The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) National Nonprofit Organization Recreational Boating Safety (RBS) Grant Program

All entities wishing to do business with the federal government must have a unique entity identifier (UEI). Currently, the DUNS number, which is a unique nine-character identification number provided by Dun & Bradstreet (D&B) free of charge, is the official UEI. D&B assigns UEI (DUNS) for each physical location of a business. Requesting a UEI (DUNS) takes about 10 minutes. Receiving a UEI (DUNS) takes 1–2 business days (under normal circumstances) when using the D&B web form. Sam.gov information can be found at: https://sam.gov/content/entity-registration.

Grants.gov registration information can be found at: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html. **Detailed information regarding DUNS and SAM is also provided in Section D of this NOFO.**

Planned UEI Updates in Grant Application Forms

On April 4, 2022, the Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number will be replaced by a "new, non-proprietary identifier" requested in, and assigned by, the System for Award Management (SAM.gov). This new identifier is being called the Unique Entity Identifier (UEI).

Additional Information can be found on Grants.gov:

https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/planned-uei-updates.html

A. Program Description

1. **Issued By**
   U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), United States Coast Guard (USCG), Office of Auxiliary & Boating Safety, Boating Safety Division

2. **Assistance Listings Number**
   97.012

3. **Assistance Listings**
   Boating Safety Financial Assistance

4. **Funding Opportunity Title**
   National Nonprofit Organization Recreational Boating Safety (RBS) Grant Program

5. **Funding Opportunity Number**
   DHS-USCG-2022-001

6. **Authorizing Authority for Program**
   Recreational Boating Safety, Public Law 117-58, 46 U.S.C 131

7. **Appropriation Authority for Program**
   Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, Public Law 117-58

8. **Announcement Type**
   Initial

9. **Program Overview, Objectives, and Priorities**
   The purpose of the National RBS Program is to reduce the number of accidents, injuries, and deaths on America's waterways and to provide a safe enjoyable experience for the boating public. The program also encourages greater nonprofit organization participation and uniformity in boating safety efforts.

   As stated in the Executive Summary of the National RBS Program 2017 – 2021 Strategic Plan, the three major priorities are:
   a. cultivate a boating public that is better prepared to engage in safer boating behaviors;
   b. make better informed policy decisions by building and using highly-integrated systems to gather and evaluate data from many sources; and
   c. nurture collaborative efforts among the stakeholders that benefit the boating public within the recreational boating safety community.

   You can find more information about the National RBS Program 2017 – 2021 Strategic Plan at http://uscgboating.org/content/strategic-plan.php.

   This competition includes a list of Areas of Interest the USCG has created in order to better implement the Strategic Plan. **Applicants are encouraged, but not required, to address one of the Areas of Interest in their proposal**. Applicants are also welcomed to cite targeted priorities in their application, but there is no need to copy information directly from the Strategic Plan into the narrative. Please see **Appendix A: Areas of Interest**.

10. **Performance Measures**
    Federal programs are required to relate financial data and performance accomplishments to the Office of Management and Budget per 2 C.F.R. § 200.301 Performance measurement. Applicants are required to develop and submit two performance measures, specifically tailored to the proposed project, that:
    a. measure program-specific outcomes, and
    b. identify program performance accomplishments.

    Performance measures should produce reliable data on the effectiveness and efficiency of the program and substantiate the use of federal assistance dollars. USCG will assess these performance measures during the application review process (please see **Section E. 1. a. Programmatic Criteria** for more information).

11. Key Changes for the 2022 Competition

- Applicants may apply for one- or three-year awards.
- There are updated and expanded upon instructions in **Section D.9.b. Required Sections & Page Limits**.
- Applicants are required to submit a standalone timeline up to two pages in length. Please see **Section D.9.b.3. Program Timeline** for specific instructions.
- Applicants are required to use the new, Microsoft Excel-based budget template. The template is labeled as **Appendix D. Budget Template** and can be downloaded directly from the funding opportunity in Grants.gov. Please see **Sections D.9.c.1. Budget** and **D.10. Other Submission Requirements** for more information.
- Applicants are required to submit their organization's procurement policies. Please see **Section D.9.c.3. Other Required Documents** for more information.
- The review process will include a clarification period during which reviewers may ask questions about an application. Please see **Section E.3. Clarification Period** for more information.
- There are updated and expanded upon instructions in **Appendix C. Budget & Budget Narrative Instructions.**

B. Federal Award Information

1. Available Funding for the NOFO: $5,966,082

Up to $4,800,000 may be awarded to three-year proposals

2. Period of Performance: 15 or 39 months.

Extensions are permitted. Please refer to **Section H. Additional Information – Extensions**.

3. Projected Period of Performance Start Date(s): 07/01/2022

4. Projected Period of Performance End Date(s): 15 months: 09/30/2023
39 months: 09/30/2025

5. Funding Instrument Type: Cooperative Agreement

A cooperative agreement is distinguished from a grant in that it provides for substantial involvement between the federal awarding agency and the non-federal entity in carrying out the activity contemplated by the federal award. USCG will work closely with recipients throughout the duration of the award to ensure that approved activities are conducted in accordance with program statute and federal regulations, requested costs are allowable and allocable, and deliverables are developed or enhanced with direct input and review by USCG staff.

USCG can halt an activity immediately if the detailed performance specifications or requirements, as determined by the agreed upon terms and conditions of the award agreement, are not met. USCG may require the review and approval of proposed tasks, activities, and deliverables prior to the recipient's implementation or dissemination.

USCG staff also play a direct role in the post-award negotiation process. Please see **Section. F. 2. Grant Award Negotiations** for more information.

C. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants

Nonprofit with 501(c) (3) IRS Status (Other than Institution of Higher Education)

2. Applicant Eligibility Criteria

46 U.S.C. 13104 authorizes federal financial assistance for "national boating safety activities of national nonprofit public service organizations." The USCG has developed the following eligibility criteria based on federal law and regulations, legal rulings and interpretations, and guidance from other federal agencies. Organizations do not need to be boating related.

a. Applicants must be a nongovernmental organization.

b. Applicants must be designated as a nonprofit organization with tax-exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) in accordance with 26 U.S.C. 501(c) (3). Applicants are required to submit a copy of their letter from the IRS specifying the organization's status.

c. Applicants must demonstrate the ability to provide recreational boating safety services that are national-in-scope. National-in-scope means the organization must demonstrate the ability to provide recreational boating safety services in all regions; is currently providing recreational boating services in all regions; or proposes a specific plan and timeline to partner and/or contract with other national, state, and/or local organizations across all regions to provide recreational boating safety services. A national membership base does not suffice. For more information regions, please see **Appendix B: Grant Regional Map**.

d. Applicants must demonstrate that one of their primary functions is to provide services to the public.

Nonprofit organizations that are associated with profit-making or taxable organizations are eligible for grants if they meet all the eligibility requirements.

3. Ineligible Organizations

The following organizations are ineligible for funding: (1) colleges and universities; (2) hospitals; (3) governments or governmental organizations (including city, county, state, etc.); (4) churches; (5) municipalities; (6) local units of national organizations; (7) fraternal, lobbying, or religious organizations; and (8) organizations that are unable operate on a national level.

