Fiscal Year 2023 Regional Environmental Literacy Capacity Building

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NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

Funding Opportunity Title: Fiscal Year 2023 Regional Environmental Literacy Capacity Building

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: NOAA-NMFS-HCPO-2023-2007600

Federal Assistance Listings Number: 11.457, Chesapeake Bay Studies

Dates: The deadline for applications is 11:59 PM Eastern Time on February 10, 2023 and applications must be submitted using www.grants.gov (Grants.gov). PLEASE NOTE: it may take Grants.gov up to two business days to validate or reject the application. Please keep this in mind in developing your submission timeline. Due to limited staffing of federal offices, hardcopy applications will not be accepted.

Informational webinars about the FY 2023 Chesapeake B-WET funding announcement will be held on November 21, 2022 at 1:00 PM Eastern Time and November 30, 2022 at 11:00 AM. To register for these webinars, please visit: https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/rt/8833601088603866894. Note that the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office's B-WET Coordinator will be available to answer questions Monday through Friday, 7:30AM-4:00PM Eastern Time excluding federal holidays.

Funding Opportunity Description: Chesapeake B-WET funds locally relevant, authentic experiential learning for K-12 audiences through Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs) and capacity building and partnership development for environmental education programs throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed states. Successful projects advance the environmental literacy goal of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement and the NOAA Education Strategic Plan by building capacity to support hands-on environmental education and scale best practices across states and the region.

This funding announcement priority is Regional Environmental Literacy Capacity Building which supports the development of systemic MWEEs in school districts by increasing the capacity of: state networks and their leadership, network weavers, their partners, and the larger environmental education community. Note that a separate funding announcement through B-WET for School District Programming is also available on Grants.gov.

FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Program Objective

a. OVERVIEW

The NOAA Bay Watershed Education and Training (B-WET) Program is an environmental education program that promotes locally relevant, experiential learning for students in kindergarten through 12th grade (K-12). B-WET was established in 2002 in the Chesapeake Bay watershed and currently exists in seven regions: Chesapeake Bay, Gulf of Mexico, New England, California, Pacific Northwest, Hawaii, and Great Lakes.

The goal of this funding opportunity is to support a project that will increase capacity for the field of environmental education at the regional, state, and local level. This capacity building project will complement the existing B-WET portfolio of projects working at the school district level. Capacity building projects are not required to directly reach students and teachers, but should lay the foundation for MWEEs at the regional, state, and/or school district level.

Successful B-WET projects provide formal education that supports the environmental literacy goal of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement (https://www.chesapeakebay.net/what/goals/environmental-literacy) and NOAA's Education Strategic Plan (https://www.noaa.gov/education/explainers/2021-2040-noaa-education-strategic-plan).

b. DEFINING THE MEANINGFUL WATERSHED EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE (MWEE)

All seven regions throughout the country use the MWEE as an approach to delivering high quality environmental education (www.noaa.gov/education/explainers/noaa-meaningful-watershed-educational-experience). Additional MWEE information and resources are available on the Bay Backpack website (www.baybackpack.com), including:

1. An Educator's Guide to the Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience (the MWEE Guide);
2. The MWEE 101 and MWEE 201 online trainings;
3. The Facilitator's Guide to MWEE Training; and
4. Evaluating a MWEE Resource.

The Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience (MWEE) is a learner-centered framework that focuses on investigations into local environmental issues and leads to

informed action. MWEEs are made up of multiple components that include learning both outdoors and in the classroom and are designed to increase environmental literacy by actively engaging students in building knowledge and meaning through hands-on experiences. In these experiences, the core ideas and practices of multiple disciplines are applied to make sense of the relationships between the natural world and society. MWEEs help connect students with their local environment and equip them to make decisions and take actions that contribute to stronger, sustainable, and equitable communities.

The MWEE consists of four essential elements and four supporting practices that build upon each other to create a comprehensive, student-centered learning experience. Throughout the MWEE, teachers provide structure, support, and encouragement as students use their curiosity and creativity to investigate and take action to address a local environmental issue. To support teacher implementation of MWEEs, B-WET has also included six characteristics that are recommended to be included in teacher professional development activities.

MWEEs are appropriate for all grade levels with content and practices growing in complexity and sophistication across the grades — starting with teacher-guided investigations and progressing to student-led inquiry. Using the MWEE framework helps educators create an engaging program to achieve their learning objectives (i.e., the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that students should be able to exhibit following instruction). Learning objectives should address academic standards, but might also include other objectives, such as teamwork, social-emotional learning, and civic responsibility.

Information on the Chesapeake B-WET program, including examples of education partnerships that have been funded to date, can be found at https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/new-england-mid-atlantic/chesapeake-bay/past-and-current-chesapeake-b-wet-projects.

Potential applicants are encouraged to contact the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office (contact information in Section VII) before submitting an application with questions about applicability of project activities to B-WET goals and objectives.

B. Program Priorities

The B-WET project funded under this announcement will support the outcomes of the Environmental Literacy Goal of the Chesapeake Bay Agreement by increasing the capacity of all levels of the environmental literacy ecosystem from MWEE implementation with youth, to state networks and their leadership. The project should:

-Resource and expand the existing Mid-Atlantic Environmental Literacy Network, including

regularly convening partners through regional workshops and conferences, increasing the number of and improving existing communication channels, supporting strategies for diversifying state networks, and recruiting new partners from sectors not traditionally engaged in environmental education.

-Convene the Education Workgroup and key partners through the biennial Environmental Literacy Forum and Summit, and workshops around other key priorities.

-Build the capacity of school districts and nonformal environmental education leaders to develop partnerships and programming to support systemic, equitable, and sustainable environmental literacy programs.

-Administer programming focused on increasing the number and quality of youth environmental education opportunities.

-Requested funds under this priority may go toward other environmental literacy capacity building initiatives such as supporting MWEE evaluation and monitoring initiatives of NOAA, the Chesapeake Bay Program, or other pertinent efforts.

Applicants seeking to administer the Regional Environmental Literacy Capacity Building effort should have the organizational capacity to effectively and simultaneously manage contracts to support the proposed work and at least 30 mini grants to grantees in all Chesapeake Bay Watershed jurisdictions. Applicants must document prior experience administering federal grant funding to school and non-profit organizations, and demonstrate previous experience with the MWEE and regional environmental literacy policy.

