state, Federal, tribal, sovereign) from the region, who provide input on regional management and science priorities, as well as outreach and partnership activities. In addition to the USGS-led Advisory Committee process, engagement of CASC Host Institutions (and, where applicable, consortium partners) and USGS regional science assets is also a crucial component of the science-management dialogue.
 - b. Research and other activities undertaken by CASC Hosts/partners and Federal staff are parts of, and should be managed as, a coherent response to information needs identified by stakeholders. Close partnership between CASC Hosts/partners and USGS CASC leadership is required in designing a scientific program and ensuring effective implementation and communication.
 - c. CASC scientific needs require expertise and perspective from across the CASC, whether this occurs at one institution or amongst several consortium partners, and USGS Centers.

Each CASC serves as a part of a national network and is expected to contribute meaningfully to network-wide efforts. Network-wide activities currently include working groups on various topics (Climate information to support State Partnerships, Communications, Program Management, etc.), an annual in person meeting, and an annual cooperators meeting.

Information and data management are crucial elements in enabling seamless interactions across the CASC Network. CASC research activities funded through this agreement or through related agreements must comply with USGS Public Access Plan and Data Management Policies ([Public Access to Results of Federally Funded Research at the U.S. Geological Survey | U.S. Geological Survey \(usgs.gov\)](#)) and NCASC Data Policies ([Data Policy and Guidance | U.S. Geological Survey \(usgs.gov\)](#)). Requirements include completion of project metadata and data management plans for CASC research projects. Research data management plans, research data products, associated metadata, and other products developed with CASC funds must be submitted to the CASC Data Steward when projects are complete. Host Institutions should work with NCASC on this function.

5. CASCs include USGS employees and Host Institution employees. CASCs may also include staff from other public or private organizations. Several CASCs have staff supported by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA tribal climate resilience liaisons). Other

DOI bureaus may provide resources (including staff) for CASC operations over time. The specific staffing and expertise at each CASC will be defined by the scientific priorities and focus of that Center and by available partnerships that facilitate access to external scientific assets. USGS/DOI staffing at CASCs may include the CASC Federal Regional Administrator and Federal Deputy Director, Science/Research Coordinator, researchers, tribal liaisons, administrative personnel, etc. Student researchers and post-doctoral researchers may also be located at the CASC. USGS staff may work onsite at CASC host institutions or may work at other locations.

[1] Based on the 2015 report of the Advisory Committee on Climate Change and Natural Resource Science, available at <https://www.sciencebase.gov/catalog/item/5c1d05d3e4b0708288c9bc2a>.

Program Website Link

<https://www.usgs.gov/ecosystems/climate-adaptation-science-centers>

B. Federal Award Information

B1. Total Funding

Estimated Total Funding

Northeast CASC base funding amount: \$7,400,000

Pacific Islands CASC base funding amount: \$9,250,000

South Central CASC base funding amount: \$7,400,000

It is anticipated that for the Northeast and South Central CASCs, a base funding amount of \$1,480,000 will be provided each year for 5 years, and that for the Pacific Islands CASC, a base funding amount of \$1,850,000 will be provided each year for 5 years.

Annually, an additional amount that is up to 20% of the overall CASC program budget for that year, may also be available for each regional CASC depending on availability of appropriated funds.

B2. Award Amount

Maximum Award

See B.1 above. For host institutions based outside of the CONUS, the addition to the base funding amount could be up to 25% to accommodate higher cost of doing business in those regions.

For all regions, supplemental funding that is up to 20% of the overall CASC program budget that year may also be available annually for each regional CASC subject to (1) availability of funds and their obligation in accordance with applicable law, (2) the Recipient showing satisfactory progress and the USGS' determination that continuation of the program would be in the best interest of the Government, (3) the submission of a SF 424 "Application for Federal Assistance" with a technical proposal describing the award objectives for the requested supplemental funding, (4) submission of a detailed budget for the requested supplemental funding; and, (5) strict adherence to the terms and conditions of the Agreement.

Minimum Award

\$ 0

Proposal Funding, Cost Sharing or Matching, and Other Requirements

1. Number of awards anticipated from this announcement: 3 (three)
 - a. Each non-Federal entity applicant may submit one proposal as a prospective Host. Candidate Host applicants may be included as consortium partners on proposals for which others have a Host role. Candidate consortium partners may be listed on multiple Host proposals.

The proposal should address the base amount above. Any additional funds over the base and proposed activities associated with those funds will be negotiated every year between CASC program leadership and the Host Institution (subject to the availability of funds appropriated by Congress and the conditions cited in B.2 above). A supplemental proposal and budget will be requested each year if additional funds are made available.

Estimated additional funding amounts for year 2026-2029 are 20% of the projected appropriation amount included in the CASC Act divided by each CASC (for host institutions based outside of the CONUS, the addition to the base funding amount could be up to 25%).

2. Cost sharing is not required in this program and will not be considered in the evaluation of applications. In the past, however, many CASC Host Institutions have provided in-kind and financial resources that augment these Federal funds.

3. It is anticipated that the CASC Hosting Agreement will be funded for one base year, with the four additional project years subject to availability of funds. Beyond the base year, each subsequent year of funding will also be contingent upon satisfactory performance (including both substantive and financial), satisfactory submission of required reporting, and the Host institution conducting an annual cooperator meeting to discuss progress during the preceding year. All renewals are at the discretion of USGS. All awards and funding under this announcement are subject to the availability of funds. “Required reporting” includes financial and annual progress reports included as standard requirements under the Terms and Conditions of USGS cooperative agreements, and any reporting required under associated grants or cooperative agreements issued non-competitively under the CASC hosting cooperative agreement to support scientific and related activities. See [Attachment B: General Terms and Conditions for detailed reporting requirements](#)
4. USGS will enter into a cooperative agreement with a single institution. This Host Institution will be responsible, where applicable, for managing subawards to consortium partners. Separately, it will also, as applicable, be the recipient of research project funding for all partner institutions and will be responsible for appropriately transferring such sub-award funds as well as providing appropriate subaward oversight (see 5 below). Proposals including consortium partners must be submitted as a single integrated proposal by the lead Host Institution.
5. Host Institutions will be eligible for separate research project funding as a component of this agreement. Research or other project activities must address the goals of the Center as described in the Centers’ Science Agenda or Strategic Plan. They must also comply with NCASC and USGS data management policies, including the preparation of Data Management Plans (see [Project Tracking Policy and Guidance | U.S. Geological Survey \(usgs.gov\)](#)). As noted above, research financial assistance agreements will be awarded only to the Host Institution, with subawards to consortium partners or others administered by the Host. The annual magnitude of federal funding anticipated to flow through the Host institution for research is estimated at approximately \$1-2 million, subject to the availability of funds. All funded research intended for publication must provide attribution of the USGS and CASC funding as specified in the guidance provided. See [Project Tracking Policy and Guidance | U.S. Geological Survey \(usgs.gov\)](#) as well as the USGS General Terms and Conditions in [Attachment B](#).
6. In order to facilitate national recognition and consistency, NCASC developed high-level communication guidance that should be implemented on websites and other public products. The CASC communications guidelines can be found here: [CASC Communications Guidelines - ScienceBase-Catalog](#)

Funding Restrictions

The reimbursement of pre-award costs is not authorized under this announcement.

Annual progress reporting that supports increased communication about non-federal entity activities and enables greater oversight of specific commitments is required. ([Project Tracking Policy and Guidance | U.S. Geological Survey \(usgs.gov\)](#)).

Also reference section D.6 Funding Restrictions.

B3. Anticipated Award Funding and Dates

Anticipated Award Date

June 30, 2025

B4. Number of Awards

Expected Number of Awards

3

B5. Type of Award

Funding Instrument Type

CA - Cooperative Agreement

Financial assistance instrument: Cooperative Agreement.

Substantial involvement on the part of USGS is anticipated for the successful completion of the objectives to be funded. In particular, it is anticipated that USGS will: Regularly review progress under the award and provide project guidance as appropriate; direct and/or redirect work because of interrelationships with other related CASC projects; provide guidance for communications with project stakeholders; provide guidance regarding project staffing needs and host institution capacities (e.g. sufficient support staff and resources to accomplish planned objectives); and support compliance with USGS and CASC data management requirements. This includes identifying points of contact and designing appropriate communication methods with Tribal, Federal, and state agencies, and providing guidance in ensuring that the communication activities follow regional, national, and network communication guidance and priorities.

Announcement Type

Initial

C. Eligibility Information

C1. Eligible Applicants

Eligible Applicants

- 00 – State governments
- 12 – Nonprofits having a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education
- 13 – Nonprofits without 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education
- 01 – County governments
- 02 – City or township governments
- 05 – Independent school districts
- 06 – Public and State controlled institutions of higher education
- 04 – Special district governments
- 20 – Private institutions of higher education

Additional Information on Eligibility

Eligible Applicants

1. Non-Federal entities eligible to submit proposals under this Announcement include state, not-for-profit, local government, and academic institutions. USGS entities may not submit proposals and may not be listed as formal partners on proposals. Federal agencies may collaborate in the execution of research projects, but should not be a Host or a consortium partner; *Federal partners must receive money through other methods as appropriate and not through Federal financial assistance* (i.e., the CASC hosting cooperative agreement).
2. Any eligible non-Federal entity, organization, or consortium interested in hosting a Center in the identified CASC region may apply; consortium partners are not required to be physically located within their corresponding CASC region. However, proposals involving institutions located outside the focal region should provide strong evidence of experience and capability to conduct research and maintain active partnerships with resource management stakeholders within the focal region, either directly or through other consortium members.
3. Proposals may be submitted for a single institution or by one institution serving as the CASC Host, along with additional consortium partners. Consortium partners should only be included if they will play a clear and substantive role in CASC strategy and operations. Examples include the provision of cooperative agreement funding for faculty and students or post-doctoral researchers for research activities related to the CASC science agenda.

C2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost Sharing / Matching Requirement

No

C3. Other

General Expectations, Requirements, and Conditions

1. The USGS will only enter into a Hosting Agreements with an applicant that meets the following criteria and standards:
 - a. Provide appropriate regionally relevant expertise responsive to the science priorities identified by regional stakeholders in the science plan and experience to achieve the CASC mission, with the goal of fostering collaborative activities and engaging expertise from across the Host and partner institutions. Science needs for each region are described in [Attachment C](#). Ensure the CASC Host Institution and consortium partners (where applicable) are able to support the science needs of the entire CASC region.
 - b. Demonstrate institutional commitment to a multi-disciplinary and organizationally effective science and management support program, through the direct involvement of senior representatives of multiple departments, colleges, etc. or higher-level institutional sponsorship and engagement (e.g., Dean, Vice President of Research, etc.)
 - c. Demonstrate commitment to the actionable science/co-development model and make available relevant science capabilities that complement and enhance USGS and DOI scientific computing and data visualization capacity and that of other science partners.
2. Demonstrate a willingness to engage as partners with the CASC Federal Regional Administrator and other USGS staff in implementing a research portfolio that meets high-priority regional needs.
3. Clearly outline in the proposal the core staff and their activities that assist with the implementation of the cooperative agreement. Core staff should include the following:
 - a. Principal Investigator* – month(s) of salary
 - b. Deputy Host Institution Director or Program Manager – Full Time
 - c. Communications – 75% or More Time

* USGS awards identify the primary individual responsible for a project as the “Principal Investigator”. However, in the CASC operations, this individual is usually referred to as the “Host Institution Director.”

Network-Wide Activities and Meetings: The Climate Adaptation Science Center (CASC) Host Institutions will be required to participate in and assist with the planning and coordination of cooperator meetings annually and external reviews every five years. These meetings will focus on the CASC hosting cooperative agreement activities, help ensure appropriate oversight of public resources, and support USGS decisions regarding annual funding for and selection of new host institutions. CASC Consortia staff also participate in a variety of CASC-wide activities including (but not limited to): partnership and science meetings, working groups (communications, project coordination, etc.), an annual in person meeting, and an annual cooperators meeting.

Excluded Parties: USGS conducts a review of the SAM.gov Exclusions database for all applicant entities and their key project personnel prior to award. USGS cannot award funds to entities or their key project personnel identified in the SAM.gov. Exclusions database as ineligible, prohibited/restricted or otherwise excluded from receiving Federal contracts, certain subcontracts, and certain Federal assistance and benefits, as their ineligibility condition applies to this Federal program.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility: Proposals should consider incorporating the principles of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion and demonstrate a plan to carry out work in ways that acknowledge existing legacies of social and environmental inequities and support actions that address them, including but not limited to the inclusion of frontline community members in setting project priorities. Ensuring justice and equity means paying particular attention to populations most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, which are often low-income communities, communities of color, indigenous and tribal communities, those already overburdened by pollution, those who lack economic or social opportunity, and people facing disenfranchisement.

Executive Order 14008 Sec. 219: *To secure an equitable economic future, the United States must ensure that environmental and economic justice are key considerations in how we govern. That means investing and building a clean energy economy that creates well-paying union jobs, turning disadvantaged communities—historically marginalized and overburdened—into healthy, thriving communities, and undertaking robust actions to mitigate climate change while preparing for the impacts of climate change across rural, urban, and Tribal areas. Agencies shall make achieving environmental justice part of their missions by developing programs, policies, and activities to address the disproportionately high and adverse human health, environmental, climate-related and other cumulative impacts on disadvantaged communities, as well as the accompanying economic challenges of such impacts. It is therefore the policy of my Administration to secure environmental justice and spur economic opportunity for disadvantaged communities that have been historically marginalized and overburdened by pollution and underinvestment in housing, transportation, water and wastewater infrastructure, and health care.*

D. Application and Submission Information

Grants.gov Application Submission and Receipt Procedures

Grants.gov Application Submission and Receipt Procedures

This section provides the application submission and receipt instructions for U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) program applications. Please read the following instructions carefully and completely.

1. Electronic Delivery

USGS is participating in the Grants.gov initiative to provide the grant community with a single site to find and apply for grant funding opportunities. USGS encourages applicants to submit their applications online through Grants.gov.

2. How to Register to Apply through Grants.gov

a. *Instructions:* Read the instructions below about registering to apply for USGS funds. Applicants should read the registration instructions carefully and prepare the information requested before beginning the registration process. Reviewing and assembling the required information before beginning the registration process will alleviate last-minute searches for required information.

Organizations must have an active System for Award Management (SAM) registration, and Grants.gov account to apply for grants. If individual applicants are eligible to apply for this funding opportunity, then you may begin with step 2, Create a Grants.gov Account, listed below.

Creating a Grants.gov account can be completed online in minutes, however to apply for federal funding, your SAM registration must be fully processed, which can take an average of 7-10 business days after all information has been entered in SAM. Please make sure to begin the process early. An organization's registration should be done in sufficient time to ensure it does not impact the entity's ability to meet required application submission deadlines.

Complete organization instructions can be found on Grants.gov here:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html>

1) *Register with SAM:* All organizations applying online through Grants.gov must register with the System for Award Management (SAM). Failure to register with SAM will prevent your organization from applying through Grants.gov. SAM registration must be renewed annually. Access <https://www.sam.gov> and complete the online SAM registration process to obtain a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI/SAM) or verify if your organization already has one. If your organization already has a UEI/SAM, you may move to step 2 to register with Grants.gov. It takes 7-10 business days to receive a UEI after all information has been entered in SAM. Ensure you enter your EBiz POC name and EBiz POC email in SAM and your organization/entity registration process is complete in SAM, this will allow you to register with Grants.gov. For more detailed instructions for registering with SAM, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html>.

2) *Create a Grants.gov Account*: The next step is to register an account with Grants.gov. Follow the on-screen instructions or refer to the detailed instructions here: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration.html>. Note: It takes one day (after you enter the EBiz POC name and EBiz POC email in SAM) to receive a UEI (SAM), which will allow you to register with Grants.gov and apply for federal funding.

3) *Add a Profile to a Grants.gov Account*: A profile in Grants.gov corresponds to a single applicant organization the user represents (i.e., an applicant) or an individual applicant. If you work for or consult with multiple organizations and have a profile for each, you may log in to one Grants.gov account to access all of your grant applications. To add an organizational profile to your Grants.gov account, enter the UEI Number for the organization in the UEI (Unique Entity Identifier) field if you selected the Organization Applicant Profile option. For more detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/add-profile.html>

4) *EBiz POC Authorized Profile Roles*: After you register with Grants.gov and create an Organization Applicant Profile, the organization applicant's request for Grants.gov roles and access is sent to the EBiz POC. The EBiz POC will then log in to Grants.gov and authorize the appropriate roles, which may include the AOR role, thereby giving you permission to complete and submit applications on behalf of the organization. You will be able to submit your application online any time after you have been assigned the AOR role. For more detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/authorize-roles.html>

5) *Track Role Status*: To track your role request, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/track-role-status.html>

b. *Electronic Signature*: When applications are submitted through Grants.gov, the name of the organization applicant with the AOR role that submitted the application is inserted into the signature line of the application, serving as the electronic signature. The EBiz POC **must** authorize people who are able to make legally binding commitments on behalf of the organization as a user with the AOR role; **this step is often missed and it is crucial for valid and timely submissions.**

3. How to Submit an Application to USGS via Grants.gov

Grants.gov applicants can apply online using Workspace. Workspace is a shared, online environment where members of a grant team may simultaneously access and edit different webforms within an application. For each notice of funding opportunity, you can create individual instances of a workspace.