4. **Contracting with Ineligible Organizations**
   Eligible applicants may contract with ineligible organizations to provide direct services to the proposed project. In the project narrative, the applicant must:
   a. indicate that it will maintain all project records, serve as the primary point of contact, and maintain funding accountability; and
   b. explicitly state which activities will be conducted by the contracted entity.

5. **Cost Share or Match**
   None.

D. Application and Submission Information

1. **Key Dates and Times**

   a. **Application Start Date:** **12/02/2021**

   b. **Application Submission Deadline:** **02/11/2022 at 11:59:59 PM EST**

   Applications received after the **February 11, 2022** deadline will **NOT** be considered for funding. Application packages that are improperly completed may not be accepted. Please note that a completed application must be submitted in order to be considered for funding. A list of required documents is in **Section D. 9. Content and Form of Application Submission**.

   c. **Anticipated Funding Selection Date:** **No later than 05/31/2022**

   d. **Anticipated Award Date:** **No later than 06/30/2022**

2. **Agreeing to Terms and Conditions of the Award**
   By submitting an application, applicants agree to comply with the requirements of this NOFO and the terms and conditions of the award, should they receive an award.

3. **Address to Request Application Package**
   Application forms and instructions are available at Grants.gov. To access these materials, go to http://www.grants.gov.

   For a hardcopy of the full NOFO, please write or fax a request to: Cynthia.M.Dudzinski@uscg.mil.

   Applications will be processed through the Grants.gov portal.

4. **Steps Required to Submit an Application, Unique Entity Identifier, and System for Award Management (SAM)**

   To apply for an award under this program, all applicants must:

a. Apply for, update, or verify their Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number from Dun & Bradstreet (D&B) and Employer ID Number (EIN)
b. In the application, provide a valid Data Universal Numbering System DUNS number, which is currently the unique entity identifier;
c. Have an account with https://login.gov/;
d. Register for, update, or verify their SAM account and ensure the account is active before submitting the application;
e. Create a Grants.gov account;
f. Add a profile to a Grants.gov account;
g. Establish an Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) in Grants.gov;
    - *The name listed as the AOR should be the person within your organization who has delegated signing authority. This person will be the primary contact on all official correspondence, including competition updates, notifications, and award documents. Please be sure to identify the correct person at the time of application.*
h. Submit application in Grants.gov;
i. Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information, including information on a recipient's immediate and highest level owner and subsidiaries, as well on all predecessors that have been awarded a federal contract or grant within the last 3 years, if applicable, at all times during which it has an active federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a federal awarding agency.

Applicants are advised that DHS may not make a federal award until the applicant has complied with all applicable DUNS and SAM requirements. Therefore, an applicant's SAM registration must be active not only at the time of application, but also during the application review period and when DHS is ready to make a federal award. Further, as noted above, an applicant's or recipient's SAM registration must remain active for the duration of an active federal award. If an applicant's SAM registration is expired at the time of application, expires during application review, or expires any other time before award, DHS 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.

5. Electronic Delivery

DHS is participating in the Grants.gov initiative to provide the grant community with a single site to find and apply for grant funding opportunities. DHS encourages or requires applicants to submit their applications online through Grants.gov, depending on the funding opportunity. For this funding opportunity, the USCG requires applicants to submit applications through Grants.gov.

6. How to Register to Apply through Grants.gov

a. *Instructions*: Registering in Grants.gov is a multi-step process. Read the instructions below about registering to apply for DHS 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.

The registration process can take up to four weeks to complete. Therefore, registration should be done in sufficient time to ensure it does not impact your ability to meet required application submission deadlines.
Organizations must have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number, active System for Award Management (SAM) registration, and Grants.gov account to apply for grants. If individual applicants are eligible to apply for this grant funding opportunity, then you may begin with step 3, Create a Grants.gov account, listed below.

Creating a Grants.gov account can be completed online in minutes, but DUNS and SAM registrations may take several weeks. Therefore, 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) *Obtain a DUNS Number*: All entities applying for funding, including renewal funding, must have a DUNS number from Dun & Bradstreet (D&B). Applicants must enter the DUNS number in the data entry field labeled "Organizational DUNS" on the SF-424 form.

   For more detailed instructions for obtaining a DUNS number, refer to: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-1-obtain-duns-number.html.

2) *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.

   For more detailed instructions for registering with SAM, refer to: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-2-register-with-sam.html.

3) *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.

4) *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 DUNS Number for the organization in the DUNS field while adding a profile.

For more detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/add-profile.html.

5) *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.

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

7) *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.**

7. How to submit an Application to DHS 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 NOFO, 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 using Workspace, refer to: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/workspace-overview.html.

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

b. *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.

c. *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.

d. *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.

e. *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 DUNS number. To trigger this feature, an applicant must complete the SF-424 information first. Once it is completed, the information will transfer to the other forms.

f. *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.

g. *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 to which you are applying.

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 DHS with tracking your issue and understanding background information on the issue.

8. Timely Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission

a. *Online Submission.* All applications must be received by **11:59:59 PM** Eastern time on 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 DHS 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 DHS.

   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.

9. Content and Form of Application Submission

a. **Format:** Applications should be written in Times New Roman, 12 pt. black font, and one-inch margins.

b. **Required Sections & Page Limits**
   The following guidance and page limits apply to specific, required components of the application. Please follow the instructions carefully. The USCG screens all application materials for compliance with the page limits, as well as the instructions provided in **Section D.10. Other Submission Requirements**. The USCG will remove any text over the page limit and any document that is not specifically required by this NOFO. **Reviewers will not read, consider, or be provided with any text or document submitted beyond what is allowed.**

   1) **Executive Summary: One page**
      Applicants must include an overview of the proposed project. It should include what the applicant plans to accomplish, a summary of the proposed activities and deliverables, and a description of the potential, broader impact of the grant's

successful completion. Reviewers will not assess the summary against the selection criteria but use it as an introduction to the proposal. If the application is successful, the USCG will post the summary, pending any necessary revisions or updates, to its public website.

Applicants **should NOT** include:

- internal or technical jargon
- references to past grants or the Strategic Plan
- organizational information or prior history
- charts, graphs, or graphics.

The Executive Summary should only include information about the proposed project or activities.

2) **Organization Description: One page**
Applicants must provide a clear and concise description of the organization, including its knowledge, background, capacity, and technical experience to complete the proposed activities. If applicable, demonstrate the organization's previous experience with or working in recreational boating safety.

This one-page description should be the primary location for reviewers to review and assess your organization's ability to complete the proposed project. Please be sure to substantiate this experience vis-à-vis the resumes included elsewhere in this application and to cite this experience, as necessary but not to the point of redundancy, within the program narrative.

3) **Program Timeline: Up to two pages**
Applicants must submit a timeline that clearly explains the entire duration of the one- or three-year proposal. In lieu of writing the timeline in the program narrative, applicants should use the following table to itemize and explain each milestone of the proposed project and its related tasks. The timeline should provide a clear, chronological description that supports and coincides with the program narrative.

Applicants may use as many rows and as much text per row, as needed, to best describe the proposed activities. Applicants are encouraged to consider **Section E.1.a. Programmatic Criteria** when drafting the timeline.

#	**Task**	**Timeframe**	**Additional Information**
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

4) **Program Narrative: 10 pages**
Applicants are encouraged to write their program narrative to address each of the published selection criteria in **Section E. 1. a. Programmatic Criteria**. Applicants should review the criteria beforehand and address each one in the order that they are listed.