C. Program Authority

Under 33 U.S.C. § 893a(a), the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is authorized to conduct, develop, support, promote, and coordinate formal and informal educational activities at all levels to enhance public awareness and understanding of ocean, coastal, Great Lakes, and atmospheric science and stewardship by the general public and other coastal stakeholders, including underrepresented groups in ocean and atmospheric science and policy careers. In conducting those activities, the Administrator shall build upon the educational programs and activities of the agency.

II. Award Information

A. Funding Availability

Under this announcement, NOAA anticipates that up to $250,000 may be available in FY 2023 to fund new applications, subject to appropriations. NOAA anticipates making one new award. Requests should not exceed $250,000 annually in Federal funds with a minimum request of $150,000. Performance periods may be up to three years, but funding beyond the first increment, usually one year, is subject to the incremental funding policy described in Section II.B of this Announcement.

B. Project/Award Period

The project start date should be between July 1, 2023 and January 1, 2024. Applicants selected to receive funding may be asked to modify the project start date. It is recommended to include the flexibility of the requested start date in your project description. Applications should cover a project period of between one and three years. Projects that request multi-year funding must include in their submission a full description of the activities and estimated budget by line item (e.g. personnel, travel, supplies) for all proposed work for each year.

When a multi-year project is awarded, the scope of work and budget for all years is approved at the time of the award, but funding is usually provided only for the first year of the project with the remainder of the award subject to incremental funding. NOAA anticipates continuing these multi-year awards for the entirety of their project periods; however, the agency has no obligation to provide any additional funding in connection with the award beyond the initial funding increment. Continuation of an award to increase funding or extend the period of performance beyond the initial funding increment is at the sole discretion of NOAA and will be contingent upon satisfactory performance, continued relevance to the NOAA mission and priorities, and the availability of funds.

Recipients of incrementally-funded projects will not need to compete for funding in subsequent years, and current recipients seeking continued funding of these multi-year awards issued under the incremental funding policy do not need to apply to this funding announcement.

Single-year awards and awards for which NOAA shortens the period of performance are required to re-compete for continued funding after the initial period of performance. Any renewal of the project will depend on the submission of a new proposal subject to review, adequate progress on previous award(s), and available funding.

Future opportunities for submitting proposals to the B-WET competitive process are anticipated, but will depend on funding levels and resources available to support new projects.

C. Type of Funding Instrument

Applications selected for funding will be funded through a cooperative agreement under the terms of this notice. Applications funded through cooperative agreements will include substantial involvement of the Federal government, which may include, but is not limited to, collaboration on the scope of work, such as liaison activities between the grantee and NOAA personnel who are contributing data or expertise to the project. Additional forms of substantial involvement that may arise are described in Chapter 5.C of the Department of Commerce (DoC) Grants and Cooperative Agreements Manual, which is currently available at: https://www.commerce.gov/sites/default/files/2021-04/Department%20of%20Commerce%20Grants%20%20Cooperative%20Agreements%20Manual%20%2820%20April%202021%29.pdf

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are K-through-12 public and independent schools and school systems, institutions of higher education, community-based and nonprofit organizations, state or local government agencies, interstate agencies, and Indian tribal governments. For-profit organizations, foreign organizations, and foreign public entities are not eligible to apply; however, for-profit and foreign organizations and foreign public entities may participate with an eligible applicant as a project partner. Additional guidance on subrecipient partners can be found at https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/section-200.331 Likewise, Federal agencies are not eligible to receive Federal assistance under this announcement, but may be project partners.

The Department of Commerce/National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (DOC/NOAA) is strongly committed to increasing the participation of Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs), i.e., Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-serving institutions, Tribal colleges and universities, Alaskan Native and Native Hawaiian institutions, and institutions that work in underserved communities. The NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office (NCBO) encourages proposals involving any of the above institutions.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

Cost-sharing is not required for this program.

C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility

Projects whose sole audience is outside the Chesapeake Bay watershed are not eligible

unless additional funding is available, as described in Section III.A, Eligible Applicants.

Applications received after the deadline will not be reviewed. Applications that are lacking any of the required elements of the application or do not follow the form prescribed in IV.B of this Announcement may not receive merit review as described in Section V.B.

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Address to Request Application Package

Electronic application packages are required and are available at: http://www.grants.gov/ (Grants.gov).

If the applicant has difficulty accessing Grants.gov or downloading the required forms from the NOAA website, they should contact Elise Trelegan at the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office by email at elise.trelegan@noaa.gov or phone 240-628-4507. The NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office does not have a direct telephonic device for the deaf, however, TDD capabilities can be accessed through the State of Maryland-supplied TDD contact number, 800-735-2258, between the hours of 8 AM-4:30 PM Eastern Time.

B. Content and Form of Application

Required Elements for Applications:

(a) At the time of application submission, all applicants shall submit the following forms with signatures of the authorized representative of the submitting institution. (Note: submission through Grants.gov results in automatic electronic signatures on these forms.):

-Application for Federal Assistance: Form SF-424

-Budget Information, Non-construction Programs: Form SF-424A

-Assurances, Non-Construction Programs: Form SF-424B

-Certifications Regarding Lobbying: Form CD-511

-Disclosure of Lobbying Activities: Form SF-LLL (if applicable, see instructions on form)

(i) Project Summary (1 page):

-Project Title

-Priority Area: Regional Environmental Literacy Capacity Building

-Project duration: 12 to 36 month project period starting on the first of the month and ending on the last day of the month. This project period should match your timeline and all forms (e.g. 08/01/2023-07/31/2026)

-Organization and Partnerships: Briefly describe your organization and list your key partners for this grant, if applicable. Partnerships are encouraged.

-Summary: Provide a brief statement that explains the need for your project, how the need was identified, what the project goals are, and the specific objectives. Your summary should use plain language to provide reviewers with an understanding of the purpose and expected outcomes of your educational project. A person unfamiliar with your project should be able to read this paragraph and grasp your plan.