Below is an overview of applying on Grants.gov. For access to complete instructions on how to apply for opportunities, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/workspace-overview.html>

1) *Create a Workspace*: Creating a workspace allows you to complete it online and route it through your organization for review before submitting.

2) *Complete a Workspace*: Add participants to the workspace to work on the application together, complete all the required forms online or by downloading PDF versions, and check

for errors before submission. The Workspace progress bar will display the state of your application process as you apply. As you apply using Workspace, you may click the blue question mark icon near the upper-right corner of each page to access context-sensitive help.

a. *Adobe Reader*: If you decide not to apply by filling out webforms you can download individual PDF forms in Workspace. The individual PDF forms can be downloaded and saved to your local device storage, network drive(s), or external drives, then accessed through Adobe Reader.

NOTE: Visit the Adobe Software Compatibility page on Grants.gov to download the appropriate version of the software

at: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html>

b. *Mandatory Fields in Forms*: In the forms, you will note fields marked with an asterisk and a different background color. These fields are mandatory fields that must be completed to successfully submit your application.

c. *Complete SF-424 Fields First*: The forms are designed to fill in common required fields across other forms, such as the applicant name, address, and Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) Number. Once it is completed, the information will transfer to the other forms.

3) *Submit a Workspace*: An application may be submitted through workspace by clicking the Sign and Submit button on the Manage Workspace page, under the Forms tab. Grants.gov recommends submitting your application package at least 24-48 hours prior to the close date to provide you with time to correct any potential technical issues that may disrupt the application submission.

4) *Track a Workspace Submission*: After successfully submitting a workspace application, a Grants.gov Tracking Number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) is automatically assigned to the application. The number will be listed on the Confirmation page that is generated after submission. Using the tracking number, access the Track My Application page under the Applicants tab or the Details tab in the submitted workspace.

For additional training resources, including video tutorials, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-training.html>

Applicant Support: Grants.gov provides applicants 24/7 support via the toll-free number 1-800-518-4726 and email at support@grants.gov. For questions related to the specific grant opportunity, contact the number listed in the application package of the grant you are applying for.

If you are experiencing difficulties with your submission, it is best to call the Grants.gov Support Center and get a ticket number. The Support Center ticket number will assist the USGS with tracking your issue and understanding background information on the issue.

4. Timely Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission

a. *Online Submission*. All applications must be received by the due date established for each program. Proof of timely submission is automatically recorded by Grants.gov. An electronic date/time stamp is generated within the system when the application is successfully received by

Grants.gov. The applicant with the AOR role who submitted the application will receive an acknowledgement of receipt and a tracking number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) from Grants.gov with the successful transmission of their application. This applicant with the AOR role will also receive the official date/time stamp and Grants.gov Tracking number in an email serving as proof of their timely submission.

When USGS successfully retrieves the application from Grants.gov, and acknowledges the download of submissions, Grants.gov will provide an electronic acknowledgment of receipt of the application to the email address of the applicant with the AOR role who submitted the application. Again, proof of timely submission shall be the official date and time that Grants.gov receives your application. Applications received by Grants.gov after the established due date for the program will be considered late and will not be considered for funding by USGS.

Applicants using slow internet, such as dial-up connections, should be aware that transmission can take some time before Grants.gov receives your application. Again, Grants.gov will provide either an error or a successfully received transmission in the form of an email sent to the applicant with the AOR role attempting to submit the application. The Grants.gov Support Center reports that some applicants end the transmission because they think that nothing is occurring during the transmission process. Please be patient and give the system time to process the application.

D1. Address to Request Application Package

1. Requirements for application documents can be found in this announcement and on Grants.gov.
2. Preapplications will not be accepted nor reviewed.
3. Electronic Application Requirement – Final applications must be submitted electronically via Grants.gov (<http://www.grants.gov>) by the due date indicated in this announcement. Hard copy/paper submissions will NOT be accepted. Electronic copies submitted via email will NOT be accepted under any circumstances.
4. All proposals must be submitted electronically through Grants.gov on or before: **Monday, February 3, 2025 at 4:00 PM Eastern Daylight Time**
5. Throughout the application period, an applicant may submit a revised or corrected proposal through Grants.gov. Include a cover letter as the first page of the proposal stating that the proposal is revised and indicating that the previous submittal is to be withdrawn from consideration. Such submissions must be completed by Monday, **February 3, 2025 at 4:00 PM Eastern Daylight Time.**

D2. Content and Form of Application Submission

SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance

Applicants must submit the appropriate Standard Form (SF)-424, Application for Federal Assistance. The required application forms are available with this announcement on Grants.gov. The SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance must be complete, signed, and dated. Do not include any proprietary or personally identifiable information. Please note: Enter

only the amount requested from this Federal program in the “Federal” funding box on the SF-424 Application form. Applicants may include funding from other federal sources in the “Other” box.

Any applicant organization that has not completed the financial assistance certifications and representations within their SAM.gov registration must submit the appropriate signed and dated Assurances form. All of the required application forms are available with this announcement on Grants.gov.

Project Abstract Summary

In accordance with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Memoranda M-21-20 and M-22-02, Federal agencies are now required to provide complete and accurate financial assistance award descriptions within USAspending.gov. As such, the Department of the Interior is requiring its bureaus and offices to provide a Project Abstract Summary for all financial assistance awards to include the below bulleted information. **Include this Project Abstract Summary alongside your proposal submitted via Grants.gov.** Project Abstract Summary character limitation as 1 page or less (no more than ~4000 characters) and use of 12 pt. font and Times New Roman is recommended. All of the below bullets need to be listed and addressed. Upon issuance of the cooperative agreement, this Project Abstract Summary will be publicly available at USAspending.gov.

- Project title
- A plain language description Award purpose (avoid acronyms or Federal or agency-specific terminology);
- Activities to be performed;
- Deliverables and Expected Outcomes;
- Intended beneficiary(ies) as well as
- Subrecipient activities, if known or specified at the time of award

Additional Forms

Project Narrative

A. Proposal Preparation

1. **Proposal Components:** Each proposal must include separate components, preceded by a **title page** that provides basic information regarding the submitting organization, including name, physical address, and contact information for a single primary point of contact for the proposal:
 - a. Summary of Deliverables and Key Outcomes (in addition to the Project Abstract Summary mentioned above)
 - b. Technical Proposal Narrative
 - c. Budget Tables
 - d. Budget Justification text
 - e. Letters of support
2. **Proposal Format:** The proposal summary of deliverables and key outcomes, technical narrative, budget tables, budget justification, and letters of support **must be combined**

together into one PDF document, in the order noted above, and submitted through Grants.gov. Applications **must be not more than 20 pages**, (including figures and tables, but NOT including the budget narrative and supporting budget documents such as an applicant's official indirect cost rate agreement and documentation of fringe benefit rates, and a data management plan), **using Times New Roman not smaller than 12-point font, single-spaced, with one-inch page margins**. Excess pages will not be evaluated. All pages of the application shall be numbered. All text, figures, and tables shall be sized to fit on 8½" by 11" paper. The standard forms noted above, budget documents, and letters of support do **not** count toward the 20-page limit. Budget items and narratives may be included within the 20-page limit or attached to the 20-page narrative and still be accepted. The application shall be in color as needed for review by peer review panel members.

B. Proposal Contents – Summary of Deliverables and Key Outcomes and Technical Proposal Narrative

Provide a summary of your proposal's deliverables and key outcomes and provide detailed information to describe your organization's ability to host a CASC. Include section titles at the beginning of each section. If additional information about your natural resource and climate change research program and partnerships can be found online, refer to the appropriate links. Exceeding the page limit provides no benefit, as the excess pages will not be evaluated.

These narratives should address the following elements:

1. **Consortium Skills and Interactions:** NCASC seeks consortia in which all members will play an active and direct role in conducting and overseeing research projects and related CASC activities undertaken by the consortium. Proposals that include multi-institution consortia should address the role/skill set of each partner institution and how the proposal principals will interact.
 - a. Identify the individual at the Host Institution who will serve as Principal Investigator. Describe this person's role and what funding (for the Principal Investigator or other staff) is requested to support this requirement. Describe why this department/center as a host "home" and individual as university leader are best suited to addressing the science challenges facing the CASC.
 - b. As appropriate, identify the proposal principals (Leadership Team), who should include, at a minimum, one senior investigator from each consortium partner. Identify each principal's individual strengths and how their expertise complements, supplements, or amplifies that of the other leadership team members. Describe how the Leadership Team members will coordinate and interact with one another. Provide brief descriptions of the current research activities (e.g., awards, projects) of each consortium partner principal.
 - c. Describe institutional-level commitment to the CASC, including how the institution will coordinate and work across Departments, Colleges and other administrative units within the institution.
 - d. Describe the governance strategy and activities for the consortium team, including proposed modes of interaction between Host and consortium partners and between all partners and the CASC Federal Regional Administrator and staff.

- e. Describe the institutional context in which the CASC would be located; that is, list other departments and programs that would be closely associated, including other Federal or non-Federal partners (e.g., NOAA Cooperative Institutes or USDA Forest Service labs), etc. Describe any anticipated activities or strategies to maximize the benefits from and leveraging of these assets. The roles of all partners (Federal and non-Federal) must be clearly identified.
 - f. Describe how proposal principals would enable and encourage other faculty, staff, and students to participate in research activities. Describe how the consortium leadership would facilitate awareness of and potential engagement in responding to requests for research proposals issued by a CASC.
 - g. Identify any involvement of proposal principals in activities or projects of:
 - i. The National Climate Adaptation Science Center (NCASC)
 - ii. Regional Climate Adaptation Science Centers (CASC)
 - iii. USDA Regional Climate Hubs (Hubs)
 - iv. NOAA Regional Integrated Science and Assessment (RISA) center(s)
 - v. Other entities whose mission reflects similar goals, providing information for adaptation planning and decision making for natural and/or cultural resources
2. **Science:** Explain how the team will address the science priorities and align with the strategic goals of the CASC as well as the nature of the science required for climate change related adaptation or resource management decision-making in the region, including items described in [Section C.C3.1.b](#), and the most effective approaches for meeting those needs. Identify how specific university or consortium skills match up with needs and complement USGS resources. Describe how the proposal, with details provided for individual members of the team, will effectively support research and related activities across the relevant CASC region. Identify new capabilities that need to be developed regionally, as appropriate. Provide at least one case example for each of the proposal principals that involves identification of climate impacts or adaptation strategies for natural or cultural resources.
- a. Explain the proposal team’s understanding of actionable science” or “usable science.” Describe how the consortium would facilitate and foster actionable science approaches in CASC-funded activities. Provide at least one case example for each of the proposal principals that illustrates actionable science principles.
 - b. Describe any proposed activities to generate and foster regional dialogue and information sharing with cultural or natural resource managers on climate impacts and adaptation science.
 - c. Describe the involvement of consortium partners, and especially the proposal principals, in activities related to American Indians, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, or other indigenous peoples.
 - d. As part of being included in the CASC Network, CASC Consortia staff also participate in a variety of CASC-wide activities including (but not limited to): partnership and science meetings, working groups (communications, project coordination, inclusive mentoring), an annual in person meeting, and an annual cooperators meeting. Please budget accordingly.

3. **Capacity Building**

- a. List and describe the broad research areas in which capacity building activities are proposed (e.g., ecological modeling, vulnerability assessment). Identify the intended physical location(s) and institutional affiliation(s) for the proposed researchers.
- b. Describe the strategy for linking capacity building activities among multiple departments or institutions. Describe specific actions that will be taken to engage participants across institutions, with the result being to enhance cross-disciplinary learning, to offer new collaboration opportunities, to invite joint funding opportunities, and to show the efficient and effective utilization of unique capacities that each university brings to the consortium. Describe any strategies or plans to facilitate peer-to-peer learning and center cohesion.
- c. Describe the proposed role of the CASC Federal Regional Administrator in capacity building activities. Describe any proposed mechanisms or opportunities for the CASC Federal Regional Administrator and researchers to participate in these activities.
- d. Describe the process by which outcomes will be tracked and evaluated, so as to ensure that their activities will be aligned with and advance CASC priorities. Describe any mechanisms for tracking capacity building activities and informing the CASC Federal Regional Administrator and NCASC of these accomplishments.
- e. Describe any programs or activities in place or proposed that will foster the engagement in CASC programs of American Indians, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, or other researchers from communities under-represented in the climate science field.

4. **Communications**

- a. Describe plans/processes for providing and supporting a website for the CASC. Include strategy for hosting, content updates, and maintenance. Note that the website must follow the information stated in the NCASC communication guidelines.
- b. Describe plans/processes for complying with USGS and DOI communication requirements, such as reporting weekly highlights of upcoming activities, coordinating press releases (as appropriate), and incorporating a review of CASC communication products with NCASC and USGS Communication staff.
- c. Describe any additional proposed communications and outreach activities and/or staff and describe how this support would be coordinated/integrated with the regional USGS CASC leadership and/or USGS-led NCASC activities.

5. **Administrative**

- a. As appropriate, describe physical space to be made available to serve the needs of current CASC staff (as described above), plus proposed students and post-doctoral researchers, and reasonable anticipated growth. Describe how any increase in the number of CASC staff will be accommodated. Describe the availability of the proposed space and any actions needed before occupancy.
 - i. If space is to be provided at the Host Institution, describe any clerical/administrative support that will be provided to the CASC. Describe whether normal maintenance support (e.g., replacing light bulbs, hanging

- white boards, moving Ethernet connections, etc.) will be provided under the agreement. Be specific as to activities and charges not to be provided.
- b. Describe the indirect charges to be applied to funds received under the Hosting Agreement, including any pass-through funds directed to other partners. Describe the indirect charges to be applied to research project awards made via the Hosting Agreement.
 - c. Describe the administrative and awards management support to be provided to the CASC, including communication with USGS staff.
 - i. Describe the staffing strategy for CASC award and subaward processing. For example, will there be a single point of contact for this activity, or will it be allocated among multiple analysts in the relevant funds management office? Will there be a single, identified “CASC Awards Manager”? Describe the training and experience of any awards management staff, especially those with dedicated CASC responsibilities. Describe the average processing time between receipt of award by the Host and issuance of subawards.
6. **Endorsement Letters:** Any endorsement letters should describe an interaction between a proposal principal at the Host or consortium partner institution and the endorsing entity that illustrates actionable science principles. Proposals may include up to ten (10) such letters, each of which should not exceed two pages. **Do Not Provide Generic Endorsement Letters.**
7. **Format for Resume/Curriculum Vitae:** Provide a biographical sketch, resume, or curriculum vitae for the Host Institution Director/Principal Investigator and for each member of the proposal Leadership Team including, as appropriate, at least one senior investigator from each consortium partner. Recommended information includes - Education and Training, Research and Professional Experience with special emphasis on activities at the science/management or science/policy interface, Publications and Synergistic Activities. The biographical sketch should be limited to two (2) pages each in length, **excluding publications listings.** The vitae should include a presentation of academic and research credentials, as applicable; e.g., earned degrees, teaching experience, employment history, professional activities, honors and awards, and grants received. A chronological list of **all** publications in **refereed journals** during the past **four (4) years**, including those in press, must be included. Also, list only those **non-refereed** technical publications that have **relevance** to the proposed project. All authors should be listed in the same order as they appear on each paper cited, along with the publication title and complete citation as these usually appear in journals.
8. **Identification of Potential Conflicts of Interest or Bias in Selection of Reviewers:** In order to enable USGS to avoid conflicts in its review process, provide a tabular list of collaborators for all senior/key personnel. This should include all persons who are, or who have been, collaborators or co-authors with leadership team members on a research project, book or book article, report, abstract, or paper during the 48 months preceding the submission of this proposal. For publications or collaborations with more than 10 authors or participants, only list those individuals in the core group with whom the leadership team

member interacted on a regular basis while the research was being done. Also, list any individuals who are currently, or have been, co-editors with leadership team members on a special issue of a journal, compendium, or conference proceedings during the 24 months preceding the submission of this application. Also, list students or post-doctoral researchers whom the individual has supervised directly. If there are no collaborators or co-editors to report, state “None.”