Applicants should clearly articulate their goals, objectives, and proposed deliverables, and how these will be achieved. The narrative should demonstrate how the proposed activities are relevant to recreational boating safety and how their successful completion serves the greater public.

Applicants **should** also:

- clearly state at the beginning of the narrative:
  - if the proposal is for one or three years
  - if the proposal will target an area of interest, as applicable
- provide as much specificity as possible when describing key tasks, itemizing budget expenses, and explaining deliverables
- include cross-references to relevant information to avoid redundancies and to maximize page space.

Applicants **should NOT** include**:**

- Technical jargon, short-hand, or abbreviations.
- Active hyperlinks to external resources that are not direct citations of a referenced source, e.g. websites containing previous work, examples of online videos, etc. Providing "see more here" hyperlinks to external information does not align with the intention of a page limit.
- Citations that exceed the 10-page limit. If using footnotes or end notes, be sure that they are counted towards the overall page count.

c. **Budget, Budget Narrative, & Other Required Documents: NO PAGE LIMITS**
The following documents are required, but not subjected to page limits.

1) **Budget**
Applicants must submit a separate, detailed, Excel-based budget using **Appendix D. Budget Template**. Applicants must download the Excel file separately from the funding opportunity in Grants.gov. and follow the instructions in **Appendix C. Budget & Budget Narrative Instructions.**

Applicants should not submit previously accepted, internally formatted budgets. Everyone is expected to use **Appendix D. Budget Template.**

For multi-year awards: Applicants proposing a multi-year project should include only Year One costs in the SF-424A. Subsequent years of funding should be included in the detailed budget and budget narrative per the templates. Funding will be awarded on a year-by-year basis pending the recipient's performance and the availability of funds. The USCG reserves the right to reduce a multi-year proposal to a 15-month period of performance pending the review and assessment of the application. Reduction in project length would be discussed during grant award negotiations, if the abbreviated project is recommended for funding.

2) **Budget Narrative**
The budget narrative should describe, explain, and justify to the fullest extent possible, in the same order and in complete sentences, the itemized costs for the proposed activities identified in the budget. Reviewers will use this as a tool to assess the necessity and cost reasonableness for each line item. Applicants should use the budget narrative to expand upon what you want to request, for how much, and for what purpose. It should not be used as an "extension" of the project narrative. Applicants must follow the instructions in **Appendix C. Budget & Budget Narrative Instructions.**

3) **Other Required Documents:**
   1. 501 (c) (3) letter from the IRS designating the applicant's nonprofit status
   2. Verification of a federally approved accounting system
   3. A copy of the Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, if applicable
   4. A Board of Directors roster that outlines duties, responsibilities, etc.
   5. Resumes of principal participant(s), if applicable:
      - *A principal participant is the primary individual(s) responsible for the preparation, conduct, and administration of the grant, and serves as the lead for the project.*
   6. Travel policy
      - *Ensure that all travel requests and expenses are allowable and consistent with this policy.*
   7. Procurement policies
      - *Include the procurement policies for your organization. Policies should be consistent with 2 C.F.R. § 200.317-200.327 Procurement Standards.*

10. Other Submission Requirements

a. **Do not submit any additional documents that are not explicitly requested in this NOFO.** These documents will not be provided to the reviewers. This includes, but is not limited to:
   1. bibliographies, footnotes, or end notes that extend beyond the 10-page narrative
   2. contractual plans or proposals unless the procurement process is complete at the time of application
   3. letters of support
   4. examples of past work
   5. presentation materials
   6. survey data
   7. course lists

We enforce these rules to ensure a fair and equitable competition for all applicants regardless of the type of project proposed.

b. **Please combine your documents into two separate PDF files:**
   1) ***Narratives***: Executive Summary, Organization Description, Timeline, Project Narrative, Budget*, and Budget Narrative
   2) ***Additional Docs***: Other Required Documents

   Please follow the instructions in* ***Appendix C. Budget & Budget Narrative Instructions *on how to save or print-to-PDF the tabs of your Excel spreadsheet.*

c. **Please keep your project titles and file names short**. Lengthy names increase administrative burden. It may also affect our ability to download files from Grants.gov.

11. Funding Restrictions

All expenditures under this program must be for allowable recreational boating safety costs.

12. Allowable Costs

a. **Pre-Award Costs**

Pre-award costs are those incurred prior to the effective date of the federal award directly pursuant to the negotiation and in anticipation of the federal award where such costs are necessary for efficient and timely performance of the scope of work. Such costs are allowable only to the extent that they would have been allowable if incurred after the date of the federal award and only with the written approval of the federal awarding agency.

b. **Indirect Facilities and Administrative (F&A) Costs**

Nonprofit organizations that do not have a current negotiated (including provisional) rate 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 2 C.F.R. § 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.

Any non-federal entity that has a current federally-negotiated indirect cost rate may apply for a one-time extension of the rates in that agreement for a period of up to four years. This extension will be subject to the review and approval of the cognizant agency for indirect costs. If an extension is granted the non-federal entity may not request a rate review until the extension period ends. At the end of the four-year extension, the non-federal entity must re-apply to negotiate a rate. Subsequent one-time extensions (up to four years) are permitted if a renegotiation is completed between each extension request.

E. Application Review Information

1. Application Evaluation Criteria

a. **Programmatic Criteria**
This section includes the criteria that reviewers will use to assess each application. Applicants should draft the narrative in the order in which the questions appear to ensure each one is addressed. **Please remember that the program narrative cannot exceed 10 pages**. **Reviewers will not be given any text that exceeds the page limit.** Also note that this section includes the points for each question, indicating its weight.

1) **Does the applicant propose a project that addresses an area of interest? –**
   a. **If yes**: Does the applicant effectively demonstrate how it will target an area of interest in its proposed project? **(20 pts)**
   b. **If no**: Does the applicant identify an area of need for the recreational boating safety community and effectively demonstrate an ability to complete the proposed project? **(20 pts)**

   All applications are eligible to receive up to 20 points. "If yes:" Applicants should clearly identify the targeted area of interest, propose relevant activities, and address any specific requirements prescribed in the area of interest description. "If no:" Applicants should clearly identify the overall need it plans to address and substantiate its importance, relevance, and potential contribution to the recreational boating safety community.

2) **Does the applicant clearly define a project timeline and milestones? (10 pts)**

   *Applicants should demonstrate that the timeline for the proposed project is reasonable and that the milestones are achievable. Applicants should ensure that incremental goals and/or milestones are clearly planned and identified, as well as any projects that may be replicated during the period of performance (e.g. delivering multiple training sessions of the same course). It is important to show the progression of the project start to finish. Applicants should follow the instructions in **Section D.9.b.3. Program Timeline**.*

3) **Are the proposed activities measureable and consistent with program requirements? (10 pts)**

   *Applicants should develop performance measures using the guidance included in **Section A. 10. Performance Measures.** Applicants should indicate if their measurements are qualitative, quantitative, or both, and demonstrate that these measures are both realistic and achievable. Applicants should also explain how their proposed activities, and their measurements, contribute to the priorities identified for the RBS program.*

4) **Does the applicant effectively plan to measure and assess its deliverables? (10 pts)**

Reviewers will assess the effectiveness of the proposed performance measures.