-Delivery Method: Explain how you will reach your audience, such as workshops, planning meetings, special events, webinars, etc.

-Audience: Describe the demographics of your audience including state(s) or region(s) and the number and types of participants you expect to reach, such as the number of administrators, subgrantees, teachers, staff, and/or students reached annually.

-Budget Information: Total federal funding requested each fiscal year; total non-federal match for each fiscal year. Total multi-year request and match (if applicable). Please list requested amounts in whole dollars. Match is not required for this funding opportunity and will not affect scoring.

(ii) Project Description (up to 10 pages): Describe in detail what your project will achieve with the following headings: What, Who, and How. Explain each aspect of your proposal clearly and address each topic below. Please address all of the following to ensure that grant reviewers can fully comprehend and score your project correctly. Specific Evaluation Criteria are defined in Section V.A.

-What: Explain the goals and objectives for your project. Include information about how the project builds capacity to advance the Environmental Literacy Goal of the Chesapeake Bay Agreement. Describe the gaps and needs that this capacity building project will address in the region. This section will be scored using evaluation criterion V.A.1

(Importance/relevance and applicability of proposal to the program goals). If your project may trigger consideration under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) as described in the NOAA NEPA policy in Section VI.B. of this Announcement, applicants should provide relevant information in the project description. Any applicable supporting documents may be included as attachments and do not count toward the page limit.

-Who: Identify the audience(s) that will be served and discuss why this audience is well-positioned to build capacity for environmental literacy. This section will be scored using evaluation criterion V.A.1 (Importance/relevance and applicability of proposal to the program goals).

-How: This is the logistical work plan for your project and should be the most in-depth section of the project description. Clearly define the activities that will be conducted during this project. Reviewers must be able to determine the duration and frequency of all activities. If multi-year, provide objectives for each year. Detail how the project meets or supports the definition of the MWEE as defined in this funding opportunity. Articulate any best practices or innovative approaches that will be used to meet the stated goals. This section will be scored using evaluation criterion V.A.2 (Technical merit)

(iii) Sustainability: Discuss a plan for sustainability of the project beyond NOAA funding. Explain how requested funding can build a project that can be sustained after NOAA grant funds expire, or if funding will be necessary beyond the project period. This may look like building in planning time for identifying future funds needed to carry out next steps toward sustaining networks or partnerships. List other sources of funding that have been sought for the project and the status of those requests. This section will be scored using evaluation criterion V.A.4 (Project Costs).

(iv) Outreach and Education: Projects should include external sharing and communication beyond the primary audience. Projects should include outreach strategies that enable the sharing of project outcomes and how they will communicate and disseminate information from the project. This could include conference presentations or strands, web development and social media. This section will be scored using evaluation criterion V.A.5 (Outreach and Education).

(v) Project Evaluation: Evaluation here is defined as the systematic collection and documentation of information about your project's outcomes in order to improve the project's effectiveness, guide judgments about its impact, and/or inform decisions about future programming or funding. In this section, explain your plans for meeting the goals and objectives of your project and for tracking and measuring progress on your outputs and your

short-term outcomes. If your medium- and long-term outcomes can also be measured within the project period, explain your plans for that evaluation as well. Evaluation plans may be quantitative and/or qualitative and may include, for example, evaluation tools, observation, or outside consultation. No more than 10% of the budget can be spent on the evaluation component of your proposal. This section will be scored using evaluation criterion V.A.2 (Technical Merit).

If funded by NOAA, grant recipients must be willing to report evaluation results to NOAA. For detailed information on how to create an evaluation plan visit NOAA's website at https://www.noaa.gov/office-education/bwet/grantee-resources.

Most project evaluations will not require institutional review board (IRB) approval, however it is the responsibility of the applicant to determine if this is necessary and report back to NOAA. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office for Human Research Protections website has resources to help you determine the necessity of IRB approval. You can find those resources at: https://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/regulations-and-policy/decision-charts-2018/index.html. If IRB is necessary, the applicant should include a timeline for IRB review as a part of their project evaluation plan, and no expenditures related to data collection may occur until IRB approval has been obtained.

Participation in B-WET National Evaluation:
In the past, B-WET has collected data on B-WET program grantee and participant activities and outcomes through its national evaluation system, above and beyond project-level evaluation work conducted by grantees. However, we are currently analyzing existing evaluation data and will enhance our evaluation approach based upon that analysis. Therefore, we are not currently collecting data via the B-WET National Evaluation System. Grantees may be invited to participate in future data collection activities and will be given advance notice about these opportunities so they can incorporate data collection into project and implementation plans, as appropriate.

Additional information about B-WET national evaluation work is available here: https://www.noaa.gov/office-education/bwet/grantee-resources/national-evaluation

(b) APPENDICES (not included in Project Description page limit):

(i) Budget Justification: Provide a detailed spreadsheet with narrative to support the requested items or activities (personnel/salaries, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, contract costs, and indirect costs). Please list requested amounts in whole dollars. If applying for multiple years of funding, the budget should be broken down for each year requested.

Applicants are encouraged to use the B-WET budget template found at https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/content/resources-prospective-chesapeake-bay-b-wet-grantees. The budget justification submitted with the application should match the dollar amounts on the required Forms SF- 424 and SF-424A. This section will be scored using evaluation criterion V.A.4 (Project Costs).

Specify how much funding has been requested from the Chesapeake Bay Trust Environmental Education Grants Program to support the project, if such funding has been requested.

For multi-year projects: Ensure that there is a detailed budget narrative detailing the budget requested for each year matching each Form SF-424A.

The budget may include an amount for indirect costs, which are essentially overhead costs for basic operational functions (e.g., lights, rent, water, insurance) that are incurred for common or joint objectives and therefore cannot be identified specifically within a particular project. See 2 C.F.R. 200.1 and 200.412-.415 at http://go.usa.gov/SBYh and http://go.usa.gov/SBg4. An applicant may also propose all allowable project charges as direct costs.