Provide a single alphabetized list for the entire Leadership Team.

Leadership Team member name	Collaborators: Last name, First name/initial	Institution

Applicants must submit the appropriate SF-424 Budget Information form and a corresponding detailed Budget Narrative. For non-construction programs or projects, applicants must complete and submit the SF-424A, “Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs” form. All of the required application forms are available with this announcement on Grants.gov. Federal award recipients and subrecipients are subject to the federal award guidance and cost principles in 2 CFR 200.

Note regarding updates to [2 CFR 200](#) effective October 1, 2024

Please be aware that projects anticipated for funding under this NOFO will be subject to the revised Uniform Guidance, effective 10/1/2024. For reference, resources are included below to help determine how this may affect your proposal and budgeted costs.

OMB’s [revised Uniform Guidance launch](#) was on April 4, 2024. To view the announcement OMB made on April 4, 2024 introducing the finalized Uniform Guidance, visit [here](#).

The [final rule, Guidance for Federal Assistance](#), was published to the Federal Register on April 22, 2024 (89 FR 30046).

OMB also released [a redline document showing the 2024 revisions](#), and issued accompanying [implementation memorandum](#) M-24-11, as well as [reference guides](#).

Detailed Budget Narrative

The project budget shall include detailed information on all cost categories and must clearly identify all estimated project costs. Unit costs shall be provided for all base budget items including the cost of work to be provided by contractors or sub-recipients. In addition, applicants shall include a narrative description of all items included in the project budget, including the value of in-kind contributions of goods and services provided to complete the project when cost share is identified to be included. Object Class Categories (cost categories) include those listed on the SF424A or SF424C.

Any over base funding (supplemental funding) budget narratives and budget tables will be submitted annually and will be negotiated and subject to the availability of funds and the conditions described previously in this announcement. For a more detailed description of the level of detail required in the budget narrative, see 2 below.

Proposal Budget Tables and Detailed Budget

The budget documentation should clearly and succinctly describe the proposed activity, provide a breakdown of associated budgeted costs (ex. by unit quantity and price), and explain how those costs were determined/what cost estimates were based on (ex. quotes, official non-Federal entity policy and/or posted rates, GSA rates, etc.) for ALL budgeted Federal costs under the award regardless of the magnitude of the cost.

It is encouraged that applicants utilize the budget table and budget narrative templates posted at <https://www.usgs.gov/programs/climate-adaptation-science-centers/project-tracking-policy-and-guidance> to ensure that all required information is received to successfully review and make an award.

1. Budget and Budget Tables:

Proposals from multi-institution consortia should reflect the prime Host applicant's budget on the SF-424A, with subaward budget figures reflected under Other Direct Costs or Contractual, as appropriate. Separate, clearly labeled, versions for each subaward should also be submitted, corresponding to the budget figures on the prime applicant's SF-424A. Project years should be broken out in separate columns, and totals should sum to the appropriate Object Class Category total. Two SF-424A forms may be submitted for a single recipient entity if additional space is needed to reflect all project years (ie. more than 4 project years).

2. Detailed Budget Narrative/ Budget justification

Note regarding updates to 2 CFR 200 effective October 1, 2024:

Please be aware that projects anticipated for funding under this NOFO will be subject to the revised Uniform Guidance, effective 10/1/2024. While some changes are referenced in this NOFO, this is not all inclusive. For a complete view of all changes that will take place and to determine how this will affect your proposal and budgeted costs, reference 2 CFR 200 as well as the resources linked below.

OMB's [revised Uniform Guidance launch](#) was on April 4, 2024. To view the announcement OMB made on April 4, 2024 introducing the finalized Uniform Guidance, visit [here](#).

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- a. Provide a detailed budget narrative covering all five years of the proposed project. Clearly state Object Class Category (Personnel, Fringe, Travel, etc.) totals as well as yearly totals, and show how all costs sum to these totals. The detailed narrative shall correspond to the information provided in the budget and tables described above. There is no page limit on the budget information.
- b. The budget narrative should provide a **detailed breakdown, justification, and cost-basis** of all budgeted award costs, as described below for each object class category. Providing this information will help avoid delays in processing an award, as an award will not be issued until all required information is provided.
 1. PERSONNEL - Salaries and wages: Applicants may wish to request Federal funds to support institution employees who will be associated with the CASC, such as the Host Institution Director/Principal Investigator, undergraduate and graduate student researchers, post-doctoral researchers, communications manager, program manager, business manager, clerical staff not covered under indirect costs, etc. The narrative should:
 - Identify individuals by project title/role/responsibility and name, if known; estimate hours or percent of time for each project member for each project year; specify the rate of compensation proposed for each person and provide the **basis for the proposed rate** (ex. current base salary rate prorated to time effort on the project). If the Principal Investigator is contributing time but not requesting funding under the Federal award, that can be stated here as well.
 - Include an explanation of the amounts included for projected increases, such as cost of living increases (per non-Federal entity policy), if the rate of pay shown is higher than the current rate of pay.
 - Tuition remission and other forms of compensation paid as, or in lieu of, wages to students performing necessary work are allowable provided that the tuition or other payments are reasonable compensation for the work performed and are conditioned explicitly upon the performance of the work. Tuition and/or tuition remission should be applied in a manner consistent with non-Federal entity official policy and should be located under the OTHER DIRECT COST object class category.
 2. FRINGE - Fringe benefits/labor overhead: Show yearly totals, by individual. Indicate the rates/amounts in conformance with normal accounting procedures. Explain what costs are covered in this category. State the basis for the rates used. Reference where rates can be found (ex. applicant's indirect cost rate agreement), provide documentation of rates utilized when available, or link to rates posted online. Indicate whether rates used are for proposal budgeting purposes only and if actual costs will be charged to the Federal award.
 3. TRAVEL: Show the number of trips requested by year and indicate yearly totals. Break out each trip to include how the trip relates to project objectives. For each trip, itemize the estimated travel costs (lodging, airfare,

per diem, and so forth). Include trip origin, trip destination, the number of people traveling and who is traveling (if known), per diem rates, the cost of transportation, and any miscellaneous expenses for each trip. A cost basis or explanation of how budgeted costs were determined/selected should be provided for all travel costs (ex. GSA rates, quotes, non-Federal entity travel policy, etc.). For travel requested to meetings or conferences, include a description of the benefit to the proposed project. Failure to provide this information may result in a determination of the cost as unallowable. Calculations of other transportation costs (such as charges for use of applicant owned vehicles or vehicle rental costs) should also be provided, including how the cost was determined.

4. **EQUIPMENT:** Equipment means “tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost which equals or exceeds the lesser of the capitalization level established by the non-Federal entity for financial statement purposes, or \$5,000.” Show the cost of all equipment necessary for achieving the objectives of the project. Each item should be itemized and include a full justification and a dealer or manufacturer quote, if available. Title to equipment will be vested per the provisions set forth in 2 CFR 200.313 Equipment in accordance with the Terms and Conditions of the award.

NOTE: Equipment and supply thresholds will change with the implementation of the revised Uniform Guidance effective October 1, 2024.

Updates to [2 CFR 200](#) effective October 1, 2024:

Please be aware that projects anticipated for funding under this NOFO will be subject to the revised Uniform Guidance, effective 10/1/2024. For reference, resources are included below to help determine how this may affect your proposal and budgeted costs.

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OMB also released [a redline document showing the 2024 revisions](#), and issued accompanying [implementation memorandum](#) M-24-11, as well as [reference guides](#).

5. **SUPPLIES:** A supply means all tangible personal property other than those described in Equipment. A computing device is a supply if the acquisition

cost is less than the lesser of the capitalization level established by the non-Federal entity for financial statement purposes or \$5,000, regardless of the length of its useful life. Enter the number of items and cost per item. Break out the cost of all supplies (ex. office, laboratory, computing, and field supplies) separately. Provide additional detail on any specific item that represents a significant portion of the proposed amount. If parts for the fabrication of equipment are proposed, list parts and materials required for each alongside their respective costs and identify this cost separately from other supply items. The supply cost breakdown should show how supply costs sum to yearly totals.

NOTE: Equipment and supply thresholds will change with the implementation of the revised Uniform Guidance effective October 1, 2024.

Updates to [2 CFR 200](#) effective October 1, 2024:

Please be aware that projects anticipated for funding under this NOFO will be subject to the revised Uniform Guidance, effective 10/1/2024. For reference, resources are included below to help determine how this may affect your proposal and budgeted costs.

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OMB also released [a redline document showing the 2024 revisions](#), and issued accompanying [implementation memorandum](#) M-24-11, as well as [reference guides](#).

6. **CONTRACTUAL - Services or consultants:** Identify the project tasks or project area for which the services would be used. List the contemplated consultants by name, the estimated amount of time required, and the quoted rate per day or hour. If known, state whether the consultant's rate is the same as she/he has received for similar services or under other Government contracts or assistance awards.
 - SUBAWARDS may be placed under the Contractual OR Other Direct Cost object class category as dictated by non-Federal entity proposal preparation procedures. For sub-awards, break down costs by object class category and provide the same level of detail for each category as described in this section. All subaward costs (Personnel, Fringe, Indirect Costs, etc.) should be included underneath of the Contractual or Other

Direct Cost category of the prime recipient's budget and should not be merged with Object Class Categories of the prime recipient (Personnel, Fringe, Travel, etc.). As noted above, separate budget tables or SF-424A forms should be provided for each subaward.

7. OTHER DIRECT COSTS (ODC): Itemize the different types of costs not included elsewhere, such as shipping, computing services, equipment use charges, publication charges, tuition remission costs, participant support costs, etc. and explain the cost's applicability to the project. Provide complete yearly breakdowns with an explanation of how the cost was determined/estimated. Where possible, breakdown by item, unit or time period costs, and rate. Provide source of rate, quote, and/or posted rates for ODC items, as applicable.
 - Publication costs - Show the estimated cost of dissemination/publishing the results of the research. State the number of publications expected and in what project year. State the basis for the budgeted cost, including the anticipated journal, method, and/or location of publication, if known.
 - Tuition remission – Provide the basis for the amount budgeted, broken out by year. Tuition remission should be applied in a manner consistent with non-Federal entity official policy, to be affirmed in the budget narrative.
8. TOTAL DIRECT COSTS: Sum of 1 – 7 above.
9. INDIRECT COSTS - Facilities & administrative (F&A) cost: State the proposed rate, modified total direct cost (MTDC) base, and total proposed amount for allowable indirect costs based on the cost principles applicable to the non-Federal entity. Also state which costs, if any, were excluded from the MTDC base.

NOTE: A copy of the official negotiated indirect cost agreement with the Federal Government should be included in the application package alongside the applicant's budget documents to support the rate used. If an applicant does not have a prior negotiated indirect cost rate, and proposes to utilize the de minimis rate of 10% of MTDCs per the provisions outlined in [2 CFR 200.414 \(f\)](#), this should be stated and explained in the budget narrative. If an applicant budgets indirect costs in a manner other than described above, the applicant will be required to provide documentation to support the rate. If sufficient documentation to support the calculation of indirect cost rates is not provided, an award cannot be made.

NOTE: The de minimis indirect cost rate will increase with the implementation of the revised Uniform Guidance effective October 1, 2024.

NOTE: Indirect cost rates negotiated after the effective date of the revised

Uniform Guidance may reflect an increased MTDC base threshold to charge indirect costs on subawards, however, indirect costs will be honored as approved on the recipient's official negotiated indirect cost rate agreement. In other words, this change allowable under the revised 2 CFR 200 Uniform Guidance will be honored only after reflected on the applicant's official negotiated indirect cost rate agreement.

Updates to [2 CFR 200](#) effective October 1, 2024:

Please be aware that projects anticipated for funding under this NOFO will be subject to the revised Uniform Guidance, effective 10/1/2024. For reference, resources are included below to help determine how this may affect your proposal and budgeted costs.

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OMB also released [a redline document showing the 2024 revisions](#), and issued accompanying [implementation memorandum](#) M-24-11, as well as [reference guides](#).

10. TOTAL FEDERAL SHARE: Sum of total Federal shares of Direct and Indirect Costs

11. APPLICANTS CONTRIBUTION: The nature and value of all in-kind, cost share, or matching contributions by the Host Institution may be outlined and described for each budget category. If provided, this information should be included subsequent to the budget narrative for the federal share of award costs. Examples of in-kind support include researcher, student, or staff salary or assistantships; facilities or rent; equipment; or other non-Federal support. If the budget includes support from another organization outside of the Host Institution, a letter from that organization may be provided as confirmation.

12. State total of Federal and non-Federal funds, if applicable

Select Items of Cost:

1. Meals and Refreshments: Per 2 CFR 200.432 Conferences, cost of meals and refreshments are allowable given they are **appropriate and necessary**. However, these costs require a strong level of justification. If requested, include the following in the justification: participants (cannot be Federal employees), appropriateness of the cost in terms of the project objectives, need/necessity of the cost, if this cost is associated with a working event and how it pertains to the

award objectives, if per diem is being provided elsewhere for the same or similar expenses, a complete breakdown of all requested costs in this category by unit cost, yearly totals, how costs were determined (per diem rates, quote, etc.), if this is the most affordable option, and that Government Accountability Office requirements (below) have been met.

- 1. The meals and refreshments are incidental to the conference;*
- 2. Attendance at the meals and when refreshments are served is important for the USGS to ensure attendees' full participation in essential discussions, lectures, or speeches concerning the purpose of the formal conference;*
- 3. The meals and refreshments are part of a formal conference that includes not just the meals and refreshments and discussions, speeches, lectures or other business that may take place when meals and refreshments are served, but also includes substantial functions occurring separately from when the food is served.*

In addition, the following limitations apply: Authorization for food and refreshments at government expense specifically excludes alcohol, icebreakers, pre-conference breakfasts, and meals during which no conference speech or presentation is held.

Data Management Plan Requirements

Proposals submitted to USGS must include a supplementary document labeled "Data Management Plan" (DMP). This supplementary document should describe how the proposal will conform to USGS policy on the dissemination and sharing of research results and associated data. A valid DMP may include only the statement that no detailed plan is needed (e.g. "No data are expected to be produced from this project"), as long as the statement is accompanied by a clear justification. This supplementary document may include:

- the types of data, samples, physical collections, software, curriculum materials, and other materials to be produced in the course of the project;
- the standards to be used for data and metadata format and content (where existing standards are absent or deemed inadequate, this should be documented along with any proposed solutions or remedies);
- policies for access and sharing including provisions for appropriate protection of privacy, confidentiality, security, intellectual property, or other rights or requirements;
- provisions for re-use, re-distribution, and the production of derivatives; and
- plans for archiving data, samples, and other research products, and for preservation of free public access to them.

Additional guidance on data management plans is available from the USGS Data Management web site here: <https://www.usgs.gov/products/data-and-tools/data-management/data-management-plans>. Simultaneously submitted collaborative proposals and proposals that include subawards are a single unified project and should include only one supplemental combined DMP by the lead PI that also addresses all subaward data management needs, regardless of the number of non-lead collaborative proposals or subawards included.

The National and Regional CASC template for data management plans should be used and can be found here: [Data Policy and Guidance | U.S. Geological Survey \(usgs.gov\)](https://www.usgs.gov/data-policy-guidance).

Conflict of Interest Disclosure

Per the Financial Assistance Interior Regulation (FAIR), [2 CFR §1402.112](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/chapter-II/subchapter-A/part-1402), applicants must state in their application if any actual or potential conflict of interest exists at the time of submission.

(a) Applicability.

(1) This section intends to ensure that non-Federal entities and their employees take appropriate steps to avoid conflicts of interest in their responsibilities under or with respect to Federal financial assistance agreements.

(2) In the procurement of supplies, equipment, construction, and services by recipients and by subrecipients, the conflict of interest provisions in [2 CFR 200.318](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/chapter-II/subchapter-A/part-200/subpart-3) apply.

(b) Notification.

(1) Non-Federal entities, including applicants for financial assistance awards, must disclose in writing any conflict of interest to the DOI awarding agency or pass-through entity in accordance with [2 CFR 200.112](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/chapter-II/subchapter-A/part-200/subpart-1).

(2) Recipients must establish internal controls that include, at a minimum, procedures to identify, disclose, and mitigate or eliminate identified conflicts of interest. The recipient is responsible for notifying the Financial Assistance Officer in writing of any conflicts of interest that may arise during the life of the award, including those that have been reported by subrecipients.

(c) *Restrictions on lobbying.* Non-Federal entities are strictly prohibited from using funds under a grant or cooperative agreement for lobbying activities and must provide the required certifications and disclosures pursuant to [43 CFR part 18](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-43/chapter-I/subchapter-A/part-18) and [31 U.S.C. 1352](https://www.uscourts.gov/uscourt/law/31-us-c-1352).