5) **Does the applicant demonstrate knowledge and experience in Recreational Boating Safety? (10 pts)**

Applicants should clearly explain how the organization and its staff have the knowledge, experience, and background to operate a RBS program successfully. This information should be captured in the one-page Organization Description and substantiated vis-à-vis staff resumes and the program narrative.

6) **Does the applicant have the organizational capacity and technical experience to complete the proposed project? (20 pts)**

If the technical experience is not "in-house," applicants should have a plan in place to acquire it and indicate the associated costs.

7) **Does the applicant describe how the proposed project is, or will be, national-in-scope? (10 pts)**

Applicants should clearly explain how their proposed project qualifies as national-in-scope. Applicants should review the program-specific definitions of national-in-scope identified in ***Section C. 2. Applicant Eligibility Criteria****.*

8) **How effective are the applicant's proposed methods of outreach and/or dissemination for its products and/or deliverables? (10 pts)**

Applicants should indicate the associated costs.

9) **Do the budget and budget narrative align with the proposed project? (10 pts)**

Please ensure that the budget and budget narrative matches and/or is tailored to the proposed project, especially if your organization is submitting more than one application. Additionally, please use consistent terminology when describing items in the narrative, budget, and budget narrative, aligning the order in which they appear.

10) **Are the budget line items necessary and/or reasonable? (10 pts)**

Reviewers will assess the necessity and cost reasonableness of each budget line. Use the budget narrative to describe, explain, and justify the associated costs of *the project. Please see **Appendix B: Budget & Budget Narrative Templates** for additional guidance.*

11) **Are the proposed administrative costs reasonable? (10 pts)**

    Reviewers will assess if the costs associated with managing and executing the proposed activities are cost-effective as they relate to the deliverables. For example, reviewers will consider the level of effort to monitor a contract or create a deliverable against the amount of money paid to the person doing it. Reviewers will draw from their subject matter expertise to assess the proposed costs, and applicants should provide a clear explanation and justification for them in their budget narratives.

b. **Financial Integrity Criteria**
Prior to making a federal award, the USCG is required by 31 U.S.C. § 3321 note, 41 U.S.C. § 2313, and 2 C.F.R. § 200.205 to review information available through any OMB-designated repositories of government wide eligibility qualification or financial integrity information. Therefore, application evaluation criteria may include the following risk-based considerations of the applicant:
1) Financial stability.
2) Quality of management systems and ability to meet management standards.
3) History of performance in managing federal award.
4) Reports and findings from audits.
5) Ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements.

c. **Supplemental Financial Integrity Criteria and Review**
Prior to making a federal award where the anticipated total federal share will be greater than the simplified acquisition threshold, currently $250,000 (see Section 805 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018, Pub. L. No. 115-91, OMB Memorandum M-18-18 at https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/M-18-18.pdf):
1) The USCG is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM, which is currently the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS) and is accessible through the sam.gov website.
2) An applicant, at its option, may review information in FAPIIS and comment on any information about itself that a federal awarding agency previously entered.
3) The USCG will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in FAPIIS, 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 C.F.R. § 200.206.

2. **Review and Selection Process**
   Applications are subjected to a Merit Review performed by Subject Matter Experts (reviewers). Reviewers assess the applications for technical merit, personnel qualifications, and the degree to which a proposal offers potential value and measurements to program goals as stated in this NOFO. Any persons who assess and score the nonprofit organization grant applications are required to complete a DHS Conflict of Interest Form.

   Upon completion of the review, BSX-2 staff logs the scores and prepares a ranking list, along with the recommended funding levels from the reviewers, for discussion and consideration. All recommendations are presented to the BSX-2 Branch and Division Chiefs for their review. The Office Chief then reviews and presents a recommendation to the Director of Inspections and Compliance for their review and ultimate approval. The Director of Inspections and Compliance has the authority to approve the awards. Once the Director of Inspections and Compliance determines the final funding levels, an approval memo is generated, co-signed, and kept as part of the official program file.

3. **Clarification Period**
   During the application review and assessment process, reviewers will have a one-week period to ask applicants clarifying questions about the proposals. The Nonprofit Coordinator will notify the applicants in advance of the scheduled clarification period so that they can prepare accordingly. The Nonprofit Coordinator will serve as an intermediary between the applicants and the reviewers. Applicants must respond within a specific amount of time and can only provide responses directly to the question(s). The Nonprofit Coordinator will provide instructions to the applicants once the clarification period is scheduled.

F. Federal Award Administration Information

1. **Notice of Award**
   Before accepting the award, the AOR and recipient should carefully read the award package. The award package includes instructions on administering the grant award and the terms and conditions associated with responsibilities under federal awards. **Recipients must accept all conditions in this NOFO as well as any special terms and conditions in the Notice of Award to receive an award under this program.**

   All applicants will be notified of their funding status. Successful applicants will receive a letter indicating the funded proposal(s), award amount(s), and the assigned Grant Technical Managers (GTMs). The letter will also include important information regarding grant award negotiations and participation in the annual, mandatory webinar.

2. **Grant Award Negotiations**
   After successful applicants receive their funding notifications, the assigned GTMs will work with recipients to identify areas of the narrative and/or budget that may require revision. Revisions may be required if:
   - the applicant was not awarded the amount of funding for which they applied
   - there are activities and/or costs that are not allowable or approved

- adjustments need to be made to the project timeline and/or period of performance.

Pending the results of the negotiations, recipients must submit the appropriate revised documents to the USCG staff for review and approval. The USCG staff may provide guidance and/or stipulations that help inform the recipient's revisions. Staff will also draft a summary of their role(s) and responsibilities that define the USCG's substantial involvement in the management of the cooperative agreement. After review and mutual acceptance of the modified document(s), the award agreement and terms and conditions will be sent to the recipient for signature.

The assigned GTM and Grants Management Specialist will remain the recipient's primary points of contact for the duration of the the project and should:

- provide technical assistance as required
- review and approve the recipient's progress reports and requests for payments
- provide required federal forms and explain how to fill them out
- act as liaison between the recipient and any other USCG staff.

3. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

All successful applicants for DHS grant and cooperative agreements are required to comply with DHS Standard Terms and Conditions, which are available online at: DHS Standard Terms and Conditions.

The applicable DHS Standard Terms and Conditions will be those in effect at the time the award was made, unless the application is for a continuation award. In that event, the terms and conditions in effect at the time the original award was made will generally apply. What terms and conditions will apply for the award will be clearly stated in the award package at the time of award. These will be found in your USCG award agreement.

4. Reporting

a. **Federal Financial Reporting Requirements**

The Federal Financial Report (FFR) form is available online at: SF-425 *OMB #4040-0014*

The financial reporting schedule for this program is:

- Through Quarter 1: due Jan 30th
- Through Quarter 3: due Jul 30th
- Through the Final Financial Report: due Jan 30, 2024 or 2026

Subsequent years of funding will follow the same schedule. Recipients will be provided with post-award reporting guidance and examples.

b. **Programmatic Performance Reporting Requirements**

Recipients are required to submit quarterly performance reports due no later than 30 days after the end of each quarter. The report should be a one to two-page narrative summarizing key tasks, notable accomplishments, challenges, and/or adjustments made during the previous quarter. Progress reports **should not** include future work plans or anticipated activities, activities that did not happen during the reporting period, or activities that were not funded by the grant.