An applicant requesting indirect costs should provide a current approved Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement established with its cognizant Federal agency or an acknowledgement letter from the cognizant agency to which the applicant has submitted a proposed rate. In addition, if an award recipient does not have a current indirect cost rate with any Federal agency, the recipient may request to use the de minimis rate described at 2 C.F.R. 200.414 or it may negotiate a new rate with the Department of Commerce. The negotiation and approval of a new rate is subject to the procedures required by the NOAA and the Department of Commerce. The U.S. Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions, https://go.usa.gov/xRuaF, require that within 90 days of the award start date, recipients submit documentation (indirect cost proposal, cost allocation, plan, etc.) necessary to perform the review to establish a new rate to the address listed below.

Lamar Revis, Grants Officer
NOAA Grants Management Division
1325 East West Highway, 9th Floor
Silver Spring, MD 20910

(ii) Timeline: Include a project schedule that indicates when each action, event, milestone, product development, and evaluation will occur. Timelines should be detailed enough for

reviewers to ascertain the number and duration of audience contacts. This section will be scored using evaluation criterion V.A.2 (Technical Merit).

(iii) Logic Model: Projects should be accomplishment oriented and identify specific outputs and outcomes. Include a logic model that articulates the short-, mid-, and long-term outcomes resulting in increased capacity for environmental literacy. This section will be scored using evaluation criterion V.A.2 (Technical Merit).

(iv) Technical Experience and Qualifications: Attach a description of your programmatic capabilities and ability to successfully implement and manage the proposed project including staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them to successfully achieve the goals of the project, and your organizational experience and past history in performing tasks similar to the proposed project. Also include a paragraph describing qualifications of each of the key personnel conducting the project, including justification for how the project team members possess the educational, scientific, and cultural expertise needed to carry out the project. If you send resumes for the key personnel conducting the project, please keep them to a maximum of three, one-page resumes. This section will be scored using evaluation criterion V.A.3 (Overall Qualifications of Applicants).

(v) Partnership Letters of Commitment: If the applicant organization has partners, such as state agencies, universities, or other organizations, include letters of commitment from partners explaining their particular role in and/or funding of the proposed project. Do not include letters of endorsement from previous participants, teachers, or others not directly involved in project implementation. Letters should be received as part of application submission. This section will be scored using evaluation criterion V.A.3 (Overall Qualifications of Applicants).

(vi) Results from prior NOAA support: If any principal investigator (PI) or co-PI identified on the project has received support from NOAA in the past five years, information on the prior award(s) is required. The following information should be provided:

-The NOAA award number, amount and period of support;

-The title of the project;

-Summary of the results of the completed work (including # of teachers/students);

-If the proposal is for renewed support, a description of the relation of the completed work to

the proposed work.

(vii) Data Management Plan: Proposals submitted in response to this announcement must include a Data Management Plan of up to two pages. This Data Management Plan does not count against the 10-page Project Description page limit. The Data Management Plan should be aligned with the NOAA B-WET Data Management Guidance provided below and will be considered as part of proposal review. NOAA may, at its own discretion, make publicly visible the Data Management Plan from funded proposals, or use information from the Data Management Plan to produce a formal metadata record and include that metadata in a Catalog to indicate the pending availability of new data. Proposal submitters are hereby advised that the final pre-publication manuscripts of scholarly articles produced entirely or primarily with NOAA funding will be required to be submitted to NOAA Institutional Repository after acceptance, and no later than upon publication. Such manuscripts shall be made publicly available by NOAA one year after publication by the journal.

Data Management Guidance to Applicants
The NOAA B-WET program has developed this guidance to help grant applicants plan to share quality environmental data collected as part of their B-WET funded projects, where applicable. Environmental Data are defined by NOAA Administrative Order (NAO) 212-15: Management of Environmental Data and Information as recorded and derived observations and measurements of the physical, chemical, biological, geological, and geophysical properties and conditions of the oceans, atmosphere, space environment, sun, and solid earth, as well as correlative data such as socio-economic data, related documentation, and metadata. Digital audio or video recordings of environmental phenomena (such as animal sounds or undersea video) are included in this definition. Numerical model outputs are included in this definition, particularly if they are used to support the conclusion of a peer-reviewed publication. Data collected in a laboratory or other controlled environment, such as measurements of animals and chemical processes, are included in this definition. Environmental data and information collected or created under NOAA grants or cooperative agreements must be made discoverable by and accessible to the general public, in a timely fashion (typically within two years), free of charge or at no more than the cost of reproduction, unless an exemption is granted by the NOAA Program. Data should be available in at least one machine-readable format, preferably a widely-used or open-standard format, and should also be accompanied by machine-readable documentation (metadata), preferably based on widely-used or international standards.

Proposals submitted in response to this announcement must include a Data Management Plan of up to two pages describing how these requirements apply to the proposed project and will be satisfied. The Data Management Plan will be considered as part of the proposal

review. Note that the Federal Program Officer may require revisions to the applicant’s Data Management Plan prior to recommending the application for funding. Applicant Data Management Plans should be aligned with the following Data Management Guidance.

If environmental data collected/generated as part of the project are primarily for education and/or the practice of making observations using scientific techniques/methods (e.g. measuring pH of water with a refractometer, measuring atmospheric humidity with a sling psychrometer, measuring percent vegetative cover using a transect, etc.) and are not intended to be shared with scientists outside of the educational program, applicants may request permission not to make data publicly accessible and obtain approval from the Federal Program Officer, if funded. In this case, this element of the application should consist of a paragraph (under the heading "Data Management Plan") describing the intended use of the data and that an exemption from data sharing is requested.

If environmental data collected/generated as part of the project are for purposes beyond education and/or the practice of making observations using scientific techniques/methods, applicants should describe (up to 2 pages, under the heading "Data Management Plan") how data will be shared, based on the following guidance:

Contents: A typical Data Management Plan should include descriptions of the types of environmental data and information expected to be created during the course of the project; the tentative date by which data will be shared; the standards to be used for data/metadata format and content; methods for providing data access; approximate total volume of data to be collected; and prior experience in making such data accessible. The plan should describe or reference the data quality control techniques that will be used or note that the data will not be quality controlled. Data that is not quality controlled should include a description on the limitations of the data or an indication of degree of uncertainty.

Technical recommendations: The NOAA B-WET program does not offer specific technical guidance. Applicants should describe their proposed approach. Use of open-standard formats and methods is encouraged.