(d) *Review procedures.* The Financial Assistance Officer will examine each conflict of interest disclosure on the basis of its particular facts and the nature of the proposed grant or cooperative agreement, and will determine whether a significant potential conflict exists and, if it does, develop an appropriate means for resolving it.

(e) *Enforcement.* Failure to resolve conflicts of interest in a manner that satisfies the government may be cause for termination of the award. Failure to make required disclosures may result in any of the remedies described in [2 CFR 200.339, Remedies for noncompliance](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/chapter-II/subchapter-A/part-200/subpart-339), including suspension or debarment (see also [2 CFR part 180](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/chapter-II/subchapter-A/part-180)).

Single Audit Reporting Statement

All U.S. states, local governments, federally recognized Indian tribal governments, and non-profit organizations expending \$750,000 USD or more in Federal award funds in the applicant's fiscal year must submit a Single Audit report for that year through the [Federal Audit Clearinghouse's Internet Data Entry System](https://www.federalclearinghouse.com/). U.S. state, local government, federally recognized Indian tribal government, and non-profit applicants must state if your organization was or was not required to submit a Single Audit report for the most recently closed fiscal year. If your organization was required to submit a Single Audit report for the most recently closed fiscal year, provide the EIN associated with that report and state if it is available through the [Federal Audit Clearinghouse](https://www.federalclearinghouse.com/) website.

NOTE: The Single Audit reporting threshold noted above of \$750,000 will increase with the implementation of the revised Uniform Guidance effective October 1, 2024.

Updates to [2 CFR 200](#) effective October 1, 2024:

Please be aware that projects anticipated for funding under this NOFO will be subject to the revised Uniform Guidance, effective 10/1/2024. For reference, resources are included below to help determine how this may affect your proposal and budgeted costs.

OMB's [revised Uniform Guidance launch](#) was on April 4, 2024. To view the announcement OMB made on April 4, 2024 introducing the finalized Uniform Guidance, visit [here](#).

The [final rule, Guidance for Federal Assistance](#), was published to the Federal Register on April 22, 2024 (89 FR 30046).

OMB also released [a redline document showing the 2024 revisions](#), and issued accompanying [implementation memorandum](#) M-24-11, as well as [reference guides](#).

Certification Regarding Lobbying

Applicants requesting more than \$100,000 in Federal funding must certify to the statements in [43 CFR Part 18, Appendix A-Certification Regarding Lobbying](#). If this application requests more than \$100,000 in Federal funds, the Authorized Official's signature on the appropriate SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance form also represents the entity's certification of the statements in 43 CFR Part 18, Appendix A.

Disclosure of Lobbying Activities

Applicants and recipients must not use any federally appropriated funds (annually appropriated or continuing appropriations) or matching funds under a federal award to pay any person for lobbying in connection with the award. Lobbying is influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any U.S. agency, a Member of the U.S. Congress, an officer or employee of the U.S. Congress, or an employee of a Member of the U.S. Congress in connection with the award. Applicants and recipients must complete and submit the [SF-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities"](#) form if the Federal share of the proposal or award is more than \$100,000 and the applicant or recipient has made or has agreed to make any payment using non-appropriated funds for lobbying in connection with the application or award. The SF-LLL form is available with this Funding Opportunity on Grants.gov. See [43 CFR, Subpart 18.100](#) and [31 U.S.C. 1352](#) for more information on when additional submission of this form is required.

Overlap or Duplication of Effort Statement

Applicants must provide a statement indicating if there is any overlap between this Federal application and any other Federal application, or funded project, in regards to activities, costs, or time commitment of key personnel. If no such overlap or duplication exists, state, "There are no overlaps or duplication between this application and any of our other Federal applications or funded projects, including in regards to activities, costs, or time commitment of key personnel". If any such overlap exists, provide a complete description of overlaps or duplications between this proposal and any other federally funded project or application in regards to activities, costs,

and time commitment of key personnel, as applicable. Provide a copy of any overlapping or duplicative proposal submitted to any other potential funding entity and identify when that proposal was submitted, to whom (entity name and program), and when you anticipate being notified of their funding decision. The statement and the description of overlap or duplication, when applicable, may be provided within the proposal or as a separate attachment to the application. If at any time a proposal is awarded funds that would be overlapping or duplicative of the funding requested from USGS, the applicant must immediately notify the USGS point of contact. Any overlap or duplication of funding between the proposed project and other active or anticipated projects may impact selection and/or funding amount.

D3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)

Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM.gov) Registration: This requirement does not apply to individuals applying for funds as individual (i.e., unrelated to any business or nonprofit organization you may own or operate) or any entity with an exception approved by the funding bureau or office in accordance with bureau or The General Service Administration has phased out the use of the Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) and replaced it with the new Unique Entity Identifier (UEI). The UEI is a 12-digit number assigned by SAM.gov to identify unique business entities. All vendors in SAM.GOV were assigned a new UEI. Grants Management systems may continue to require a UEI.

[2 C.F.R. part 25 Unique Entity Identifier](#) – Unless exempted from this requirement under 2 CFR 25.110, the recipient must maintain the currency of their information in the System for Award Management (SAM) until submission of their final financial report required under this award or receipt of final payment, whichever is later. The recipient must notify potential subrecipients of the requirement to provide its unique entity identifier. The requirements in this part do not apply to individuals or any entity with a qualifying condition and exempted by the awarding bureau or office before award per 2 CFR §25.110(d) and bureau or office policy.

Register with the System for Award Management (SAM)

Applicants must register in SAM.gov prior to submitting a federal award application. Also reference Section D.2 above. Federal award recipients must 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. We may not make a Federal award to an applicant that has not completed the SAM.gov registration. If an applicant selected for funding has not completed their SAM.gov registration by the time the program is ready to make an award, the program may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award. The program can use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

Register on the SAM.gov website. Access <https://www.sam.gov> and complete the online SAM registration process to obtain a UEI (SAM) or verify if your organization already has one. If your organization already has a UEI (SAM), you may register with Grants.gov and provide a valid

unique entity identifier in the application. It takes 7-10 business days to receive a UEI after all information has been entered in SAM. Ensure you enter your EBiz POC name and EBiz POC email in SAM and your organization/entity registration process is complete in SAM, this will allow you to register with Grants.gov.

There is no cost to register with SAM.gov. There are third-party vendors who will charge a fee in exchange for registering entities with SAM.gov; **please be aware you can register and request help for free.**

The “Help” tab on the website contains User Guides and other information to assist you with registration. The Grants.gov [Register with SAM page](#) also provides detailed instructions. You can also contact the supporting Federal Service Desk for help registering in SAM. Once registered in SAM, entities must renew and revalidate their SAM registration at least once every 12 months from the date previously registered. Entities are strongly encouraged to revalidate their registration as often as needed to ensure their information is up to date and reflects changes that may have been to the entity’s IRS information.

D4. Submission Dates and Times

Due Date for Applications

February 3, 2025

Application Due Date Explanation

Electronically submitted applications must be submitted no later than 4:00 p.m., ET, on the listed application due date.

D5. Intergovernmental Review

Prior to application submission, U.S. state and local government applicants should visit the [OMB Office of Federal Financial Management website](#) and view the “State Point of Contact (SPOC) List” to determine whether their application is subject to the state intergovernmental review process under Executive Order (E.O.) 12372 “Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs.” States not on the list do not participate in the intergovernmental review process, and therefore do not have a SPOC. If you are located within a State that does not have a SPOC, you may send application materials directly to a Federal awarding agency. If your state is on the list, contact the designated entity for more information on the state’s prior review requirements for Federal assistance applications.

D6. Funding Restrictions

Pre-award Costs

The reimbursement of pre- award costs is not authorized under this announcement.

Indirect Costs

The Federal awarding agency that provides the largest amount of direct funding to your organization is your cognizant agency for indirect costs, unless otherwise assigned by the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB). If the Department of the Interior is your organization's cognizant agency, the Interior Business Center will negotiate your indirect cost rate. Contact the Interior Business Center by phone 916-930-3803 or using the [IBC Email Submission Form](#). See the [IBC Website](#) for more information.

Organizations must have an active Federal award before they can submit an indirect cost rate proposal to their cognizant agency. Failure to establish an approved rate during the award period renders all costs otherwise allocable as indirect costs unallowable under the award. Recipients must have prior written approval from USGS to use amounts budgeted for direct costs to satisfy cost-share or match requirements or to cover unallowable indirect costs. Recipients shall not shift unallowable indirect costs to another Federal award unless specifically authorized to do so by legislation.

10% De Minimis Rate: In accordance with [2 CFR 200.414 \(f\)](#), "In addition to the procedures outlined in the appendices in paragraph (e) of this section, any non-Federal entity that does not have a current negotiated (including provisional) rate, except for those non-Federal entities described in appendix VII to this part, paragraph D.1.b, may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC) which may be used indefinitely. No documentation is required to justify the 10% de minimis indirect cost rate. As described in § 200.403, costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs, but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both. If chosen, this methodology once elected must be used consistently for all Federal awards until such time as a non-Federal entity chooses to negotiate for a rate, which the non-Federal entity may apply to do at any time." The use of de minimis rates does not require the review and approval of the cognizant agency for indirect costs.

NOTE: The de minimis indirect cost rate will increase with the implementation of the revised Uniform Guidance effective October 1, 2024.

NOTE: Indirect cost rates negotiated after the effective date of the revised Uniform Guidance may reflect an increased MTDC base threshold to charge indirect costs on subawards, however, indirect costs will be honored as approved on the recipient's official negotiated indirect cost rate agreement. In other words, this change allowable under the revised 2 CFR 200 Uniform Guidance will be honored only after reflected on the applicant's official negotiated indirect cost rate agreement.

Updates to [2 CFR 200](#) effective October 1, 2024:

Please be aware that projects anticipated for funding under this NOFO will be subject to the revised Uniform Guidance, effective 10/1/2024. For reference, resources are included below to help determine how this may affect your proposal and budgeted costs.

OMB's [revised Uniform Guidance launch](#) was on April 4, 2024. To view the announcement OMB made on April 4, 2024 introducing the finalized Uniform Guidance, visit [here](#).

The [final rule, Guidance for Federal Assistance](#), was published to the Federal Register on April 22, 2024 (89 FR 30046).

OMB also released [a redline document showing the 2024 revisions](#), and issued accompanying [implementation memorandum](#) M-24-11, as well as [reference guides](#).

Required Indirect Cost Statement to be submitted with Application

All organizations must include the applicable statement from the following list in their application, and attach to their application any documentation identified in the applicable statement:

We are:

- A U.S. state or local government entity receiving more than \$35 million in direct Federal funding each year with an indirect cost rate of [insert rate]. We submit our indirect cost rate proposals to our cognizant agency. Attached is a copy of our most recently approved rate agreement/certification.
- A U.S. state or local government entity receiving less than \$35 million in direct Federal funding with an indirect cost rate of [insert rate]. We have prepared and will retain for audit an indirect cost rate proposal and related documentation.
- A [insert your organization type; U.S. states and local governments, do not use this statement] that has previously negotiated or currently has an approved indirect cost rate with our cognizant agency. Our indirect cost rate is [insert rate]. [Insert either: “Attached is a copy of our most recently approved but expired rate agreement. In the event an award is made, we will submit an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency within 90 calendar days after the award is made.” or “Attached is a copy of our current negotiated indirect cost rate agreement.”]
- A [insert your organization type] that has never submitted an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency. Our indirect cost rate is [insert rate]. If we receive an award, we will submit an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency within 90 calendar days after the award date.
- A [insert your organization type] that has never submitted an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency and has an indirect cost rate that is lower than 10%. Our indirect cost rate is [insert rate; must be lower than 10%]. However, if we receive an award we will not be able to meet the requirement to submit an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency within 90 calendar days after award. We request as a condition of award to charge a flat indirect cost rate of [insert rate; must be lower than 10%] against [insert a clear description of the direct cost base against which your rate is charged (e.g., salaries; salaries and fringe benefits; or modified total direct costs). However, please note that your organization cannot charge indirect costs in excess of the indirect costs that would be recovered if applied against modified total direct costs as defined in [§2 CFR 200.68](#)]. We understand that we must notify USGS in writing if we establish an approved rate with our cognizant agency at any point during the award period.
- A [insert your organization type] that has never submitted an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency and has an indirect cost rate that is 10% or higher. Our indirect

cost rate is [insert your organization's indirect rate; must be 10% or higher]. However, if we receive an award we will not be able to meet the requirement to submit an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency within 90 calendar days after award. We request as a condition of award to charge a flat *de minimis* indirect cost rate of 10% to be charged against modified total direct project costs as defined in [2 CFR §200.68](#). We understand that we must notify USGS in writing if we establish a negotiated rate with our cognizant agency at any point during the award period. We understand that additional Federal funds may not be available to support an unexpected increase in indirect costs during the project period and that such changes are subject to review, negotiation, and prior approval by USGS.

- A [insert your organization type] that is submitting this proposal for consideration under the "Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit Network", which has a Department of the Interior-approved indirect cost rate cap of 17.5%. If we have an approved indirect cost rate with our cognizant agency, we understand that we must apply this reduced rate against the same direct cost base as identified in our approved indirect cost rate agreement per [2 CFR §1402.414](#). If we do not have an approved indirect cost rate with our cognizant agency, we understand that we must charge indirect costs against the modified total direct cost base defined in 2 CFR §200.68 "Modified Total Direct Cost (MTDC)". We understand that we must request prior approval from USGS to use the 2 CFR 200 MTDC base instead of the base identified in our approved indirect cost rate agreement. We understand that USGS approval of such a request will be based on: 1) a determination that our approved base is only a subset of the MTDC (such as salaries and wages); and 2) that use of the MTDC base will still result in a reduction of the total indirect costs to be charged to the award. In accordance with 2 CFR §200.405, we understand that indirect costs not recovered due to a voluntary reduction to our federally negotiated rate are not allowable for recovery via any other means.
- A [insert your organization type] that will charge all costs directly.

Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS)

Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) purchases must be approved by the USGS Office of Aviation Services (OAS). Applicants are advised that not all UAS models are allowable for purchase. As used herein, the term "unmanned aircraft systems" encompasses unmanned aerial systems, drones, and similar technology, including component parts, that are remotely controlled and subject to Federal Aviation Administration regulations. For further information on budgeting for UAS purchases, contact personnel listed under section G. Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s) below.

D7. Other Submission Requirements

Information Sessions

To facilitate the financial assistance application process, two information sessions will be conducted by the NCASC to accommodate inquiries from applicants about this program and the proposal review, evaluation, and selection process.

The information sessions will be scheduled as follows: **Tuesday, October 22, 2024 at 3 PM EDT and Thursday, November 7, 2024 at 3 PM EDT**. Interested applicants should email to obtain connection information.

In addition, the USGS has posted several documents that provide forward-looking views of intended CASC operations, focus, and functions. These are available for review on the CASC website at <https://www.usgs.gov/land-resources/climate-adaptation-science-centers/casc-host-recompetition>.

E. Application Review Information

E1. Criteria

Significance and Approach

Maximum Points: 40

Significance:

- How effectively does the applicant describe for an audience without a science background how this proposal will impact the CASC mission?
- Does the proposal improve the scientific knowledge and technical capabilities for the purpose of climate adaptation planning or resource management as related to the priorities of this Request For Proposal (RFP)?
- Does the proposal demonstrate understanding of, and commitment to, what is needed to make the CASC an exceptional research and capacity building facility for applied climate impact research?
- Does the proposal convey a clearly stated commitment that CASC research will be aligned with CASC priorities and DOI's Secretarial Priorities?
- Does the budget appear reasonable for the proposed activities?
- Does the proposal demonstrate a plan to carry out work in ways that address social and environmental inequities and support actions that address them, including but not limited to the inclusion of frontline community members in setting priorities that address the climate adaptation needs of those frontline communities?

Approach:

- Does the investigative team offer a demonstrated understanding of, experience in, and commitment to the co-development and -implementation of applied climate science for the purpose of climate adaptation planning or resource management?
- Does the applicant provide examples of engaging stakeholders before, during, and after initiation of the research process?
- Are the proposed budget and requested resources reasonable, and is the work plan practical and achievable for the proposed level of work and expected benefits, given the budget request?

- Does the applicant acknowledge potential problem areas and consider alternative strategies, and benchmarks for success?
- Does the applicant identify how activities will be conducted under the base amount? Is the proposal well described and have a reasonable budget?