The performance reporting schedule for this program is:

- Quarter 0*: Jul 1 – Sept 30th, due Oct 30th
- Quarter 1: Oct 1 – Dec 31st, due Jan 30th
- Quarter 2: Jan 1 – Mar 31st, due Apr 30th
- Quarter 3: Apr 1 – Jun 30th, due Jul 30th
- Quarter 4: Jul 1 – Sept 30th, due Oct 30th
- Quarters 5+ will follow the same schedule, as applicable
- Final Report: due Jan 30, 2024 or 2026

**Quarter 0 is an adopted USCG term for the months preceding the federal fiscal year. This will be clarified further during post-award guidance.*

The total number of quarterly reports for each period of performance are:

- 15 months – 5 reports
- 39 months – 13 reports

c. **Closeout Reporting Requirements**

Within 120 days after the end of the period of performance, or after an amendment has been issued to close out a grant, recipients must submit the following:

1) The final request for payment, if applicable;
2) The final FFR (SF-425);
3) The final progress report detailing all accomplishments;
4) A qualitative narrative summary of the impact of those accomplishments throughout the period of performance; and
5) Other documents required by this NOFO, terms and conditions of the award, or other USCG guidance.

If applicable, an inventory of all construction projects that used funds from this program must be reported with the final progress report.

After these reports have been reviewed and approved by the USCG, a closeout notice will be completed to close out the grant. The notice will indicate the period of performance as closed, list any remaining funds that will be de-obligated, and address the requirement of maintaining the grant records for three years from the date of the final FFR, unless a longer period applies, such as due to an audit or litigation, for equipment or real property used beyond the period of performance, or due to other circumstances outlined in 2 C.F.R. § 200.334 Retention requirements for records.

In addition, any recipient that issues subawards to any subrecipient is responsible for closing out those subawards as described in 2 C.F.R. § 200.344 Closeout. Recipients acting as pass-through entities must ensure that they complete the closeout of their subawards in time to submit all necessary documentation and information to the USCG during the closeout of their prime grant award.

The recipient is responsible for returning any funds that have been drawn down but remain as unliquidated on recipient financial records.

d. **Disclosing Information per 2 C.F.R. § 180.335**
This reporting requirement pertains to disclosing information related to government-wide suspension and debarment requirements. Before a recipient enters into a grant award with the USCG, the recipient must notify the USCG if it knows if it or any of the recipient's principals under the award fall under one or more of the four criteria listed at 2 C.F.R. § 180.335:
1) Are presently excluded or disqualified;
2) Have been convicted within the preceding three years of any of the offenses listed in 2 C.F.R. § 180.800(a) or had a civil judgment rendered against it or any of the recipient's principals for one of those offenses within that time period;
3) Are presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity (federal, state or local) with commission of any of the offenses listed in 2 C.F.R. § 180.800(a); or
4) Have had one or more public transactions (federal, state, or local) terminated within the preceding three years for cause or default.

At any time after accepting the award, if the recipient learns that it or any of its principals falls under one or more of the criteria listed at 2 C.F.R. § 180.335, the recipient must provide immediate written notice to the USCG in accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 180.350.

5. Monitoring and Oversight
Per 2 C.F.R. § 200.329, the USCG, through its authorized representatives, has the right, at all reasonable times, to conduct desk reviews, make site visits to review project accomplishments and management control systems to review project accomplishments and to provide any required technical assistance. During site visits, the USCG will review recipients' files related to the grant award. As part of any monitoring and program evaluation activities, grant recipients must permit the USCG, upon reasonable notice, to review grant-related records and to interview the organization's staff and contractors regarding the program. Recipients must respond in a timely and accurate manner to the USCG requests for information relating to the grant program**.**

G. <u>DHS Awarding Agency Contact Information</u>

1. Contact and Resource Information
Cynthia Dudzinski: (202) 372-1064
Cynthia.M.Dudzinski@uscg.mil

H. Additional Information

1. **Period of Performance Extensions**
   One-time extensions are allowed. Recipients must request an extension in writing 10 days prior to the end of the period of performance. The USCG staff will review the request, as well as the award's agreed-upon deliverables, milestones, and timeline, to determine if the request is both appropriate and feasible. The USCG will notify the recipient via email and/or an official notification letter.

2. **Program Income**
   Recipients are encouraged to earn income to defray program costs where appropriate. The USCG authorizes program income per the addition method as defined by 2 C.F.R. § 200.307 (e)(2). Program income must be used for allowable and approved grant activities, and it must be expended prior to the end of the project period. Recipients are encouraged to spend program income first before requesting additional grant funds.

3. **SAM.gov Registration: Beware Third Party Scammers**
   There is **NO FEE** to register or maintain your SAM.gov registration.

   If you get an email, text, or phone call from a company asking you to contact them right away about your SAM.gov registration, be cautious. If you are asked to pay money to complete or renew your SAM.gov registration, be cautious.

   These messages are not from the federal government. It is **FREE TO REGISTER** in SAM.gov for any entity. You engage third party vendors at your own risk.

   Please report these type of messages to the Federal Service Desk (FSD) at https://fsd.gov/fsd-gov/home.do. It will be reviewed by General Services Administration (GSA) staff.

4. **Appendices**
   A. Areas of Interest
   B. Grant Regional Map
   C. Budget & Budget Narrative Instructions
   D. Budget Template – ***Applicants must download the Excel file separately from the funding opportunity in Grants.gov.***

Appendix A: Areas of Interest

The Coast Guard is accepting applications for both one-year or three-year proposals unless otherwise stated within the area of interest. This specification, if applicable, is bold-faced and italicized at the end of the description. Please read the requirements for each area of interest carefully and ensure that your narrative addresses the critical elements. Three-year proposals will be awarded on a year-by-year basis pending the recipient's performance and the availability of funds.

1. **Standards Development**
   This area of interest will develop and carry out a program to encourage active participation by members of the public and other qualified persons in the development and maintenance of technically-sound voluntary safety standards for the manufacturing of recreational boats and associated equipment, focusing on extending and/or enhancing federal safety regulations. The standards should be designed to improve the safety of recreational boats and reduce boating incidents where the boats or their associated equipment are the cause or contributing factor. Focus areas may include electrical systems, fuel systems, control systems, emergency cut-off devices, warning labels, sound signal appliances, and thermal appliances. ***Applicants are encouraged to submit three-year proposals that demonstrate a sufficient timeline to accomplish the proposed goals and an ability to respond to other critical topics as they arise.***

2. **Outreach, Marketing, and Year-Round Safe Boating Campaign Projects**
   This area of interest will include activities designed to inform the boating public and media advertising firms about the inherent risks associated with boating, to persuade them to adopt safe boating behaviors, and to remind them of these behaviors. The desire is also to ensure that advertising campaigns by media firms that may show recreational boating include safe boating behaviors. Specific advertising campaigns should target first-time boaters, inexperienced operators, and the boat rental market. Regarding campaign projects, examples include the importance of boater education, engine cut-off switch use, life jacket wear, and cold water awareness; compliance with the navigation rules; consequences of irresponsible behavior on the water, including boating under the influence (BUI); victims' support to provide awareness through stories on the human side of boating tragedies; the continued successful efforts by the boat manufacturing industry and recreational boating community to make boating safer; electronic visual distress signaling device (eVDSD) and safety equipment selection given activity, operating area, and carriage requirements (including how to identify signals of others in distress); the importance of required boating equipment; the requirements for fire protection equipment given the new final rulemaking and the proper use of that equipment; and education on new and old life jacket labels..