Data Accessibility: The NOAA B-WET program recommends that public access to grant produced data be enabled via an existing publicly accessible online data server at the funded institution is to be used to host these data (describe in application); or a public data repository appropriate to this scientific domain (describe in application). (e.g. The GLOBE Program - http://www.globe.gov/, CoCoRaHS Community - http://www.cocorahs.org/); or recipient-established data hosting capability (please describe in application’s Data

Management Plan).

Resources: Proposals are permitted to include the costs of data preparation, accessibility, or archiving in their budgets.

Questions Regarding This Guidance
Responsible NOAA Official for questions regarding this guidance and for verifying accessibility of data produced by funding recipients: Elise Trelegan, NOAA Fisheries, Elise.Trelegan@noaa.gov, 240-628-4507.

(viii) National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA): Consistent with Section IV.B.(a)(ii) and Section VI.B. of this Announcement, if any permits, permit requests, maps, or other supporting NEPA documents are applicable to your project, they may be included as attachments.

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

To enable the use of a universal identifier and to enhance the quality of information available to the public as required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act, 31 U.S.C. 6101 note, to the extent applicable, any proposal awarded in response to this announcement will be required to use the System for Award Management (SAM), which may be accessed online at https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/. Applicants are also required to use the Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System, as identified in OMB guidance published at 2 CFR Parts 25, which may be accessed at http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/textidx?SID=2dae4a7dcd5848a6364bb94d2d7786dd&mc=true&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2subtitleA.tpl.

D. Submission Dates and Times

Proposals must be submitted through Grants.gov and must be received by 11:59 PM Eastern Time on February 10, 2023. PLEASE NOTE: After electronic submission of the application through Grants.gov, the person submitting the application will receive within the next 24 to 48 hours two email messages from Grants.gov updating them on the progress of their application. The first email will confirm receipt of the application by the Grants.gov system, and the second will indicate that the application has either been successfully validated by the system before transmission to the grantor agency or has been rejected because of errors. Only validated applications are sent to NOAA for review. After the application has been validated, this same person will receive a third email when the application has been downloaded by the federal agency.

Due to limited staffing of federal offices, hardcopy applications will not be accepted.

Informational webinars will be held on November 21, 2022 at 1:00 PM Eastern Time and November 30, 2022 at 11:00 AM. To register for these webinars, please visit: https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/rt/8833601088603866894.

E. Intergovernmental Review

Applications under this program are not subject to Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs.

F. Funding Restrictions

Allowable Costs

Funds awarded cannot necessarily pay for all the costs that the recipient might incur in the course of carrying out the project. Allowable costs are determined by reference to the OMB Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (OMB Uniform Requirements), found at 2 C.F.R. Part 200 and adopted by the Department of Commerce through 2 C.F.R. 1327.101. Refer to http://go.usa.gov/SBYh and http://go.usa.gov/SBg4. Generally, costs that are allowable include salaries, equipment, supplies, and training, as long as these are "necessary and reasonable." Construction costs are not allowed.

G. Other Submission Requirements

Applicants are strongly encouraged not to wait until the application deadline date to begin the application process through http://www.grants.gov. In developing your submission timeline, note that validation or rejection of your application by Grants.gov may take up to 2 business days after submission.

In addition, potential funding applicants must register with Grants.gov before any application materials can be submitted, and first-time registration with Grants.gov can take up to three weeks or more. It is therefore strongly recommended that this registration process be completed as soon as possible to allow sufficient time to ensure applications are submitted before the closing date. Also, even if an applicant has registered with Grants.gov previously, the applicant's password may have expired or their registration may need to be renewed prior to submitting to Grants.gov. Grants.gov will not accept submissions if the applicant has not been authorized or if credentials are incorrect. Authorizations and credential corrections can take several days or longer to establish.

To use Grants.gov, an applicant must have a EUI number and be registered in the System for

Award Management (SAM), https://www.sam.gov/SAM/, and periodic renewals are required. Allow a minimum of five days to complete the SAM registration. More information can be found at SAM.gov.

The Grants.gov site contains directions for submitting an application, the application package (forms), and is also where the completed application is submitted. When using Grants.gov, applicants must locate the downloadable application package for this solicitation by the Funding Opportunity Number or the CFDA number listed in the Executive Summary of this Announcement. Applicants will be able to download a copy of the application package, complete it offline, and then upload and submit the application via the Grants.gov site.

After electronic submission of the application through Grants.gov, the person submitting the application will receive within the next 24 to 48 hours two email messages from Grants.gov updating them on the progress of their application. The first email will confirm receipt of the application by the Grants.gov system, and the second will indicate that the application has either been successfully validated by the system before transmission to the grantor agency or has been rejected because of errors. After the application has been validated, this same person will receive another email when the application has been downloaded by the Federal agency. Only validated applications are sent to NOAA for review, and the validation time is deemed the time NOAA received it.

If you experience a Grants.gov "systems issue" (technical problems or glitches with the Grants.gov website) that you believe threatens your ability to complete a submission before an applicable funding cycle deadline, please (i) print any error message received; and (ii) call the Grants.gov Contact Center at 1-800-518-4726 for immediate assistance. Ensure that you obtain a case number regarding your communications with Grants.gov. Please note: problems with an applicant organization's computer system or equipment are not considered "systems issues." Similarly, an applicant's failure to: (i) complete the required registration, (ii) ensure that a registered Authorized Organizational Representative submits the application, or (iii) receive an email message from Grants.gov validating or rejecting its application are not considered systems issues. NOAA is not required to screen applications before the submission deadline in order to identify deficiencies that would cause the application to be rejected or receive a poor evaluation. However, if deficiencies are identified by NOAA or the applicant, the applicant may correct any deficiencies in their application through resubmission before the deadline. A Grants.gov "systems issue" is an issue occurring in connection with the operations of Grants.gov system, such as the temporary loss of service by Grants.gov due to unexpected volume of traffic or failure of information technology systems, both of which are highly unlikely. In the event of a

confirmed “systems issue,” or a significant natural disaster affecting submission, NOAA may allow more time for applicant submission due to system problems at Grants.gov at the time of application submission that are beyond the control of the applicant.