Project Team, Collaboration, and Environment

Maximum Points: 25

Project Team:

- Are there adequate professional staff positions dedicated to providing essential or unmet core and administrative functions for the CASC as part of the base funding?
- Do(es) the applicant(s) bring the appropriate expertise and experience on climate impacts research or climate adaptation to lead and deliver the proposed output(s), and to achieve the proposed contribution(s)?
- Is the proposed leadership approach, governance, and organizational structure appropriate for the project?
- Has the PI/Host Institution Director demonstrated an ability to lead others, and commitment to the success of the CASC?
- Does the investigative team (PIs, collaborators, and other researchers) bring diverse, complementary and integrated expertise to the project?

Collaboration:

- Has the PI/Host Institution Director provided documented evidence of willingness to collaborate with others beyond his/her institution to share ideas, science, etc. to advance the CASC's activities as outlined in the RFP?
- Is there evidence of the ability of the team of investigators to work together in an interdisciplinary fashion, in particular in collaboration with existing USGS capacity (i.e., centers, units, programs) in the region?
- How do the proposed collaborative relationships strengthen or weaken the proposal?
- Does the proposal describe the level of integration and interdisciplinary collaboration among the team and how team effort will bring added value to the project in terms of methodologies, data acquisition and analysis, knowledge exchange, etc.?

Environment:

- Is there substantive evidence of broad institutional support for, and awareness of, CASC activities from relevant departments and administrators?
- Is the environment (academic institution and/or other organization support, equipment, facilities, and other resources available to the investigators) appropriate to enable the conduct and success of the project?
- Does the proposal benefit from unique features of the scientific environment, or subject populations, or employ useful collaborative arrangements?

Capacity Building and Communication

Maximum Points: 25

Capacity Building:

- Is a detailed plan for engaging graduate and postdoctoral students in CASC research projects provided?
- Are qualifications and characteristics of current and anticipated students/fellow researchers, as well as a selection plan specified, in order to support CASC research?
- Additional expectations include plans for involving researchers/fellows in annual CASC meetings, conferences and meeting participation; documentation of a ready supply of fellows; and history of successful fellowships for researchers in the appropriate research topic.
- Does the proposal include a clearly stated intention of collaboration, as appropriate, with the CASC Federal Regional Administrator on matters related to capacity building?
- Does the proposal encourage engagement with tribal or other indigenous students and early-career individuals to expose them to climate-related research and expand CASC research to diverse audiences and beneficiaries?
- Are the proposed budget and requested resources reasonable, and is the work plan practical and achievable for the proposed level of work and expected benefits, given the budget request?

Communication:

- Does the proposal explain how it will effectively communicate and disseminate climate change science to a wide range of managers and decision-makers?
- Does the proposal define products and/or outline a strategy for communicating CASC scientific findings to the public and knowledge end-users?
- Do(es) the applicant(s) provide examples regarding their effectiveness in website design, innovative use of technology, and content management to enhance communication?
- Are the proposed budget and requested resources reasonable, and is the work plan practical and achievable for the proposed level of work and expected benefits, given the budget request?

Budget Assessment

Maximum Points: 10

Is the requested funding appropriate to support the project? Is it realistic and well-justified in the budget narrative?

- Appropriate budget planning should be demonstrated. The requested resources should be adequate to financially support the full scope of the project.
- Reviewers will be asked to consider the proposed budget of the project, and to provide a justified recommendation as to whether the budget should be:
 - Accepted, as described; or
 - Reduced by a specific dollar amount (total).

Cost sharing is not required in this program and will not be considered in the evaluation of applications.

Facilities Assessment

Maximum Points: 0

Proposals should describe physical space to be made available to serve the needs of current CASC staff (as described above), plus proposed students and post-doctoral researchers, and planned accommodations for a reasonable anticipated increase in the number of CASC staff. If space is to be provided at the Host Institution, details regarding the extent and nature of support for that space should be provided, e.g., furniture, supplies and equipment ordering and maintenance (copier, paper, whiteboards, etc.), communications infrastructure. Space arrangements will be discussed directly with applicants as part of the agreement finalization process.

E2. Review and Selection Process

Proposals will be scored on each criterion using a 1-10 point scale and weighted accordingly to the point scale provided above. Applications that meet the basic minimum requirements will be evaluated by peer reviewers that will consider responses to the above questions.

The USGS will select the proposal that best meets the NCASC mission. Proposals will be reviewed for the technical quality of proposed activities, general capabilities of the Host Institution, Host Institution Director/Principal Investigator and Leadership Team, plans for capacity building, and communication services within the proposal. This evaluation may result in an award to a proposal that does not receive the highest technical rating of all proposals evaluated.

Climate Adaptation Science Center Host proposals will be reviewed in accordance with the criteria listed in the above section by a Technical Review Panel of approximately one dozen individuals that may include representatives of USGS, other DOI bureaus, other Federal agencies and other partner entities. Reviewers are accomplished in their respective disciplines and proficient in the technical subjects they are reviewing. Each reviewer will provide written input for each proposal reviewed, and the Committee will seek consensus on a recommendation. Procedures to ensure confidentiality and avoid conflict of interest will be implemented.

Additionally, applicants are hereby notified that:

- a. The Federal awarding agency, prior to making a Federal award with a total amount of Federal share greater than the simplified acquisition threshold, is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (currently FAPIIS) (see 41 U.S.C. 2313);
- b. An applicant, at its option, may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM and comment on any information about itself that a Federal awarding agency previously entered and is currently in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM;
- c. The Federal awarding agency will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in 2

CFR §200.205 Federal awarding agency review of merit of proposals and 2 CFR §200.206 Federal awarding agency review of risk posed by applicants.

Site Visits

At the discretion of the USGS, one or more individuals may conduct site visits (in person and/or virtual) to proposed Host and/or consortium partner institutions as part of the decision process. Visits will be coordinated with applicant institutions, and USGS will provide advance notice of specific issues to be addressed and any other requirements for the visit.

If site visits are conducted, input from these will be considered as well.

E3. CFR – Regulatory Information

Refer to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Award Terms and Conditions for the general administrative and national policy requirements applicable to USGS awards. USGS will communicate any other program- or project-specific special terms and conditions to recipients in their Notice of Award.

E4. Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates

Three awards to host the Northeast, Pacific Islands, and South Central Climate Adaptation Science Centers are anticipated to be made in the 4th quarter of FY 2025.

F. Federal Award Administration Information

F1. Federal Award Notices

Official notice of award is made by the USGS Office of Acquisition and Grants (OAG) and will be provided electronically to a selected applicant's Authorized Representative. Federal award funds can only be approved and obligated by a designated Contracting/Grants Officer.

F2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

See the “[DOI Standard Terms and Conditions](#)” for the administrative and national policy requirements applicable to DOI awards.

Refer to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Award Terms and Conditions for the general administrative and national policy requirements applicable to USGS awards. The USGS will communicate any other program- or project-specific special terms and conditions to recipients in their Notice of Award.

Data Availability

Per the Financial Assistance Interior Regulation (FAIR), [2 CFR §1402.315](#):

(a) All data, methodology, factual inputs, models, analyses, technical information, reports, conclusions, valuation products or other scientific assessments in any medium or form, including textual, numerical, graphic, cartographic, narrative, or audiovisual, resulting from a financial assistance agreement is available for use by the Department of the Interior, including being available in a manner that is sufficient for independent verification.

(b) The Federal Government has the right to:

(1) Obtain, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the data, methodology, factual inputs, models, analyses, technical information, reports, conclusions, or other scientific assessments, produced under a Federal award; and

(2) Authorize others to receive, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use such data, methodology, factual inputs, models, analyses, technical information, reports, conclusions, or other scientific assessments, for Federal purposes, including to allow for meaningful third-party evaluation.

Geospatial Data

If you receive financial assistance from the Department of the Interior (DOI), you must follow these rules for geospatial data:

Follow Federal Standards: All geospatial data you collect or create must meet the standards set by the Federal Geospatial Data Committee (FGDC) or the Department of the Interior. This is required by the Geospatial Data Act of 2018, which is part of Public Law 115-254, specifically in Subtitle F (Geospatial Data), sections 751-759C (codified at 43 U.S.C. §§ 2801– 2811).

Include Metadata: Your Geographic Information Systems (GIS) files must include complete metadata. Metadata is information that describes the data, such as where it came from, how accurate it is, and how it should be used. This is to ensure that anyone using the data understands its context and quality.

Check for Existing Data: Before you start collecting new geospatial data, you need to check GeoPlatform.gov. This is to see if there is already existing geospatial data from federal, state, local, or private sources that can meet your needs and is available for free. If such data is available, you should use it instead of gathering new data.

These rules help ensure that geospatial data is reliable, high-quality, and that resources are used efficiently.

F3. Reporting

Financial Reports

All recipients must use the [SF-425, Federal Financial Report](#) form for financial reporting. At a minimum, all recipients must submit a **final** financial report. Final reports are due no later than 120 calendar days after the award period of performance end date or termination date. For awards with periods of performance longer than 12 months, recipients are required to submit **interim** financial reports annually or on the frequency established in the Notice of Award. The only exception to the interim financial reporting requirement is if the recipient is required to use the SF-270/271 to request payment and requests payment at least once annually through the

entire award period of performance. All financial reporting requirements and submission procedures will be described in the official award Terms and Conditions (reference Attachment B).

Performance Progress Reports

Performance reports must contain a comparison of actual accomplishments with the established goals and objectives of the award; a description of reasons why established goals were not met, if appropriate; and any other pertinent information relevant to the project results. Final reports are due no later than 120 calendar days after the award period of performance end date or termination date. For awards with periods of performance longer than 12 months, recipients are required to submit **interim** performance progress reports on the frequency established in the award Terms and Conditions (reference [Attachment B](#)). For additional details on progress reporting reference [Attachment B](#).

Significant Development Reports

Events may occur between the scheduled performance reporting dates which have significant impact upon the supported activity. In such cases, recipients are required to notify the Bureau in writing as soon as the recipient becomes aware of any problems, delays, or adverse conditions that will materially impair the ability to meet the objective of the Federal award. This disclosure must include a statement of any corrective action(s) taken or contemplated, and any assistance needed to resolve the situation. The recipient should also notify USGS in writing of any favorable developments that enable meeting time schedules and objectives sooner or at less cost than anticipated or producing more or different beneficial results than originally planned.

Conflict of Interest Disclosures

Recipients must notify the program immediately in writing of any conflict of interest that arises during the life of their Federal award, including those reported to them by any subrecipient under the award. Recipients must notify the program in writing if any employees, including subrecipient and contractor personnel, are related to, married to, or have a close personal relationship with any Federal employee in the Federal funding program or who otherwise may have been involved in the review and selection of the award. The term employee means any individual engaged in the performance of work pursuant to the Federal award. Recipients may not have a former Federal employee as a key project official, or in any other substantial role related to their award, whose participation put them out of compliance with the legal authorities addressing post-Government employment restrictions. See the [U.S. Office of Government Ethics website](#) for more information on these restrictions. USGS will examine each conflict of interest disclosure based on its particular facts and the nature of the project and will determine if a significant potential conflict exists. If it does, USGS will work with the recipient to determine an appropriate resolution. Failure to disclose and resolve conflicts of interest in a manner that satisfies USGS may result in any of the remedies described in [2 CFR 200.339 Remedies for Noncompliance](#), including termination of the award.

Other Mandatory Disclosures

The Non-Federal entity or applicant for a federal award must disclose, in a timely manner, in writing to the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity all violations of Federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting the Federal award. Non-Federal entities that receive a federal award including the terms and conditions outlined in [2 CFR 200, Appendix XII—Award Term and Condition for Recipient Integrity and Performance](#)

[Matters](#) are required to report certain civil, criminal, or administrative proceedings to SAM. Failure to make required disclosures can result in any of the remedies described in [2 CFR 200.339 Remedies for Noncompliance](#), including suspension or debarment.

Reporting Matters Related to Recipient Integrity and Performance

If the total value of your currently active grants, cooperative agreements, and procurement contracts from all Federal awarding agencies exceeds \$10,000,000 for any period of time during the period of performance of this Federal award, then you as the recipient during that period of time must maintain the currency of information reported to the System for Award Management (SAM) that is made available in the designated integrity and performance system (currently the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)) about civil, criminal, or administrative proceedings in accordance with [Appendix XII](#) to 2 CFR 200.

G. Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s)

G1. Program Technical Contact

For **programmatic technical assistance**, contact:

First Name:

Emily

Last Name:

Fort

Email:

efort@usgs.gov

G2. Program Administration Contact

For **program administration assistance**, contact:

First Name:

Rachel

Last Name:

Miller

Email:

Rachelmiller@usgs.gov

G3. Application System Technical Support

For Grants.gov technical registration and submission, downloading forms and application packages, contact:

Name:

Grants.gov Customer Support

Telephone:

1-800-518-4726

Email:

Support@grants.gov

H. Other Information

The Federal Government is not obligated to make any Federal award as a result of this announcement.

Payments

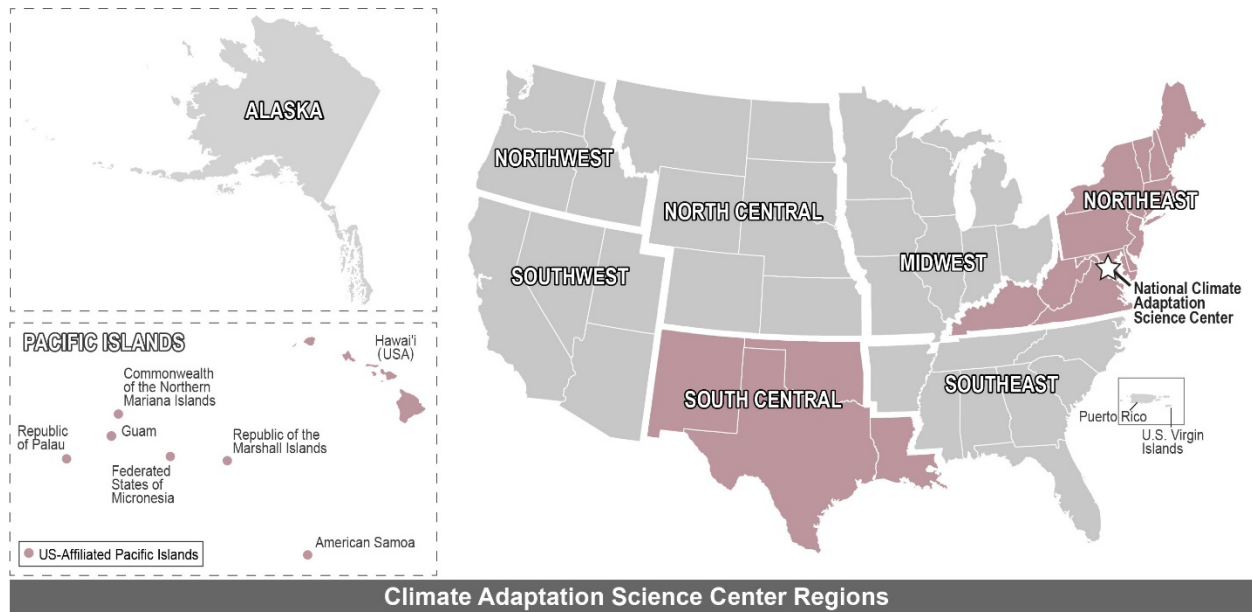
Domestic recipients are required to register in and receive payment through the U.S. Treasury's Automated Standard Application for Payments (ASAP), unless approved for a waiver by the USGS program. Foreign recipients receiving funds to a final destination bank outside the U.S. are required to receive payment through the U.S. Treasury's International Treasury Services (ITS) System. Foreign recipients receiving funds to a final destination bank in the U.S. are required to enter and maintain current banking details in their SAM.gov entity profile and receive payment through the Automated Clearing House network by electronic funds transfer (EFT). The Bureau will include recipient-specific instructions on how to request payment, including identification of any additional information required and where to submit payment requests, as applicable, in all Notices of Award.

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT STATEMENT:

OMB Control Number: 1028-0096, Expiration Date: 09/30/2026

We are collecting this information in accordance with the program identified above. Your response is required to obtain or retain a benefit. We will use the information you provide to conduct a competitive review and select projects for funding and, if awarded, to evaluate performance. We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number. Public report burden for this collection is estimated to average 45 hours per grant/cooperative agreement application and 12 hours to prepare a final technical report. Actual time for these activities will vary depending on program-specific requirements. You may send comments on the burden estimate or any other aspect of this information collection to the Bureau Clearance Officer, U.S. Geological Survey, 12201 Sunrise Valley Drive, MS807, Reston VA 20192.

Attachment A: Northeast, Pacific Islands, and South Central CASC Recompetition Map



Attachment B: Terms and Conditions

DELIVERABLES

Progress Reports

Annual reports must address activities and spending by the CASC host under the hosting cooperative agreements. An annual report does not need to be submitted for the final year of the hosting cooperative agreement when the 5-year hosting cooperative agreement Final Technical Report is submitted. Overview reports intended for general audiences will not be accepted by National CASC and the Office of Acquisition and Grants (OAG) as meeting reporting requirements.