3. **Standardize State Recreational Boating Safety Statutes and Regulations**
   This area of interest will foster measurable standardization and reciprocity among state boating safety statutes, regulations, and rules, and how they are administered and enforced with special focus on incident reporting, boating under the influence of alcohol and drugs, boater education, and life jacket wear requirements. Hands-on coordination of state efforts and the establishment of cooperative environments, to include workshops and conferences where state officials can discuss issues regarding these topics, are required. This standardization shall endeavor to be compatible with other state boating safety efforts and promote RBS program effectiveness, the use of national education standards, and improved administration of USCG-approved vessel numbering and incident reporting systems. The successful grantee(s) shall provide for a

systematic measurement depicting passage of state laws during the performance period that provide for uniformity and reciprocity of boating safety laws. The successful grantee(s) shall also maintain an up-to-date and comprehensive online guide to state recreational boating safety laws and regulations that can be modified upon notification or discovery of change. ***Applicants are encouraged to submit three-year applications that demonstrate a sufficient timeline to accomplish the proposed goals and an ability to respond to other critical topics as they arise.***

4. **Boating Incident Investigations Courses**
   This area of interest will develop USCG-approved curriculum and materials necessary for instruction of recreational boating incident investigators in the United States. The curriculum must include at least 40 hours of instruction and must cover the requirements of Title 46 U.S.C. Chapter 61 – Reporting Marine Casualties, Title 33 CFR 173 Subpart C – Casualty and Accident Reporting, 33 CFR 174 Subpart C – Casualty Reporting System Requirements (in particular, the casualty reporting system administration requirements of 33 CFR 174.103), 33 CFR Subpart D – State Reports, and 33 CFR Part 179 – Defect Notification. Proposals for this training are for classroom/on-site settings; however, given possible travel restrictions and other impacts associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, applicants are encouraged to submit proposals that also offer courses via online technologies. The proposal should target geographically diverse locations that have not previously hosted an incident investigation course, focusing on class sizes to best balance the maximum number of total students trained and the maximum number of class locations. The course must cover an overview of recreational boat incident investigations, general shipboard and vessel terminology, navigation rules and regulations, boat manufacturer compliance with 33 CFR 181/183, environmental distractions, witness interviews, collision dynamics, evidence collection and preservation, diagramming, and report writing, with an emphasis on adherence to definitions and detail in the incident narrative and with particular focus on human factor causal elements. The award must also include an instructor’s manual or handbook. ***Applicants are encouraged to submit a three-year proposal.***

5. **Boating Under the Influence (BUI) of Alcohol and Dangerous Drugs Detection and Enforcement Courses**
   This area of interest will develop and conduct train-the-trainer and BUI detection and enforcement training courses for state and local marine patrol officers, USCG boarding officers, and others. The goal of the training would be to provide students with the knowledge and skills they need to detect and deter recreational boater alcohol and drug use and related incidents. Additionally, the area of interest would support the execution of a focused national outreach effort to highlight the dangers of BUI through education and enforcement, as well as specific training on the effective use of the *Seated Battery of Standardized Field Sobriety Tests*. Given possible travel restrictions and other impact associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, applicants are encouraged to submit proposals that offer courses via online technologies. ***Applicants are encouraged to submit a three-year proposal.***

6. **Investigation into Electric Propulsion**
   This area of interest will focus on providing guidance to the Coast Guard on electric propulsion systems in the recreational market. As the current Federal Regulations for electrical systems do not apply to boats with electric propulsion (boats without internal combustion engines), an analysis should be conducted to determine appropriate alternatives to provide an equivalent level of safety as boats covered by the federal regulations. Topics to be researched would include lithium ion battery installations, standards to determine and rate the horsepower of electric

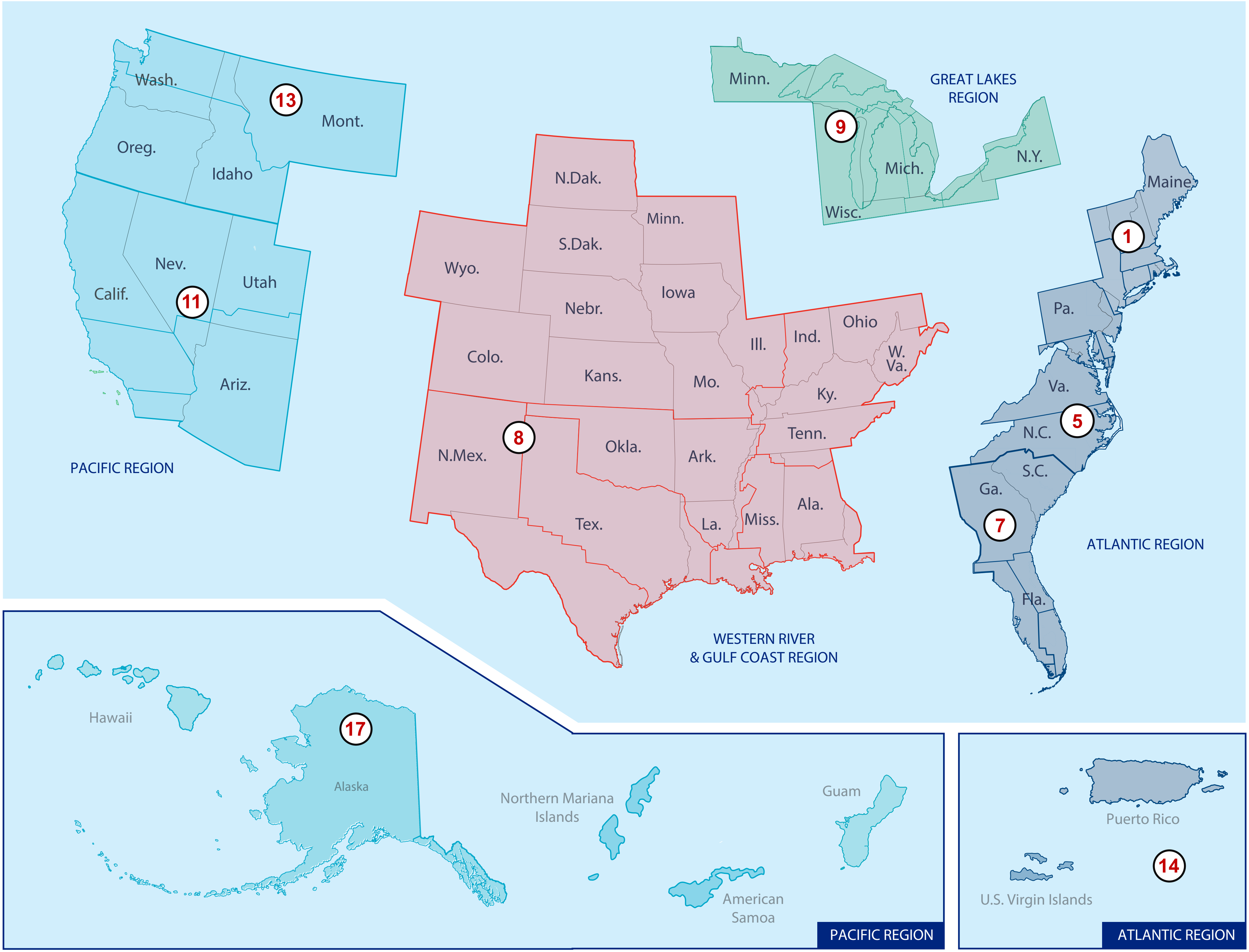
propulsion systems such as static thrust and HP, and kW to HP equivalencies. The investigation should also include effects of electric propulsion system on boat weight, outboard weight charts, calculations for flotation, max capacity, and max powering for all boat types. ***Since this area of interest is only envisioned to run one year, applicants must submit a one-year proposal.***