V. Application Review Information

A. Evaluation Criteria

1. Importance/relevance and applicability of proposal to the program goals

This criterion assesses whether the proposed work addresses B-WET program goals and priority areas, and if the project is relevant to NOAA, federal, regional, state, or local activities.

Does the project meaningfully advance the Environmental Literacy Goal and related outcomes of the Chesapeake Bay Agreement at the regional level? Does the proposal address one or more clearly demonstrated gaps or needs in the region as whole? (20 points)

2. Technical merit

This criterion assesses whether the approach is technically sound, logical, and feasible, if the methods are appropriate, and whether there are clear project goals and objectives.

Does the application clearly describe how the project logistics will be executed and include details sufficient to determine how stated goals and outcomes will be achieved? Does the applicant describe how activities will connect to and be supportive of existing regional, state, and district-level capacity building efforts? Does the applicant ensure that activities will prioritize environmental literacy programs in school districts with the highest need? Does the applicant ensure that mini-grants will support regional priorities, including MWEEs? Does the applicant provide an effective evaluation strategy? (40 points)

3. Overall qualifications of applicants

This criterion assesses whether the applicant possesses the necessary experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project.

a. Does the applicant demonstrate an understanding of the Mid-Atlantic environmental literacy community, including in-depth understanding of existing partnerships, school district needs and challenges, and environmental literacy programming? Does the proposal

include partnerships that contribute to project implementation, and are those partners documented with a letter of commitment detailing how they will engage in the project (as opposed to simply voicing support)? Do these partnerships reach beyond usual partners in environmental education? Are these partners focused on ensuring equity while working to meet the unique needs of their community? Does the applicant demonstrate experience working in network development? Do they have experience administering an environmental education focused grant program? Does the proposal demonstrate that the applicant and/or their partners have the educational, scientific, and cultural expertise and organizational capacity to successfully complete this project?(20 points)

4. Project costs

This criterion evaluates the budget to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time frame.

a. Is there sufficient detail to verify that the budget request is reasonable for the number of participants and/or intended audience to be reached? Is the budget going to the highest priority needs of the project? Is the funding being used to broaden support for environmental education through the engagement of new partners? Does the applicant identify what ongoing resources specifically will be needed to maintain the program beyond the grant period? Does the budget adequately detail the amount of time each individual will spend on the project and is this a reasonable amount of staff time for such a project? Are the requested funds for salaries and fringe benefits only for those personnel who are directly involved in the implementation of the proposed project? (15 points)

5. Outreach and education

This criterion assesses whether the project involves mechanisms for significant external sharing and communication about the project by students, teachers, or project staff. This includes consideration of the Data Management Plan described in Section IV.B.(b)(vii) of this Announcement.

Does the proposal describe an outreach strategy that will effectively promote the program models to potential program partners throughout the Bay Watershed? Does the proposal describe opportunities for sharing effective models outside of the Bay Watershed? (5 points)

B. Review and Selection Process

An initial administrative review is conducted on each application received by the deadline to assure that it is eligible, responsive, and complete. NOAA, in its sole discretion,

may continue the review process for applications with non-substantive issues that may be easily addressed. If NOAA identifies a non-material deficiency in an application after the deadline, applicants may be requested to make non-material changes.

Applications that are cleared for meeting minimum requirements will be moved into merit review and evaluated by a two-phase review process; a preliminary technical review and a panel review meeting. Both phases are conducted by the same set of private and/or public sector expert reviewers. Each review phase is described in detail below, followed by post-merit-review procedures.

Technical Review:

The purpose of the technical review is to evaluate each proposal's technical merit via individual evaluations of the proposals. Each application will be reviewed by a minimum of three reviewers. Reviewers provide comments (which can be shared with applicants after the competition has concluded) and assign scores to the applications based on the evaluation criteria in Section V.A. of this federal funding opportunity. If one or more non-Federal reviewers is used, no consensus advice will be given.

Based on the results of the individually scored proposals, the Program Officer will prepare a preliminary ranked list of proposals. This preliminary rank order will be used in the subsequent panel meeting where final funding recommendations are made.

Panel Review:

A panel review meeting will be held following the technical review process. The purpose of the panel meeting is to discuss the proposals in-depth and to get final funding recommendations from reviewers. This in-depth discussion may raise issues or answer questions that a reviewer did not have in the technical review, or it may clarify an issue. After discussing proposals, panelists will provide comments and a final score for each application, upon which a final rank order is established. If one or more non-Federal reviewers is used, no consensus advice will be given by the panel.

Up to four separate review events may be held depending on geography or type of applications received. Scores from separate review events will not be combined to establish an overall rank order.

Project Selection

The Chesapeake B-WET Coordinator may, in consultation with NCBO staff, review the ranking of the proposals and recommendations of the review panel and make recommendations to the Selecting Official, who is expected to be the Director of the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office or designee. The rank order from the review panel will be the primary consideration for the Selection Official in deciding which of the new proposals will be recommended for funding to the NOAA Grants Officer. The Selecting Official shall award in rank order unless the proposal is justified to be selected out of rank order based on the Selection Factors described in Section V.C. of this Announcement. NOAA may select all, some, or none of the applications, or part of any application, ask applicants to work together or combine projects, defer applications to the future without re-competition, or reallocate funds to different funding categories, to the extent authorized.

Please note that not all activities submitted under a single proposal may be deemed appropriate for funding, and the Selecting Official may recommend alternate activities as appropriate or only partial funding, based on the selection factors and the merit and/or panel review written evaluations. For a proposal to be selected for funding, the applicant may be asked to modify objectives and activities, work plans, and budgets, and to provide supplemental information required by the agency prior to the award. This may result in submission of a revised application before final funding decisions are made. The exact amount of funds to be awarded, the final scope of activities, the project duration, and other relevant application details will be determined in pre-award negotiations among the applicant and NOAA officials. Applicants should also note that modifications to projects may be necessary as a result of NOAA’s efforts to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), as described in Section VI.B. of this Announcement, and other legislation.