- a) The recipient must submit annual progress reports electronically through GrantSolutions (<https://home.grantsolutions.gov/home/>) or via e-mail to the USGS Program Officer/Climate Adaptation Science Center Technical Officer and one copy of the transmittal letter to the USGS Grants Management Official within 90 calendar days after the agreement year (i.e., 12 months after the approved effective date of the agreement and every 12 months thereafter until the expiration date of the agreement.). Please check the NCASC website (<https://www.usgs.gov/ecosystems/climate-adaptation-science-centers/project-tracking-policy-and-guidance>) for the latest templates and guidelines for progress reports. For agreements with a total anticipated performance period of twelve months (12) months or less, only a final technical report will be required. A progress report is not required in the final budget year, unless the recipient requests an extension to the project period.
- b) Annual reports of funded project activities provide a record of the recipient's study and preliminary results. Annual reports serve several important functions to the Climate Adaptation Science Centers (CASCs) and are used as:
 - An essential component of the CASC due diligence activities;
 - A means for PIs to communicate significant preliminary research findings or reasons for project delays;
 - A metric for gauging the impact of CASC funding programs;
 - A method for PIs to provide advanced notice to CASC Directors about upcoming publications in order to ensure effective communication efforts (e.g. press releases, website announcements etc.)
- c) The Annual Reports shall reference the instructions provided in the template on the CASC website: <https://www.usgs.gov/programs/climate-adaptation-science-centers/project-tracking-policy-and-guidance>. Individual CASCs may request additional information.

- d) The progress reports shall include the following information:
- (1) A comparison of actual accomplishments to the objectives of the agreement established for the budget period and overall progress in response to the performance metrics.
 - (2) The reasons why established goals were not met, if appropriate.
 - (3) Additional pertinent information including, when appropriate, analysis and explanation of cost overruns or high unit costs.
 - (4) An outline of anticipated activities and adjustments to the program during the next budget period.
- e) Between the required reporting dates, events may occur which have significant impact upon the project or program. In such cases, the recipient shall inform the USGS as soon as the following types of conditions become known:
- (1) Problems, delays, or adverse conditions which will materially impair the ability to meet the objective of the agreement. This disclosure must include a statement of the action taken, or contemplated, and any assistance needed to resolve the situation.
 - (2) Favorable developments which enable meeting time schedules and objectives sooner or at less cost than anticipated or producing more or different beneficial results than originally planned.

Final Technical Report

- a) The Recipient must submit the final technical report electronically through GrantSolutions (<https://www.home.grantsolutions.gov/home>) or via e-mail to the USGS Program Officer/Climate Adaptation Science Center Technical Officer and one copy of the transmittal letter to the USGS Grants Management Official. **The Final Performance Report is due 120 calendar days after the period of performance end date.** Please check the NCASC website (<https://www.usgs.gov/ecosystems/climate-adaptation-science-centers/project-tracking-policy-and-guidance>) for the latest templates and guidelines for final reports.
- b) The Final Report for the funded project activities provides a record of the recipient's study and results. Final Reports serve several important functions to the CASCs and are used as:
- An essential component of the CASC due diligence activities;
 - A metric for gauging the impact of CASC funding programs;
 - An opportunity for Principal Investigators to suggest areas for improvement in the CASC funding program;
 - A tool for the CASCs to gather information about publications, products, presentations and data to advance communications to resource managers, stakeholders and the general public.

- c) The Final Report final technical report shall reference the instructions provided in the template on the CASC website: <https://www.usgs.gov/programs/climate-adaptation-science-centers/project-tracking-policy-and-guidance>. Individual CASCs may request additional information.
- d) The final technical report shall document and summarize the results of recipient's work. The report shall include a quantitative description of activities and overall progress in response to the performance metrics which documents and summarizes the results of the entire Agreement. The final report shall include tables, graphs, diagrams, sketches, etc., as required to explain the results achieved under the Agreement. The report shall also include recommendations and conclusions based upon both the experience and the results obtained.

Annual Financial Reports

- a) The recipient must submit an annual SF 425, Federal Financial Report, for each individual USGS award. The SF 425 is available at grants.gov/forms/forms-repository/post-award-reporting-forms. The SF 425 will be due within 90 days following the end of the annual period or within 90 days following the end of each annual period coinciding with the award start date.
- b) The SF 425 must be submitted electronically through GrantSolutions (<https://home.grantsolutions.gov/home/>) or by e-mail to SF425@usgs.gov with a cc to the USGS Grants Management Official. Recipient must include the USGS award number (see page 1, block 4 titled: Grant No.) in the subject line of all e-mail correspondence. If, after 90 days, recipient has not submitted a report, the recipient's account in Automated Standard Application for Payments (ASAP) will be placed in a manual review status until the report is submitted.

Final Financial Report

- a) The recipient will liquidate all obligations incurred under the award and submit a final SF 425, Federal Financial Report in accordance with C.3.b. no later than 120 calendar days after the Agreement completion date.
- b) Recipient will promptly return any unexpended federal cash advances or will complete a final draw from ASAP to obtain any remaining amounts due. Once 120 days has passed since the Agreement completion date, USGS shall unilaterally deobligate federal funds as reflected in the Final SF 425.
- c) Subsequent revision to the final SF 425 will be considered only as follows:
 - i. When the revision results in a balance due to the Government, the recipient must submit a revised final SF 425, Federal Financial Report, and refund the excess payment whenever the overcharge is discovered, no matter how long the lapse of time since the original due date of the report.

- ii. When the revision represents additional reimbursable costs claimed by the recipient, a revised final SF 425 may be submitted to the USGS Grants Management Official with an explanation. If approved, the USGS will either request and pay a final invoice or reestablish the ASAP subaccount to permit the recipient to make a revised final draw. Any revised final report representing additional reimbursable amounts must be submitted no later than 1 year from the due date of the original report, i.e., 15 months following the Agreement completion date. USGS will not accept any revised SF 425 covering additional expenditures after that date and will return any late request for additional payment to the recipient.

Publications

Funded researchers must provide advanced notification to CASC Directors of all anticipated manuscripts, videos, web tools, educational tools, etc. (any type of deliverable that will be made public) intended for publication/distribution that have been produced through the CASC-funded project. This early notice allows the CASCs to accurately account for CASC-derived products and assist as needed in any press announcements. Investigators should notify the CASC at the time a manuscript has been accepted for publication, and if possible when it has moved to “in press” status.

a) Acknowledgment of Support and Disclaimer

Funding acknowledgement must be spelled out in all scientific publications and press releases where research funding was provided by USGS. Use the guidelines below and check the NCASC website (<https://www.usgs.gov/ecosystems/climate-adaptation-science-centers/project-tracking-policy-and-guidance>) for more information.

Acknowledgement of Support:

Recipient is responsible for assuring that an acknowledgment of USGS support:

1. is made in any publication (including World Wide Web pages) of any material based on or developed under this Agreement, in the following terms:

This material is based upon work supported by the U.S. Geological Survey under Grant/Cooperative Agreement No. (see page 1, block 4 titled: Grant No.).

2. is orally acknowledged during all news media interviews, including popular media such as radio, television and news magazines.

Disclaimer:

Recipient is responsible for assuring that publication of material (including World Wide Web pages) based on or developed under this Agreement, also contains the following disclaimer:

The views and conclusions contained in this document are those of the authors and should not be interpreted as representing the opinions or policies of the U.S. Geological Survey. Mention of trade names or commercial products does not constitute their endorsement by the U.S. Geological Survey.

Publication:

Publication of the results of any project carried out under this assistance award is authorized in professional journals, trade magazines, or may be made by the USGS. Such manuscripts or publications submitted to journals or professional publications for publication shall be accompanied by the following notation:

This manuscript is submitted for publication with the understanding that the United States Government is authorized to reproduce and distribute reprints for Governmental purposes.

EXAMPLE: "This material is based upon work supported by the U.S. Geological Survey [insert CASC region] Climate Adaptation Science Center under Grant/Cooperative Agreement No. (insert agreement number). The views and conclusions contained in this document are those of the authors and should not be interpreted as representing the opinions or policies of the U.S. Geological Survey. Mention of trade names or commercial products does not constitute their endorsement by the [insert CASC region] Climate Adaptation Science Center or the National Climate Adaptation Science Center] or the US Geological Survey. This manuscript is submitted for publication with the understanding that the United States Government is authorized to reproduce and distribute reprints for Governmental purposes."

b) USGS Logo

Use of the USGS logo (also known as "visual identity" or "identifier") constitutes the recipient's agreement to and acceptance of the following terms:

- The USGS identifier is trademarked and not in the public domain.
- Use of the trademarked USGS identifier is authorized by USGS for use only by recipients of USGS funding.
- Use is authorized on information products that result from research funded by the financial assistance award.
- Use the USGS identifier for any other purpose without written permission from USGS is prohibited; doing so constitutes trademark infringement.
- Recipient will adhere to the design requirements, which are as follows:
 - The USGS identifier must appear in black, white, or green only.
 - The USGS identifier cannot be modified in any way except for proportional sizing.
 - The USGS identifier should appear at the same size as logos of other agencies, if any.

- If used on a digital product, the USGS identifier should link to www.usgs.gov

c) Copies for USGS

Recipient is responsible for assuring that the USGS Project Office is provided a digital version, preferably as a MS Word DOCx file, of every accepted manuscript upon acceptance for publication by the journal.

d) Department of the Interior Requirements

Two copies of each publication produced under a Grant or Cooperative Agreement shall be sent to the Natural Resources Library with a transmittal that identifies the sender and the publication. The address of the library is:

U.S. Department of the Interior
Natural Resources Library
Division of Information and Library Services
Gifts and Exchange Section
18th and C Streets, NW
Washington, DC 20240

ASSISTANCE ADMINISTRATIVE DATA

Payment

Payments under financial assistance awards must be made using the Department of the Treasury Automated Standard Application for Payments (ASAP) system (www.asap.gov).

- a) The Recipient agrees that it has established or will establish an account with ASAP. USGS will initiate enrollment in ASAP. If the Recipient does not currently have an ASAP account, they must designate an individual (name, title, address, phone and e-mail) who will serve as the Point of Contact (POC).
- b) With the award of each grant/cooperative agreement, a sub-account will be set up from which the Recipient can draw down funds. After Recipients complete enrollment in ASAP and link their banking information to the USGS ALC (14080001), it may take up to 10 days for sub-accounts to be activated and for funds to be authorized for drawdown in ASAP.
- c) Inquiries regarding payment should be directed to ASAP at 855-868-0151.
- e) Payments may be drawn in advance only as needed to meet immediate cash disbursement needs.

Revisions and Prior Approvals

Modifications to this Agreement shall generally be executed by mutual written consent of the parties, with the exception of certain purely administrative changes that may be executed unilaterally by the USGS. Recipients may make certain limited budgetary and programmatic changes without prior USGS approval as outlined in 2 CFR 200.308 and 200.407. Any proposed change which requires prior written approval of the USGS shall be submitted in writing to the address at D.1 at least thirty (30) days prior to the requested effective date of the proposed change. The USGS will respond to the change request within thirty (30) days of receipt.

- a) Extensions. Recipients are specifically advised that requests for extension or other change to the budget or project period(s) require prior written approval. Such requests must be submitted as outlined above and be accompanied by a statement supporting the extension and a revised budget indicating the planned use of all unexpended funds during the proposed extension period. A revised budget is not required for no cost extensions.
- b) Transfer of Funds. Recipients are specifically advised that prior written approval of the USGS Grants Management Official is not required for transfer of funds between direct cost categories when the cumulative amount of the transfer during the performance period does not exceed ten percent (10%) of the total USGS award. Prior written approval is required from the USGS Grants Management Official for transfers of funds in excess of the ten percent limitation.
- c) Carry Forward of Funds. Recipients are specifically advised that prior written approval by the USGS Grants Management Official is required to carry forward unobligated balances to subsequent budget periods. It is expected that funds be expended during the budget period for which they are obligated. The request must include the amount of funds to be carried over, why the carry-over of funds is necessary, and for how long the funds should be carried over.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Department of the Interior Standard Terms and Conditions

The Recipient shall be subject to the Department of the Interior Standard Terms and Conditions which are incorporated herein by reference and available on the Internet at:

<https://www.doi.gov/grants/doi-standard-terms-and-conditions>

Additional Terms and Conditions

- a) Research Integrity
 - 1) USGS requires that all grant or cooperative agreement Recipient organizations adhere to the Federal Policy on Research Misconduct, Office of Science and Technology Policy, December 6, 2000, 65 Federal Register (FR) 76260. The Federal Policy on Research Misconduct outlines requirements for addressing allegations of research

misconduct, including the investigation, adjudication, and appeal of allegations of research misconduct and the implementation of appropriate administrative actions.

- 2) The Recipient must promptly notify the USGS Project Office when research misconduct that warrants an investigation pursuant to the federal policy on research misconduct is alleged.

b) Data Availability

- 1) Applicability. The Department of the Interior is committed to basing its decisions on the best available science and providing the American people with enough information to thoughtfully and substantively evaluate the data, methodology, and analysis used by the Department to inform its decisions.
- 2) Use of Data. The regulations at 2 CFR 200.315 apply to data produced under a federal award, including the provision that the Federal Government has the right to obtain, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the data produced under a federal award as well as authorize others to receive, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use such data for federal purposes.
- 3) Availability of Data. The recipient shall make the data produced under this award and any subaward(s) available to the Government for public release, consistent with applicable law, to allow meaningful third party evaluation and reproduction of the following:
 - a. The scientific data relied upon;
 - b. The analysis relied upon; and
 - c. The methodology, including models, use to gather and analyze the data.

2 CFR 1402.315 Availability of Data:

(a) All data, methodology, factual inputs, models, analyses, technical information, reports, conclusions, valuation products or other scientific assessments in any medium or form, including textual, numerical, graphic, cartographic, narrative, or audiovisual, resulting from a financial assistance agreement is available for use by the Department of the Interior, including being available in a manner that is sufficient for independent verification.

(b) The Federal Government has the right to:

- (1) Obtain, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the data, methodology, factual inputs, models, analyses, technical information, reports, conclusions, or other scientific assessments, produced under a federal award; and
- (2) Authorize others to receive, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use such data, methodology, factual inputs, models, analyses, technical information, reports,

conclusions, or other scientific assessments, for federal purposes, including to allow for meaningful third-party evaluation.

c) Conflict of Interest

1) Applicability.

- a. This section intends to ensure that non-Federal entities and their employees take appropriate steps to avoid conflicts of interest in their responsibilities under or with respect to Federal financial assistance agreements.
- b. In the procurement of supplies, equipment, construction, and services by recipients and by subrecipients, the conflict of interest provisions in 2 CFR 200.318 apply.

2) Requirements.

- a. Non-Federal entities must avoid prohibited conflicts of interest, including any significant financial interests that could cause a reasonable person to question the recipient's ability to provide impartial, technically sound, and objective performance under or with respect to a federal financial assistance agreement.
- b. In addition to any other probations that may apply with respect to conflicts of interest, no key official of an actual or proposed recipient or subrecipient, who is substantially involved in the proposal or project, may have been a former Federal employee who, within the last one (1) year, participated personally and substantially in the evaluation, award, or administration of an award with respect to that recipient or subrecipient or in development of the requirement leading to the funding announcement.
- c. No actual or prospective recipient or subrecipient may solicit, obtain, or use non-public information regarding the evaluation, award, or administration of an award to that recipient or subrecipient or the development of a federal financial assistance opportunity that may be of competitive interest to that recipient or subrecipient.

3) Notification.

- a. Non-Federal entities, including applicants for financial assistance awards, must disclose in writing any conflict of interest to the DOI awarding agency or pass-through entity in accordance with 2 CFR 200.112, Conflicts of Interest.
- b. Recipients must establish internal controls that include, at a minimum, procedures to identify, disclose, and mitigate or eliminate identified conflicts of interest. The recipient is responsible for notifying the USGS Grants Management Official in writing of any conflicts of interest that may arise during the life of the award, including those that have been reported by subrecipients.

4) Restrictions on Lobbying. Non-Federal entities are strictly prohibited from using funds under this grant or cooperative agreement for lobbying activities and must provide the required certifications and disclosures pursuant to 43 CFR Part 18 and 31 USC 1352.