7. **Life Jacket Wear Rate Study**
   This area of interest will provide alternatives to achieving reliable estimates of nationwide recreational boater life jacket wear rates. Plans presented should lay out the advantages and disadvantages of and projected costs of an annual, biennial, and triennial study. Plans can include the use of paid and/or volunteer observers and must be based on actual observation of a representative sample of boaters on high-use lakes, rivers, and bays, ideally conducted in different locations at different times of the year to accurately capture the impact of the seasonal nature of boating. Methods for developing estimates must be replicable and must be able to collect data by number, type, length, operation, and activity of boats by boater age and gender. ***Applicants are encouraged to submit a three-year proposal.***

8. **Outreach and Awareness Symposium**
   This area of interest will provide for a single national symposium to focus on the support of the National Recreational Boating Safety Program. Symposium organizers must focus on professional development opportunities for participants while making every effort to ensure affordability and gain maximum attendance. The symposium should provide opportunities for grant recipients, as appropriate, to present results of grant projects and hold planning sessions. Three to six months after the symposium, the organizers must survey participants on the long-term impacts of the symposium and include survey results in their final report. Sources and amount of other funding for the symposium must be clearly identified. ***Applicants are encouraged to submit a three-year proposal.***

9. **Voluntary Departure Hazards**
   This area of interest will increase awareness among the boating public of the possible danger of voluntarily entering the water from an underway recreational vessel without first considering the risk of drowning and the need to wear a life jacket. Voluntary departure deaths from underway vessels have accounted for more than 50 deaths per year for the last six years, as victims without life jackets lack the proper awareness of the environmental conditions and the capabilities of persons remaining on the vessel. ***Since this area of interest is only envisioned to run one year, applicants must submit a one-year proposal.***

Appendix B: Grant Regional Map



Appendix C: Budget & Budget Narrative Instructions

*** Please read through this entire document before creating your budget. Always ensure that the amounts in the budget and budget narrative match your SF-424 and SF-424A Section B. ***

The purpose of the budget and budget narrative templates is to provide a standardized, detailed list of the itemized costs required to complete a proposed project. Applicants should use the budget and budget narrative templates to expand upon the general cost categories of the SF-424A Section B and provide the specific items, per category, that will be charged to the grant.

Applicants are required to use the Microsoft Excel-based budget template, while the budget narrative should be written separately in Microsoft Word. Applicants must download the Excel spreadsheet, labeled **Appendix D. Budget Template,** from the funding opportunity in Grants.gov. The format for the budget narrative can be found within this appendix.

Please do not submit previously accepted, internally formatted budgets. Everyone is expected to use **Appendix D. Budget Template.**

Budget Template Guidance

- The USCG created the budget template using approved line items from previously awarded grants. These items are only intended to be examples of what your budget may look like. Applicants are not required to use the same titles, descriptions, or rates. The budget should be tailored to your organization's terminology, policies, rates, and descriptions.

- Applicants should not change the overall structure of the budget categories and column headings, however, applicants are encouraged to include as many (or as few) rows as necessary to convey all the associated costs of the project.

- The budget should only have short, concise descriptions within the template. Explanations and further information should be included in the budget narrative.

- Applicants are permitted to request funding for one or three years.
    - **If requesting one year:**
        - Please remove the unused tabs from your budget.

        - Ensure to state explicitly in your narrative that it is a one-year proposal per the instructions in **Section 9.b.4. Program Narrative**. This will make it abundantly clear to reviewers that additional budget information is not missing from the application.

    - **If requesting three years**:
        - Each year should have its own tab within the spreadsheet.

        - Applicants should propose the same total dollar amount for each year of funding, but are not required to have three identical budgets. Each budget year should be tailored to the anticipated activities and/or progression of the proposal.

    - Do not include estimates for program income or potential carryover. The template, for the purposes of your initial application, intentionally prohibits your ability to do so.

- The USCG reminds applicants that your budget at the time of application is an informed estimate that may change over time. Applicants are encouraged to give their best estimate for anticipated costs even if there is a degree of uncertainty. If an applicant is successful for a three-year award, grantees will have the opportunity to submit a revised budget ahead of Year Two and Year Three.

- Not every category within this template will apply to your organization or the activities that you propose. This template is our attempt to standardize as much unique information as possible into generic categories. This standardization helps our reviewers to clearly identify and assess your proposal's budget. Please be mindful to include only costs that are informed, reasonable, necessary, and clearly defined.

Specific Guidance for using Excel

- Ensure that your formulas are accurate and working. Check that all cells are properly accounted for in the calculations.

- Each category subtotal should appear in blue font in the same row as the category heading. This is to ensure that the subtotal is uniformly located and easily identifiable across all sections.

- Manually run spell check on each tab before submitting your budget. Excel does not highlight spelling or grammar mistakes within the text. Spell check can be found on the "Review" tab in the first position on the far left.

- Do not round up your totals. Dollar amounts should be set to two decimal points.

- **Each tab of the spreadsheet is pre-formatted to print or save easily into a letter-sized PDF. The header for each tab is also labeled Year One, Two, or Three and the footer lists "Page [Number] of [Number]". When preparing the file for PDF submission, ensure to save or print-to-PDF each tab individually. Verify that no budget years or page numbers are missing prior to submission.**

Budget Narrative Guidance

- The budget narrative should describe, explain, and justify to the fullest extent possible, in the same order and in complete sentences, the itemized costs for the proposed activities identified in your budget. Reviewers will use this as a tool to assess the necessity and cost reasonableness for each line item.

- Applicants should use the budget narrative to expand upon what you want to request, for how much, and for what purpose. However, it should not be used as an "extension" of the project narrative.

- The budget narrative is the appropriate location to provide descriptions of job titles, roles and responsibilities, proposed travel, various contracts and their purposes, as well as context for specific line items requests. Please review the **Instructions Matrix** for more information.

- The format for the budget narrative should mirror the lettering specified in the SF-424A Section B and budget template. In lieu of paragraphs, you may use bullets, numbers, or letters under each section header to convey the descriptions of your line items. If using numbers or letters, however, please also include the corresponding number or letter in the budget line item description so it is easy to cross-reference between documents. This is especially helpful if a category has many individual line items that all warrant separate descriptions.