Grants Management Review

The NOAA Grants Officer will review financial and grants administration aspects of a proposed award, including conducting an assessment of the risk posed by the applicant in accordance with 2 C.F.R. 200.206. If Federal funding will be over $250,000 over the period of performance, NOAA 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). 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. NOAA 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 §200.206.

In addition to reviewing repositories of government-wide eligibility, qualifications or financial integrity information, the risk assessment conducted by NOAA may consider items such as the financial stability of an applicant, quality of the applicant's management systems, an applicant's history of performance, previous audit reports and audit findings concerning the applicant and the applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on non-Federal entities. Applicants should be in compliance with the terms of any existing NOAA grants or cooperative agreements and otherwise eligible to receive Federal awards, or make arrangements satisfactory to the Grants Officer, to be considered for funding under this competition. All reports due should be received and any concerns raised by the agency should be timely addressed in order to receive a new award.

Upon review of these factors, if appropriate, specific award conditions that respond to the degree of risk may be applied by the NOAA Grants Officer pursuant to 2 C.F.R. 200.208. NOAA also reserves the right to reject an application in its entirety where information is uncovered that raises a significant risk with respect to the responsibility or suitability of an applicant. In addition, NOAA may not make a Federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and System for Award Management requirements referenced in Section VI.B. of this Announcement, and if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time NOAA is ready to make a Federal award, NOAA may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another applicant. The final approval of selected applications and issuance of awards will be by the NOAA Grants Officer. The award decision of the Grants Officer is final.

C. Selection Factors

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

1. Availability of funding

2. Balance/distribution of funds
-Geographically
-By type of institutions
-By type of partners

-By priority areas
-By project types

3. Duplication of other projects funded or considered for funding by NOAA or other Federal agencies

4. Program priorities and areas of interest as set out in section I. B of this NOFO.

5. Applicant's prior award performance

6. Partnerships with/Participation of targeted groups

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

D. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

Subject to the availability of funds, review of proposals will occur during the three months following the date given in this announcement that the full proposals are due to NCBO and notification, and applicants may receive communications to negotiate a potential award in April 2023. Final issuance of awards or declinations are expected by August 2023. No date prior to July 1, 2023 should be used as the proposed start date on proposals.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

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

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified their proposal was not recommended for funding or

was not reviewed because it did not meet the minimum requirements described in IV.B (Content and Form of Applications). Unsuccessful paper applications will not be returned to the applicant.

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

The Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions will apply to awards in this program. A current version of this document is available athttps://go.usa.gov/xPGmB. These terms will be provided in the award package in Grants Online.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

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

UNIFORM ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS, COST PRINCIPLES, AND AUDIT REQUIREMENTS. Through 2 C.F.R. § 1327.101, the Department of Commerce adopted Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards at 2 C.F.R. Part 200, which apply to awards in this program. Refer to http://go.usa.gov/SBYh and http://go.usa.gov/SBg4.

DOC TERMS AND CONDITIONS. Successful applicants who accept a NOAA award under this solicitation will be bound by Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions. This document will be provided in the award package in NOAA’s Grants Online system at http://www.ago.noaa.gov and at http://go.usa.gov/hKbj.

LIMITATION OF LIABILITY. Funding for programs listed in this notice is contingent upon the availability of appropriations. Applicants are hereby given notice that funds may not have been appropriated yet for the programs listed in this notice. In no event will NOAA

or the Department of Commerce be responsible for proposal preparation costs. Publication of this announcement does not oblige NOAA to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds.

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (NEPA). NOAA must analyze the potential environmental impacts, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), for applicant projects or proposals which are seeking NOAA federal funding opportunities. Detailed information on NOAA compliance with NEPA can be found at the following NOAA NEPA website: http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/, including our NOAA Administrative Order 216-6 for NEPA, http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/NAO216_6.pdf, and the Council on Environmental Quality implementation regulations, http://energy.gov/sites/prod/files/NEPA-40CFR1500_1508.pdf. Consequently, as part of an applicant's package, and under their description of their program activities, applicants are required to provide detailed information on the activities to be conducted, locations, sites, species and habitat to be affected, possible construction activities, and any environmental concerns that may exist (e.g., the use and disposal of hazardous or toxic chemicals, introduction of non- indigenous species, impacts to endangered and threatened species, aquaculture projects, and impacts to coral reef systems). In addition to providing specific information that will serve as the basis for any required impact analyses, applicants may also be requested to assist NOAA in drafting an environmental assessment, if NOAA determines an assessment is required. Applicants will also be required to cooperate with NOAA in identifying feasible measures to reduce or avoid any identified adverse environmental impacts of their proposal. Failure to do so shall be grounds for not selecting an application. In some cases if additional information is required after an application is selected, funds can be withheld by the Grants Officer under a special award condition requiring the recipient to submit additional environmental compliance information sufficient to enable NOAA to make an assessment on any impacts that a project may have on the environment.

REVIEW OF RISK. After applications are proposed for funding by the Selecting Official, the Grants Office will perform administrative reviews, including an assessment of risk posed by the applicant under 2 C.F.R. 200.206. These may include assessments of the financial stability of an applicant and the quality of the applicant’s management systems, history of performance, and the applicant’s ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on non-Federal entities. Special conditions that address any risks determined to exist may be applied. Applicants may submit comments to the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS) about any information included in the system about their organization for consideration by the awarding agency.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT (FOIA) - In the event that an application contains

information or data that you do not want disclosed prior to award for purposes other than the evaluation of the application, mark each page containing such information or data with the words "Privileged, Confidential, Commercial, or Financial Information - Limited Use" at the top of the page to assist NOAA in making disclosure determinations. DOC regulations implementing the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C 552, are found at 15 C.F.R. Part 4, which sets forth rules for DOC to make requested materials, information, and records publicly available under FOIA. The contents of funded applications may be subject to requests for release under the FOIA. Based on the information provided by the applicant, the confidentiality of the content of funded applications will be maintained to the maximum extent permitted by law.

NOAA Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Prevention and Response Policy Applicable to Financial Assistance Awards - If NOAA-operated, leased, or owned facilities are involved in any awards funded under this announcement, such awards are subject to the NOAA Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Prevention and Response Policy Applicable to Financial Assistance Awards Involving NOAA Operated Facilities (May 2018) found at: http://www.ago.noaa.gov/grants/facilities_assault_policy.html.