- 5) Review Procedures. The USGS Grants Management Official will examine each conflict of interest disclosure on the basis of its particular facts and the nature of the proposed grant or cooperative agreement, and will determine whether a significant potential conflict exists and, if it does, develop and appropriate means for resolving it.
- 6) Enforcement. Failure to resolve conflicts of interest in a matter that satisfies the Government may be cause for termination of the award. Failure to make required disclosures may result in any of remedies described in 2 CFR 200.338, Remedies for Noncompliance, including suspension or debarment (see also 2 CFR Part 180).

d) Program Income

- 1) If the recipient is an educational institution or nonprofit research organization, any other program income will be added to funds committed to the project by the federal awarding agency and Recipient and be used to further eligible project or program objectives, as described in 2 CFR 200.307(e)(2).
- 2) For all other types of recipients, any other program income will be deducted from total allowable costs to determine the net allowable costs before calculating the Government's share of reimbursable costs, as provided in 2 CFR 200.307(e)(1).

e) Government Furnished Equipment or Equipment Authorized for Purchase

Title to equipment acquired wholly or in part with Federal funds shall be vested in the recipient unless otherwise specified in the award document. The recipient shall retain control and maintain an inventory of such equipment as long as there is a need for such equipment to accomplish the purpose of the project, whether or not the project continues to be supported by federal funds. When there is no longer a need for such equipment to accomplish the purpose of the project, the recipient shall use the equipment in connection with other Federal awards the recipient has received. Disposal of equipment shall be in accordance with 2 CFR 200.313.

f) Patent Rights (37 CFR § 401.14)

Unless otherwise provided in the Agreement, if this Agreement is for experimental, developmental, or research work, the following clause (implementing the Bayh-Dole Act, [35 U.S.C. § 200 et seq.]) shall apply. The recipient shall include this clause in all subawards for experimental, developmental, or research activities.

a. *Definitions*

1. INVENTION means any invention or discovery which is or may be patentable or otherwise protectable under Title 35 of the USC, to any novel variety of plant which is or may be protected under the Plant Variety Protection Act (7 U.S.C. § 2321 et seq.).

2. SUBJECT INVENTION means any invention of the recipient conceived or first actually reduced to practice in the performance of work under this agreement, provided that in the case of a variety of plant, the date of determination (as defined in section 41(d)) must also occur during the period of performance.
3. PRACTICAL APPLICATION means to manufacture in the case of a composition or product, to practice in the case of a process or method, or to operate in the case of a machine or system; and, in each case, under such conditions as to establish that the invention is being utilized and that its benefits are to the extent permitted by law or Government regulations available to the public on reasonable terms.
4. MADE when used in relation to any invention means the conception or first actual reduction to practice of such invention.
5. SMALL BUSINESS FIRM means a small business concern as defined at section 2 of Pub. L. 85-536 (15 U.S.C. 632) and implementing regulations of the Administrator of the Small Business Administration. For the purpose of this clause, the size standards for small business concerns involved in government procurement and subcontracting at 13 CFR 121.3-8 and 13 CFR 121.3-12, respectively, will be used.
6. NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION means a domestic university or other institution of higher education or an organization of the type described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (26 U.S.C. § 501(c)) and exempt from taxation under Section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code (26 U.S.C. § 501(a)) or any domestic non-profit scientific or educational organization qualified under a State non-profit organization statute.

b. *Allocation of Principal Rights*

1. The recipient may retain the entire right, title, and interest throughout the world to each subject invention solely made by recipient subject to the provisions of this Patent Rights clause, including (2) below, 35 U.S.C. §§ 202, 203 and 37 CFR § 401.14. Inventions made under this Agreement jointly by USGS and recipient will be jointly owned by both parties. However, where a USGS employee is a coinventor, the USGS may, for the purpose of consolidating rights in the invention and if it finds that it would expedite the development of the invention:
 - (a) license or assign whatever rights it may acquire in the subject invention to the nonprofit organization, small business firm, or non-Federal inventor in accordance with the provisions of this chapter; or
 - (b) acquire any rights in the subject invention from the nonprofit organization, small business firm, or non-Federal inventor, but only to the extent the party from whom the rights are acquired voluntarily enters into the transaction and no other transaction under this chapter is conditioned on such acquisition.

With respect to any subject invention in which the recipient retains title, the federal Government shall have a non-exclusive, nontransferable, irrevocable, paid-up license to practice or have practiced for or on behalf of the U.S. the subject invention throughout the world. If the Agreement indicates it is subject to an identified international agreement or treaty, the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) also has the

right to direct the recipient to convey to any foreign participant such patent rights to subject inventions as are required to comply with that agreement or treaty.

2. If the recipient performs services at a Government owned and operated laboratory or at a Government owned and recipient operated laboratory directed by the Government to fulfill the Government's obligations under a Cooperative Research and Development Agreement (CRADA) authorized by 15 U.S.C. 3710a, the Government may require the recipient to negotiate an agreement with the CRADA collaborating party or parties regarding the allocation of rights to any subject invention the recipient makes, solely or jointly, under the CRADA. The agreement shall be negotiated prior to the recipient undertaking the CRADA work or, with the permission of the Government, upon the identification of a subject invention. In the absence of such an agreement, the recipient agrees to grant the collaborating party or parties an option for a license in its inventions of the same scope and terms set forth in the CRADA for inventions made by the Government.

c. *Invention Disclosure, Election of Title and Filing of Patent Applications by Recipient*

1. The recipient will disclose each subject invention to USGS within two months after the inventor discloses it in writing to recipient personnel responsible for the administration of patent matters. The disclosure to USGS shall be in the form of a written report and shall identify the Agreement under which the invention was made and the inventor(s). It shall be sufficiently complete in technical detail to convey a clear understanding of the nature, purpose, operation, and, to the extent known, the physical, chemical, biological or electrical characteristics of the invention. The disclosure shall also identify any publication, on sale or public use of the invention, whether a manuscript describing the invention has been submitted for publication and, if so, whether it has been accepted for publication, at the time of disclosure. In addition, after disclosure to USGS, the recipient will promptly notify USGS of the acceptance of any manuscript describing the invention for publication, or of any on sale or public use planned by the recipient.
2. The recipient will elect in writing whether or not to retain title to any such invention by notifying USGS within two years of disclosure to USGS. However, in any case where publication, on sale, or public use has initiated the one-year statutory period wherein valid patent protection can still be obtained in the U.S., the period for election of title may be shortened by USGS to a date that is no more than 60 days prior to the end of the statutory period.
3. The recipient will file its initial patent application on an invention to which it elects to retain title within one year after election of title or, if earlier, prior to the end of any statutory period wherein valid patent protection can be obtained in the U.S. after a publication, on sale, or public use. The recipient will file patent applications in additional countries or international patent offices within either ten months of the corresponding initial patent application, or six months from the date when permission is granted by the Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks to file foreign patent applications when such filing has been prohibited by a Secrecy Order.

4. Requests for extension of the time for disclosure to USGS, election, and filing under subparagraphs 1., 2., and 3. may, at the discretion of USGS, be granted.

d. *Conditions When the Government May Obtain Title*

The recipient will convey to USGS, upon written request, title to any subject invention:

1. if the recipient fails to disclose or elect the subject invention within the times specified in paragraph c. above, or elects not to retain title, provided that USGS may only request title within 60 days after learning of the failure of the recipient to disclose or elect within the specified times;
2. in those countries in which the recipient fails to file patent applications within the times specified in paragraph c. above, but prior to its receipt of the written request of USGS, the recipient shall continue to retain title in that country; or in any country in which the recipient decides not to continue the prosecution of any application for, to pay the maintenance fees on, or defend in a reexamination or opposition proceeding on, a patent on a subject invention.

e. *Minimum Rights to Recipient*

1. The recipient will retain a non-exclusive royalty-free license throughout the world in each subject invention to which the Government obtains title, except if the recipient fails to disclose the subject invention within the times specified in paragraph c. above. The recipient's license extends to its domestic subsidiaries and affiliates, if any, within the corporate structure of which the recipient is a party and includes the right to grant sublicenses of the same scope to the extent the recipient was legally obligated to do so at the time the Agreement was made. The license is transferable only with the approval of USGS except when transferred to the successor of that part of the recipient's business to which the invention pertains.
2. The recipient's domestic license may be revoked or modified by USGS to the extent necessary to achieve expeditious practical application of the subject invention pursuant to an application for an exclusive license submitted in accordance with applicable provisions at 37 CFR Part 404. This license will not be revoked in that field of use or the geographical areas in which the recipient has achieved practical application and continues to make the benefits of the invention reasonably accessible to the public. The license in any foreign country may be revoked or modified at discretion of USGS to the extent the recipient, its licensees, or its domestic subsidiaries or affiliates have failed to achieve practical application in that foreign country.
3. Before revocation or modification of the license, USGS will furnish the recipient a written notice of its intention to revoke or modify the license, and the recipient will be allowed thirty days (or such other time as may be authorized by USGS for good cause shown by the recipient) after the notice to show cause why the license should not be revoked or modified. The recipient has the right to appeal, in accordance with applicable regulations in 37 CFR Part 404 concerning the licensing of Government-owned inventions, any decision concerning the revocation or modification of its license.

f. *Recipient Action to Protect Government's Interest*

1. The recipient agrees to execute or to have executed and promptly deliver to USGS all instruments necessary to: (i) establish or confirm the rights the Government has throughout the world in those subject inventions for which the recipient retains title; and (ii) convey title to USGS when requested under paragraph d. above, and to enable the Government to obtain patent protection throughout the world in that subject invention.
2. The recipient agrees to require, by written agreement, its employees, other than clerical and non-technical employees, to disclose promptly in writing to personnel identified as responsible for the administration of patent matters and in a format suggested by the recipient each subject invention made under this Agreement in order that the recipient can comply with the disclosure provisions of paragraph c. above, and to execute all papers necessary to file patent applications on subject inventions and to establish the Government's rights in the subject inventions. The disclosure format should require, as a minimum, the information requested by paragraph c.1 above. The recipient shall instruct such employees through the employee agreements or other suitable educational programs on the importance of reporting inventions in sufficient time to permit the filing of patent applications prior to U.S. or foreign statutory bars.
3. The recipient will notify USGS of any decision not to continue prosecution of a patent application, pay maintenance fees, or defend in a reexamination or opposition proceeding on a patent, in any country, not less than 30 days before the expiration of the response period required by the relevant patent office.
4. The recipient agrees to include, within the specification of any U.S. patent application and any patent issuing thereon covering a subject invention, the following statement: "This invention was made with Government support under (identify the agreement) awarded by the U.S. Geological Survey. The Government has certain rights in this invention."
5. The recipient or its representative will complete, execute and forward to USGS a confirmation of a License to the U.S. Government and the page of a United States patent application that contains the Federal support clause within two months of filing any domestic or foreign patent application.

g. *Subcontracts*

1. The recipient will include this Patent Rights clause, suitably modified to identify the parties, in all subcontracts, regardless of tier, for experimental, developmental or research work. The subcontractor will retain all rights provided for the recipient in this Patent Rights clause, and the recipient will not, as part of the consideration for awarding the subcontract, obtain rights in the subcontractors' subject inventions.
2. In the case of subcontracts, at any tier, when the prime award by USGS was a contract (but not a cooperative agreement), USGS, subcontractor, and contractor agree that the mutual obligations of the parties created by this Patent Rights clause constitute a contract between the subcontractor and the Foundation with respect to those matters covered by this Patent Rights clause.

h. *Reporting on Utilization of Subject Inventions*

The recipient agrees to submit on request periodic reports no more frequently than annually on the utilization of a subject invention or on efforts at obtaining such utilization that are being made by the recipient or its licensees or assignees. Such reports shall include information regarding the status of development, date of first commercial sale or use, gross royalties received by the recipient and such other data and information as USGS may reasonably specify. The recipient also agrees to provide additional reports in connection with any march-in proceeding undertaken by USGS in accordance with paragraph j. of this Patent Rights clause. As required by 35 U.S.C. § 202(c)(5), USGS agrees it will not disclose such information to persons outside the Government without the permission of the recipient.

i. *Preference for United States Industry*

Notwithstanding any other provision of this Patent Rights clause, the recipient agrees that neither it nor any assignee will grant to any person the exclusive right to use or sell any subject invention in the U.S. unless such person agrees that any products embodying the subject invention or produced through the use of the subject invention will be manufactured substantially in the U.S. However, in individual cases, the requirement for such an agreement may be waived by USGS upon a showing by the recipient or its assignee that reasonable but unsuccessful efforts have been made to award licenses on similar terms to potential licensees that would be likely to manufacture substantially in the U.S. or that under the circumstances domestic manufacture is not commercially feasible.

j. *March-in Rights*

The recipient agrees that with respect to any subject invention in which it has acquired title, USGS has the right in accordance with procedures at 37 CFR § 401.6 and USGS regulations at 45 CFR § 650.13 to require the recipient, an assignee or exclusive licensee of a subject invention to grant a non-exclusive, partially exclusive, or exclusive license in any field of use to a responsible applicant or applicants, upon terms that are reasonable under the circumstances and if the recipient, assignee, or exclusive licensee refuses such a request, USGS has the right to grant such a license itself if USGS determines that:

1. such action is necessary because the recipient or assignee has not taken or is not expected to take within a reasonable time, effective steps to achieve practical application of the subject invention in such field of use;
2. such action is necessary to alleviate health or safety needs which are not reasonably satisfied by the recipient, assignee, or their licensees;
3. such action is necessary to meet requirements for public use specified by Federal regulations and such requirements are not reasonably satisfied by the recipient, assignee, or licensee; or

4. such action is necessary because the agreement required by paragraph i. of this Patent Rights clause has not been obtained or waived or because a licensee of the exclusive right to use or sell any subject invention in the U.S. is in breach of such agreement.

k. *Special Provisions for Agreements with Non-profit Organizations*

If the recipient is a nonprofit organization, it agrees that:

1. rights to a subject invention in the U.S. may not be assigned without the approval of USGS, except where such assignment is made to an organization which has as one of its primary functions the management of inventions, provided that such assignee will be subject to the same provisions as the recipient;
2. the recipient will share royalties collected on a subject invention with the inventor, including Federal employee co-inventors (when USGS deems it appropriate) when the subject invention is assigned in accordance with 35 U.S.C. § 202(e) and 37 CFR § 401.10;
3. the balance of any royalties or income earned by the recipient with respect to subject inventions, after payment of expenses (including payments to inventors) incidental to the administration of subject inventions, will be utilized for the support of scientific or engineering research or education; and
4. it will make efforts that are reasonable under the circumstances to attract licensees of subject inventions that are small business firms and that it will give preference to a small business firm if the recipient determines that the small business firm has a plan or proposal for marketing the invention which, if executed, is equally likely to bring the invention to practical application as any plans or proposals from applicants that are not small business firms; provided that the recipient is also satisfied that the small business firm has the capability and resources to carry out its plan or proposal. The decision whether to give a preference in any specific case will be at the discretion of the recipient. However, the recipient agrees that the Secretary of Commerce may review the recipient's licensing program and decisions regarding small business applicants, and the recipient will negotiate changes to its licensing policies, procedures or practices with the Secretary when the Secretary's review discloses that the recipient could take reasonable steps to implement more effectively the requirements of this paragraph k.4.

l. *Communications*

All communications required by this Patent Rights clause must be submitted through the Office of Policy and Analysis (OPA), U.S. Geological Survey, Reston, VA 20192, gs_usgs_patents@usgs.gov.

Geospatial Data Act of 2018, Pub. L. 115-254, Subtitle F – Geospatial Data, §§ 751- 759C, codified at 43 U.S.C. §§ 2801–2811

If you receive financial assistance from the Department of the Interior (DOI), you must follow these rules for geospatial data:

Follow Federal Standards: All geospatial data you collect or create must meet the standards set by the Federal Geospatial Data Committee (FGDC) or the Department of the Interior. This is required by the Geospatial Data Act of 2018, which is part of Public Law 115-254, specifically in Subtitle F (Geospatial Data), sections 751-759C (codified at 43 U.S.C. §§ 2801– 2811).

Include Metadata: Your Geographic Information Systems (GIS) files must include complete metadata. Metadata is information that describes the data, such as where it came from, how accurate it is, and how it should be used. This is to ensure that anyone using the data understands its context and quality.

Check for Existing Data: Before you start collecting new geospatial data, you need to check GeoPlatform.gov. This is to see if there is already existing geospatial data from federal, state, local, or private sources that can meet your needs and is available for free. If such data is available, you should use it instead of gathering new data.

These rules help ensure that geospatial data is reliable, high-quality, and that resources are used efficiently.

Attachment C: Science Priorities

Northeast CASC Science Priorities

The selected host institution should support the mission of the Northeast Climate Adaptation Science Center (NE CASC) to produce relevant, actionable climate adaptation science that directly addresses management challenges through co-production and meaningful partnerships with natural and cultural resource managers, policymakers, Tribal Nations, and researchers **across the entire NE CASC footprint from Maine to Virginia**, including urban environments.