- As previously mentioned, not every category within the template will apply to your organization or the activities that you propose. Applicants may write, "Not applicable," in lieu of a description, as appropriate. Including this statement will alert reviewers that information is not unintentionally missing.

Budget Narrative Format

The budget narrative should be written as a regular text document, but organized into sections using the letters and headings from the SF-424A Section B and budget template (listed below). There is no need to format the budget narrative into a table. Applicants should also follow the guidance in the **Instructions Matrix** for the types of descriptions that should be included in each section. Sections delineated with an asterisk (*) are sections that the USCG acknowledges may have minimal or no description.

A. **Personnel**
B. **Fringe Benefits***
C. **Travel**
D. **Equipment***
E. **Supplies**
F. **Contractual**
G. **Construction** – *Unallowable for this program*
H. **Other**
I. **Total Direct Charges***
J. **Indirect Charges***
K. **Total***

General Advice

- Please remember that when applying for federal assistance, you should request the amount of money necessary to complete the proposed project – not an unrealistic amount that either appears to be “pie in the sky” or a lower, “competitive” rate that could potentially undercut your ability to be a successful grantee.

- Costs should be informed, reasonable, necessary, and clearly defined. Use the budget narrative to your advantage; include important, relevant information to demonstrate to reviewers that your budget is based in knowledge and experience.

- Refrain from using internal office jargon, short-hand, or abbreviations. Use clear, concise terminology, titles, or specific names, as relevant.

- Given that these costs at the time of application are estimates, we recommend that you include a few sentences within your budget narrative about how you would reprogram your money should cost-savings become available. For example, you may want to purchase a greater number of items, add an additional traveler to a trip, or host an additional class. We encourage you to proactively think about the future of your activities and anticipated costs.

- Understand that these are cooperative agreements, and that by definition (see **Section B.5. Funding Instrument Type**), it provides for substantial involvement between the USCG and nonprofit grantee to carry out the activities of the award. Please be advised that if successful, USCG staff will work with you to negotiate and revise activities and their related costs, as necessary.

Instructions Matrix

These are side-by-side instructions for the information that should be captured in the budget vs. the budget narrative. It also identifies where costs should be captured as it relates to employees, contractors, volunteers, committee members, etc.

	Category	Budget	Budget Narrative
A	**Personnel**	• List by generic title the employees associated with the project (i.e. these are staff who receive a W2). • Itemize hourly rates and estimated hours. *For nonprofits staffed entirely by contractors, please include your title/role and hourly rate under the Contractual section.*	• Describe the roles and responsibilities of the employees listed in the budget. • Explain why their role is important to the proposal, what their primary tasks will be, and how they will contribute to the success of the project. • Include all relevant employees.
B	**Fringe Benefits**	• Include your organization's fringe benefits rate. • The rate should be calculated using the total amount from the Personnel category.	• Fringe benefits are understood as contributions to employee benefits such as social security, pension funds, etc. • A minimal description is sufficient.
C	**Travel**	• This is for employee travel only. • Include a brief title of the trip. • Provide itemized cost estimates per trip. • Estimates should include airfare and/or other transportation, accommodations, per diem, and other approved, associated costs as defined by your organization's travel policy.	• Clearly identify and describe each trip charged to the grant. This should include the purpose of the trip(s), how it relates to grant activities, the number of travelers, and the anticipated destinations. • Ensure that any costs itemized in your budget are allowable per your organization's travel policy. • Applicants may use the published GSA per diem rates. • If requesting international travel, applicants should be familiar with the Fly America Act and incorporate its requirements into your travel policy.

	Category	Budget	Budget Narrative
D	**Equipment**	• Federal regulations define equipment as tangible personal property costing equal to or more than $5,000 per unit. • List any equipment required for the proposed project. • The anticipated cost per unit (CPU) should be defined, as well as the number of item(s) to be purchased or leased.	• Provide specific details about the item(s) to be purchased, such as make, model, technical specifications, etc. • Explain why these items are necessary for the proposed activities.
E	**Supplies**	• Federal regulations define supplies as tangible personal property costing less than $5,000 per unit. • List any supplies required for the proposed project. • If making bulk purchases, please list each item separately with their estimated CPU and quantity.	• Provide specific details about the item(s) to be purchased and how they will be used to complete the proposed activities. • If bulk item estimates may change based upon price quotes or the availability of products, include a list of potential items that may also be considered for purchase using the allocated funds.
F	**Contractual**	• List by generic title the contract staff associated with the project (i.e. these are staff who may receive a 1099 form). • Itemize hourly rates and estimated hours. • Include any contract staff travel. Estimates should include airfare and/or other transportation, accommodations, per diem, and other approved, associated costs as defined by your organization's travel policy. • Itemize by short name and dollar amount any consultant services, subcontracts, and subcontractors (if known) that will be hired to execute specific grant activities. • This may include services such as digital marketing, promotional materials, video production, graphic design, website maintenance, etc.	• Describe the roles and responsibilities of the contract staff listed in the budget. • Explain why their role is important to the proposal, what their primary tasks will be, and how they will contribute to the success of the project. • Clearly identify and describe each trip charged to the grant. This should include the purpose of the trip(s), how it relates to grant activities, the number of travelers, and the anticipated destinations. • Ensure that any costs itemized in your budget are allowable per your organization's travel policy. • Please refer back to the previously hyperlinked resources in the **Travel** section. • Describe each service, subcontract, and subcontractor (if known) identified in the budget.

	Category	Budget	Budget Narrative
			• Explain the service, expertise, and/or product to be provided and how it directly relates to the necessary execution of the grant. • Remember: Federal regulations (2 CFR 200.320 Methods of procurement to be followed) require recipients to obtain price or rate quotations from an adequate number of qualified sources before contracting a service. The bids do not need to be submitted for USCG review, but recipients must be able to substantiate the bids upon request from their USCG representative.
G	**Construction**	*Unallowable for this program*	
H	**Other**	• Include any other applicable costs that do not fit into the pre-determined categories. This may include intangible items such as insurance, audit expenses, shipping costs, etc. • Please refer to 2 CFR 200 Subpart E – Cost Principles if you have questions regarding allowable costs. • If you are seeking approval for committee travel or for volunteers who will travel on behalf of your organization to conduct business, list their expenses in this section. If awarded, USCG may work with you to better capture or reclassify these costs, as necessary.	• Provide specific details about each expense and how it relates to the proposed activities. • Per 2 CFR 200.422 Advisory councils: *"Costs incurred by advisory councils or committees are unallowable unless authorized by statute, the Federal awarding agency or as an indirect cost where allocable to Federal awards."* This section should be used to describe, explain, and justify how the proposed, related expenses are necessary to the committee's success. • Travel for committee members or volunteers who will travel on behalf of your organization should be included in this section. Please follow the guidance under **Travel** and list their expenses in this section.
I	**Total Direct Charges**	No description is required.	No description is required.

	Category	Budget	Budget Narrative
J	**Indirect Charges**	• Specify your organization's negotiated indirect cost rate – OR – if your organization has never received a negotiated indirect cost rate, you may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs. • If your organization does not charge indirect costs to the grant, please write a zero (0). • Please see 2 CFR 200.414 Indirect (F&A) Costs for more information.	• If applicable, specify the indirect cost rate, the name of the federal agency that negotiated it, and the date that it was approved.
K	**Total**	No description is required.	No description is required.