REQUIRED USE OF AMERICAN IRON, STEEL, MANUFACTURED PRODUCTS, AND CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS. If applicable, and pursuant to the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (“IIJA”), Pub.L. No. 117-58, which includes the Build American, Buy American (BABA) Act, Pub. L. No. 117-58, §§ 70901-52 and OMB M-22-11, recipients of an award of Federal financial assistance from the Department of Commerce (DOC) are hereby notified that none of the funds provided under this award may be used for a project for infrastructure unless: 1) all iron and steel used in the project are produced in the United States–this means all manufacturing processes, from the initial melting stage through the application of coatings, occurred in the United States; 2) all manufactured products used in the project are produced in the United States—this means the manufactured product was manufactured in the United States; and the cost of the components of the manufactured product that are mined, produced, or manufactured in the United States is greater than 55 percent of the total cost of all components of the manufactured product, unless another standard for determining the minimum amount of domestic content of the manufactured product has been established under applicable law or regulation; and 3) all construction materials1 are manufactured in the United States—this means that all manufacturing processes for the construction material occurred in the United States. The Buy America preference only applies to articles, materials, and supplies that are consumed in, incorporated into, or affixed to an infrastructure project. As such, it does not apply to tools, equipment, and supplies, such as temporary scaffolding, brought to the construction site and removed at or before the completion of the infrastructure project. Nor does a Buy America preference

apply to equipment and furnishings, such as movable chairs, desks, and portable computer equipment, that are used at or within the finished infrastructure project but are not an integral part of the structure or permanently affixed to the infrastructure project. WAIVERS. When necessary, recipients may apply for, and DOC may grant, a waiver from these requirements. DOC will notify the recipient for information on the process for requesting a waiver from these requirements. 1) When DOC has made a determination that one of the following exceptions applies, the awarding official may waive the application of the domestic content procurement preference in any case in which DOC determines that: a. applying the domestic content procurement preference would be inconsistent with the public interest; b. the types of iron, steel, manufactured products, or construction materials are not produced in the United States in sufficient and reasonably available quantities or of a satisfactory quality; or c. the inclusion of iron, steel, manufactured products, or construction materials produced in the United States will increase the cost of the overall project by more than 25 percent. A request to waive the application of the domestic content procurement preference must be in writing. DOC will provide instructions on the format, contents, and supporting materials required for any waiver request. Waiver requests are subject to public comment periods of no less than 15 days and must be reviewed by the Made in America Office. There may be instances where an award qualifies, in whole or in part, for an existing waiver described at whitehouse.gov/omb/management/made-in-america. DEFINITIONS. “Construction materials” includes an article, material, or supply—other than an item of primarily iron or steel; a manufactured product; cement and cementitious materials; aggregates such as stone, sand, or gravel; or aggregate binding agents or additives2 —that is or consists primarily of: non-ferrous metals; plastic and polymer-based products (including polyvinylchloride, composite building materials, and polymers used in fiber optic cables); glass (including optic glass); lumber; or drywall. “Domestic content procurement preference’’ means all iron and steel used in the project are produced in the United States; the manufactured products used in the project are produced in the United States; or the construction materials used in the project are produced in the United States. “Infrastructure” includes, at a minimum, the structures, facilities, and equipment for, in the United States, roads, highways, and bridges; public transportation; dams, ports, harbors, and other maritime facilities; intercity passenger and freight railroads; freight and intermodal facilities; airports; water systems, including drinking water and wastewater systems; electrical transmission facilities and systems; utilities; broadband infrastructure; and buildings and real property. Infrastructure includes facilities that generate, transport, and distribute energy. ‘‘Project’’ means the construction, alteration, maintenance, or repair of infrastructure in the United States. -- 1 Excludes cement and cementitious materials, aggregates such as stone, sand, or gravel, or aggregate binding agents or additives. 2 IIJA, § 70917(c)(1).

C. Reporting

(a) In addition to Evaluation Reporting described in Section IV.B.(a)(v) of this Announcement, financial and performance progress reporting requirements are described in the Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions and 2 C.F.R. 200.328-.200.330, referenced above in Sections VI.A. and B. of this Announcement, and further implemented as described below.

1. Financial Reports - Information about federal financial reports is available at: http://go.usa.gov/cjE4T
2. Performance/Progress Reports - Suggested content and guidance related to Chesapeake B-WET performance/progress reports can be found here: https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/funding-and-financial-services/how-manage-your-grant

(b) The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act, 31 U.S.C. 6101 Note, includes a requirement for awardees of applicable Federal grants to report information about first-tier subawards and executive compensation under Federal assistance awards. All awardees of applicable grants and cooperative agreements are required to report to the Federal Subaward Reporting System (FSRS) available at www.FSRS.gov on all subawards over $30,000. Refer to 2 C.F.R. Part 170 at http://go.usa.gov/cT8WW.

VII. Agency Contacts

Please visit the Chesapeake B-WET Applying for a Grant webpage: https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/grant/noaa-chesapeake-bay-watershed-education-and-training-program or contact Elise Trelegan at the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office by email at elise.trelegan@noaa.gov or by phone at or phone 240-628-4507.

VIII. Other Information

The applicant acknowledges and understands that information and data contained in applications for financial assistance, as well as information and data contained in financial, performance and other reports submitted by applicants, may be used by the Department of Commerce in conducting reviews and evaluations of its financial assistance programs. For this purpose, applicant information and data may be accessed, reviewed and evaluated by Department of Commerce employees, other Federal employees, Federal agents and contractors, and/or by non-Federal personnel, all of whom enter into appropriate conflicts of interest and nondisclosure agreements covering the use of such information. As may be provided in the terms and conditions of a specific financial assistance award, applicants are expected to support program reviews and evaluations by submitting required financial and performance information and data in an accurate and timely manner, and by cooperating

with Department of Commerce and external program evaluators. In accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.303(e), applicants are reminded that they must take reasonable measures to safeguard protected personally identifiable information and other confidential or sensitive personal or business information created or obtained in connection with a Department of Commerce financial assistance award.