NE CASC science is guided by our mission and goals. These goals are:

- **Building an engaged community.** We bring together scientists, managers, and conservation stewards of the region's natural resources by developing and supporting networks, communities of practice, and forums to share the latest science.
- **Producing relevant, actionable science.** We identify climate science needs with input from partners within the U.S. Department of the Interior, as well as Northeast regional Tribal and State Governments, to co-produce science and tools that directly inform on-the-ground solutions for management challenges.
- **Supporting innovation.** We develop and foster cutting edge science and novel solutions required to respond to the challenge of climate adaptation. We also support research at the interface of adaptation and mitigation.
- **Developing the next generation.** We support the next generation of climate scientists through support of graduate research and associated pipeline support, including emphasis on the needs of populations historically underrepresented in climate science and adaptation.
- **Increasing accessibility.** We make the wealth of existing data, knowledge, and tools more accessible by emphasizing science delivery, science synthesis, visualization, and other approaches to maximize accessibility to climate information.
- **Fostering equity and inclusion.** We lead with best practices in diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice in all our work, from supporting the next generation of scientists, to partnering with historically underrepresented communities and scientists in our research and abiding by the data sovereignty of Tribal Nations.

The current [NE CASC science strategy \(2022-2025\)](#) is organized into four themes. These themes capture the majority of our work and represent the unique role that NE CASC activities bring to the intersection of ecosystems and climate. More details on projects funded by the NE CASC can be found [here](#).

The themes are:

- **Climate impacts to, and vulnerability of, fish, wildlife, and their habitats.**
Addressing gaps in the understanding of climate impacts to key resources, increasing the

understanding of the complex interaction between climate and other stressors, and translating this information into actionable vulnerability and risk assessments.

- **Effectiveness and transferability of adaptation actions and strategies.** Expanding knowledge around and usability of adaptation strategies, including evaluating the effectiveness and feasibility of existing and novel adaptation strategies and actions and translating this information into actionable guidance for managers and decision makers. This includes demonstrations and evaluations of transferability of climate adaptation strategies into novel habitats or landscape-scale applications.
- **Social, cultural, and economic considerations in natural resource climate adaptation.** Increasing the inclusion of social, cultural, and economic values in natural resource management decisions and priorities and evaluating how these variables influence efficiency, transferability, and buy-in for climate adaptation strategies. Examples include species, sites, and landscapes of cultural significance, Indigenous governance and ethical and equitable adaptation.
- **Landscape-scale conservation strategies in a changing climate.** Informing strategies that scale up from local approaches to enable and enact conservation at broader scales and across diverse ecosystems in the face of changing climate.

Within these organizational themes, the NE CASC identifies specific partner needs and priorities and responds to these **evolving needs** in the region. The selected host institution will contribute to and work collaboratively on addressing partner priorities.

Successful proposals should demonstrate how their capacity and expertise will advance the NE CASC's mission, goals, and themes in a comprehensive way. In addition to proposing specific scientific, capacity building, and translation activities, successful applicants will be expected to have a clear governance plan for their host and consortium structure that ensures the coordination and synergy of individual efforts. Applicants that engage with Tribal partners are encouraged to articulate how they plan to follow Tribal climate leadership, uphold Tribal sovereignty, and respect and protect Tribal data and knowledge.

Current areas of interest include:

- **Urban Ecology.** Given our location, investigations of the impact of climate change on the ecosystem services and functions of urban and suburban habitats and biodiversity are of particular interest. These may include potential intersections or interactions between climate change and land use or other non-climate factors, such as clean energy infrastructure.
- **Evaluation of Climate Adaptation Strategies.** Investigations of existing climate adaptation actions and their efficacy.

Finally, the NE CASC is committed to diversifying partner representation in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields relevant to our mission. As such, the selected host would be similarly committed to justice, diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility, as well as

demonstrably elevate the capacity, concerns, voices, and challenges of Tribal Nations and historically underserved communities through equitable engagement.

NE CASC values drive our science

- *Building an engaged community*
 - *Producing relevant, actionable science*
 - *Supporting innovation*
 - *Developing the next generation*
 - *Increasing accessibility*
 - *Fostering equity and inclusion*
-

NC CASC: Successful proposals are not expected to address every scientific priority; they should demonstrate how their capacity and expertise will advance the NC CASC's vision and desired outcomes on selected topics in a comprehensive way. In addition to proposing specific scientific, capacity building, and translation activities, successful applicants will be expected to have a clear governance plan for their host and consortium structure that ensures the coordination and synergy of individual efforts. Applicants that choose to engage with tribal partners are encouraged to articulate how they plan to follow tribal climate leadership, uphold tribal sovereignty, and respect and protect tribal data and knowledge.

Pacific Islands CASC Science Priorities

The selected host institution should support the mission of the Pacific Islands Climate Adaptation Science Center (PICASC) to produce relevant, actionable climate adaptation science that directly addresses management challenges through co-production and meaningful partnerships with natural and cultural resource managers, policymakers, communities, Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, and researchers across the entire PICASC footprint: the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI); the Freely Associated States (FAS), including the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), and the Republics of the Marshall Islands (RMI) and Palau; the Pacific Remote Island Areas (PRIAs); the state of Hawai‘i; and the unincorporated territories of American Samoa and Guam.

The PICASC is guided by our Program Vision: Enhancing Climate Security through Interconnectivity.

This Vision informs our Mission and Goals to:

- Support Sustainability of Pacific Island Cultures and Ecosystems, for and with this and Future Generations
- Maintain and Enhance Ecosystem and Community Potential for Climate Adaptation
- Support Responsible and Informed Cultural and Natural Resource Management by Co-Producing Research and Co-Developing Accessible, Effective Tools for Decision Making and Climate Adaptation Actuation based on Diverse Knowledge Systems
- Support Innovation
- Co-Assess Outcomes, including Diverse Ways of Knowing
- Strive Towards Climate Justice and Equity

The most recent PICASC [Five-Year Science Agenda](#) covered years 2018-2022. This Agenda is in the process of being updated, which should culminate during the initial years of the next Host Award. The themes noted below are in keeping with the expired Science Agenda and findings from recent regional syntheses, including the National Climate Assessment. These themes are anticipated to remain relevant in the next iteration of the PICASC Five-Year Science Agenda.

I. Themes:

- a. Ecological Security – Understanding Climate Change Impacts
 - i. Biodiversity
 - ii. Invasive Species Dynamics
 - iii. Projected Ecological Shifts
 - iv. Agroecology and Traditional Aquaculture
 - v. OneHealth
- b. Water Security – Understanding Climate Change Impacts on Biodiversity and System Function, including vulnerability of fish and aquatic systems, wildlife, plants, fungi, etc.
 - i. Altered Precipitation Patterns
 - ii. Ecohydrology and Watershed Services

- iii. Terrestrial and Coastal Impacts, across Relevant Sectors
 - iv. Drought, Fire, and Landscape Change
 - c. Shifting Human Relationships to Natural and Cultural Resources – Assessing Risks and Vulnerabilities alongside Opportunities
 - i. Pacific Islander and Native Hawaiian Knowledge Systems
 - ii. Significant Cultural Sites/Species/Systems
 - iii. Diaspora
 - iv. Community-Based Adaptation Planning
 - d. Planning, Decision, and Management Actuation Support Frameworks and Tools
 - i. Biocultural Approaches
 - ii. Concurrent, Complementary Approaches (e.g. Nature-based Solutions, RAD, etc.)
 - iii. Temporally and Spatially Appropriate Tools for Decision-Making
 - iv. Risk Assessments with Climate and Co-factors
 - v. Planning for and Managing Impacts of Increased Frequency and Severity of Natural Disasters
 - vi. Adaptation and Survival in Low Islands and Atolls
 - vii. Holistic, Whole of System Connectivity, Assessment, Planning, and Management – “Ridge to Reef”
 - viii. Chronic vs. Stochastic Change
 - e. Promotion of Co-Stewardship – Centering Equity and Justice Now and In Future Generations
 - i. Pacific Islander and Native Hawaiian Knowledge Systems
 - ii. Youth Engagement in Science and DKS
 - iii. Community Engagement

II. Challenges Potential Hosts Should Consider

- a. Data:
 - i. Historical and Current Data Scarcity
 - ii. Data Integration Challenges
 - iii. Data Management Challenges
 - iv. Tool Updates with Changing Data
- b. Model Utility:
 - i. Modeling Complex Systems
 - ii. Spatial and Temporal Applications Appropriate to Decision Making
 - iii. Concurrent Risk Factors
 - iv. Community Engagement in Model Development and Interpretation
 - v. Local Capacity to Support/Interpret Modeling Efforts
- c. Location
 - i. Historically Underserved, Data Depauperate
 - ii. Geographic Isolation
 - iii. Time Zones/Date Line Challenges
- d. Diversity of USAPI
 - i. Cultural Diversity
 - ii. Island Geography and Geology
 - iii. Micro-climates

- iv. Biodiversity, including Threatened and Endangered Species and Systems
 - v. Varied Governance Structures, cross-jurisdictional challenges
- e. Vulnerabilities and Disruptions to Cultural Securities
 - i. Local Food Systems
 - ii. Natural Resources Important to Cultural Practices
 - iii. Cultural Sites
 - iv. Changing Sense of Place/Expectations/ Management Values
 - v. Invasive Species/Diseases
 - vi. Cross-Sector Confounding Challenges
 - vii. Post-Disaster Recovery
- f. Maintaining Ecosystem Services in Understudied Systems
 - i. Valued by Communities
 - ii. Relevant to Adaptation
- g. Intra- and Interagency and Additional Donor Redundancy and Lack of Coordination.

III. Pathways/Products Towards Resilience

- a. Develop Best Practices
 - i. in Data Management for Decision Makers in the Region
 - ii. for Maintaining Connectivity Around Climate Change Adaptation Concerns, Challenges, and Progress
 - iii. For sharing tools, training, and other opportunities to enhance decision making
- b. Co-Develop Accessible and Applicable Planning and Adaptation Approaches and Tools in Management-Relevant Temporal and Spatial Scales
- c. Co-Produce Knowledges Used to Inform Planning, Action, and Assessments with Diverse Knowledge Systems, including Science, Community Knowledge, Cultural Knowledge, and Indigenous Knowledges
- d. Identify Measurable Factors and Thresholds that Affect or Function as Indicators of Sustainability
- e. Develop Models to Assess Impacts of Potential Management Strategies on Managed Systems, and Natural and Cultural Resources
- f. Apply excellent Communication Strategies to Promote Climate Adaptation Literacy across the Islands
- g. Create opportunities to share knowledge and build capacity, including locally relevant practices like “talk story”
- h. Build Connected Communities of Practice around relevant Climate Adaptation Themes.
- i. Create opportunities for Next Generation Climate Adaptation Knowledge Holders
- j. Build science literacy and capacity for climate adaptation

On an annual basis, within these themes, the PICASC identifies specific partner needs and priorities to guide funding and support. The PICASC also maintains flexibility to identify and address stochastic events and evolving needs (e.g. Climate-smart Maui wildfire recovery and

planning). The selected host institution will contribute to and work collaboratively on addressing community partner priorities across the USAPI.

Successful proposals should demonstrate how the capacity and expertise of the proposed consortium will advance the PICASC's vision, goals, and themes in a complementary and comprehensive way. In addition to proposing specific scientific, capacity building, and communications activities, successful candidates will be expected to have a clear governance plan for their host and consortium structure that ensures the coordination and synergy of individual efforts. Applicants that engage with Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, and Island Community partners are also encouraged to articulate how they plan to engage with leadership in these institutions. In particular, there should be a clear plan for how the applicant will address Knowledge sovereignty and promote respect and protection of Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander data and knowledges.

South Central CASC Science Priorities

The selected host institution should support the South Central CASC (SC CASC) mission: to work with DOI, Federal, Native Nations, and State agencies including natural and cultural resource decision-makers to create, translate, and deliver science that benefits fish, wildlife, water, land, and people adapting to a changing climate. To achieve this mission, the South Central CASC prioritizes the climate information needs of federal, state, and Tribal natural and cultural resource managers across our four-state region. This includes working with organizations responsible for priority-setting, resource allocation, and decision-making regarding the restoration, protection, conservation, and management of fish, wildlife, plants, lands, waters, and cultural resources.

Detailed information about the South Central CASC science priorities can be found in the [2025-2030 Science Agenda](#).

Key management challenges highlighted in the Science Agenda include:

- Amplification and seasonality of hydrometeorological extremes
- Wildfire and forest resilience
- Altered hydrological regimes
- Changes in water quality, quantity, and sediment delivery in the coastal marine zone
- Barriers, opportunities and unintended consequences of adaptation

Key Research Focal Areas highlighted in the Science Agenda include:

- At-risk species
- Agroecosystems as natural resources
- Cultural resources
- Freshwater hydro ecosystems
- Coastal ecosystems
- Rio Grande Basin
- Pilot research projects

Implementation of the South Central CASC Science Agenda will guide the work of the South Central CASC – both the USGS and the Consortium– over the next 5 years. Key considerations for implementation of this plan are highlighted below:

- Forward actionable science: Center user-driven science that addresses the information needs of regional partners and support approaches that enable iterative dialog to define research questions, integrate multiple knowledge systems, and support decision-making.
- Emphasize interdisciplinarity: Effectively advancing the adaptation of fish, wildlife, habitats, and cultural resources to the impacts of climate change is an interdisciplinary endeavor. The South Central CASC will work to support interdisciplinary approaches to adaptation that draw on diverse disciplines to understand how organizations, human communities, ecosystems, etc. adapt to a changing environment.

- Expand and sustain partnerships: Bring together the expertise of scientists, managers, and partners to design, develop, and implement research to inform effective climate adaptation efforts. Strengthen partnerships with Tribal governments, Indigenous communities, and inter-Tribal organizations involved in climate adaptation to support tribal climate adaptation needs. Develop partnerships with organizations that are connected to historically marginalized and underserved populations, e.g., HBCUs (Historically Black Colleges and Universities), TCUs (Tribal Colleges and Universities), and HSIs (Hispanic Serving Institutions), as well as community-serving and other non-profit organizations.
- Advance technical assistance and climate literacy initiatives: Build regional capacity to access, interpret, and apply climate science information and tools. In the next phase of our Science Agenda, we aspire to expand efforts to increase the climate literacy of natural and cultural resource managers in our region and beyond. This will include collaboration and information sharing with the next generation of ecosystem researchers, climate stewards, managers, and decision-makers as well as building the capacity of natural and cultural resource managers to make collaborative and climate-informed decisions.
- Prioritize science communication: Translate current research and knowledge into public awareness and community engagement. This involves communicating research findings in engaging and accessible formats tailored to the needs of diverse audiences and educating partners and other users on how to apply South Central CASC-generated information in their decision processes. The Center will prioritize sharing management priorities and science needs gleaned from the Science Advisory Committee, state visits, listening sessions, and from liaisons embedded on the landscape back with researchers to catalyze actionable science that addresses priority management needs.
- Integrate best practices in tool development: Continue to develop effective and user-friendly tools that bridge the gap between researchers and partners. Tools produced through funded projects should emphasize the importance of usability for managers, ensure regular updates, and should engage end users at every stage to inform design and implementation.
- Incorporate downscaling and application of Global Climate Models (GCMs): Prioritize the downscaling of Global Climate Models and the production of ecologically significant variables to support ecological forecasting. This will provide resource managers with more precise, localized data that enhances preparedness, adaptation, and resilience strategies, ensuring that climate adaptation efforts are grounded in the most relevant and actionable science.
- Consider attentiveness to scale in decision-making: Ensure climate-related data, models, tools, and information are developed at appropriate management scales to enhance their usability and applicability in management contexts.
- Forward ecosystem-based approaches to research and management: Promote holistic, ecosystem-scale approaches to research and management, as emphasized by agency personnel and in listening sessions, to ensure comprehensive and effective environmental stewardship.

- Implement monitoring and evaluation: Establish robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks for adaptation initiatives to ensure continuous improvement and effectiveness. Regularly assess and update these initiatives based on performance data, stakeholder feedback, and emerging climate trends to enhance resilience and adaptability.
- Center equity and Environmental Justice: Integrate and operationalize best practices in equity and environmental justice into research to ensure inclusive and fair outcomes. Prioritize the voices and needs of marginalized communities and ensure that research processes and outcomes address and mitigate environmental disparities.
- Leverage science synthesis and interpretation of existing information and data: Synthesize existing research to support climate adaptation decisions and actions. Integrate research findings into comprehensive insights to inform decision-making, identify knowledge gaps, enhance reliability to forward interdisciplinary solutions and evidence-based practices.