

Translating Coastal Research into Application

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NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Federal Agency Name(s): Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce

Funding Opportunity Title: Translating Coastal Research into Application

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: NOAA-OAR-SG-2022-2007298

Federal Assistance Listings Number: 11.417, Sea Grant Support

Dates: Letters of Intent must be received by electronic mail (oar.hq.sg.competitions@noaa.gov) to the National Sea Grant Office (NSGO) by 5:00 p.m. Local Time of the submitting Sea Grant Program on June 15, 2022.

Eligible applicants must submit application materials by 11:59 pm Eastern Time on August 30, 2022 to Grants.gov.

Projects should commence on January 1, 2023 with a period of performance of two to four years.

Funding Opportunity Description: The National Sea Grant College Program was enacted by the U.S. Congress in 1966 (amended in 2020, Public Law 116-221) to support leveraged federal and state partnerships that harness the intellectual capacity of the nation's universities and research institutions to solve problems and generate opportunities in coastal communities.

The U.S. Coastal Research Program (USCRP) is a multi-agency led effort to coordinate Federal activities, strengthen academic programs, and address coastal community needs. Past USCRP opportunities have funded university researchers across the U.S. to tackle coastal science and engineering questions in a variety of environments along all of the nation's coastlines. The goal of the USCRP is to build a community of practice to address societal needs along the coast. USCRP is a collaboration of Federal agencies, academics, and stakeholders that aims to identify research priorities, enhance funding for coastal academic programs, foster collaboration, and promote science translation.

It is anticipated that approximately \$4,000,000 will be available to move research project findings detailed in The Nearshore Report (<https://uscoastalresearch.org/publications>) toward application through service delivery that integrates research, its application, and community engagement in three thematic program areas of (1) long-term coastal evolution, (2) extreme

storms, and (3) human and ecosystem health. Developing and delivering actionable scientific information to users on the related themes requires integration of a broad range of stakeholder needs and coastal science. The USCRP Story Map highlights research that has been funded by the program: <https://bit.ly/uscrp-projects>

Proposals should address the needs or gaps that have been identified by or are evident from USCRP-funded projects, to move research project findings toward application through service delivery and decision support for coastal community decision-makers, planners, and other coastal stakeholders (i.e., the translation of societally-relevant coastal and estuarine physical processes science to science-based solutions that address coastal community needs related to resilience). Deriving societal benefit from this research requires engaging end-users to ensure it is delivered to them in an accessible and equitable manner to support their resilience decision-making and planning.

This document sets out requirements for submitting to NOAA-OAR-SG-2022-2007298. Additional guidance and tips on how best to prepare an application are provided in the Sea Grant General Application Guide available at <https://seagrants.noaa.gov/Portals/1/Guidance/SeaGrantGeneralApplicationGuide.pdf>

FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Program Objective

The U.S. Coastal Research Program (USCRP: <https://uscoastalresearch.org>) is a collaboration of federal agencies, academics, and stakeholders (communities, NGOs, industry, etc.) that aims to connect scientific and engineering research to societally-relevant coastal challenges. By building a strong community of practice, the USCRP has fostered collaborative opportunities, enhanced available funding, and promoted science translation to users. The USCRP is collaborating with Sea Grant to make significant advancements on the part of its mission related to community engagement. Since 2016, the USCRP has funded 63 academic research studies to address coastal research needs in its priority areas of long-term and short-term nearshore coastal processes. Results from these studies have been documented in the literature and implemented in advancements to technology, methodology, numerical models, and other mechanisms. Because increasing resilience in coastal areas is critical, this year's funding opportunity aims to support projects that will engage coastal community decision makers and help to advance the outcomes, successes, and lessons learned from past USCRP funded research.

NOAA provides funding to Sea Grant institutions to increase the understanding, assessment, development, management, utilization, and conservation of the Nation's ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes resources by providing assistance to promote strong educational-based, responsive research and training activities, broad and prompt dissemination of knowledge and techniques, and multidisciplinary approaches to environmental problems, in accordance with 33 USC 1121(b).

For this call, the following definitions will be applied.

--Stakeholders means communities, NGOs, industry, universities, local, state, federal, tribal, and federal agencies or other end-users of research and related products, tools, and services.

--Engagement means partnering with coastal stakeholders to identify actionable research and co-production of knowledge, tools, products, and services to address issues impacting the stakeholders and their communities.

B. Program Priorities

Over the past three decades, the understanding of physical coastal processes has improved. However, societal needs are growing with increased coastal urbanization and threats of future climate change, and significant scientific challenges remain.

Communicating multi-layered technical information including biological, geological, chemical, physical, and economic data and model results to the stakeholders is challenging. Engaging with end-users and coastal stakeholders in the application of research and the development of tools, products, and services for decision support is essential to ensure significant societal benefit and impact.

The USCRP has invested in coastal processes research over the past five years. These research efforts have established a foundation of knowledge, and identified gaps and significant barriers to increased coastal resilience. USCRP is strongly supported by the U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center, the U.S. Geological Survey's Coastal and Marine Hazards and Resources Program, and the American Shore and Beach Preservation Association. Through collaboration between academia, government, and industry there is an opportunity to engage with coastal decision-makers, managers, and other stakeholders to develop research, service delivery and decision support tools, products, and services that will improve diverse aspects of coastal management and build greater coastal resilience.

The collaborative projects funded through this competition will serve to integrate research, outreach, and education to engage with coastal stakeholders. Successful applicants will propose collaborative programs in which multiple disciplines and sources of knowledge are integrated holistically to lead to new and novel understanding and solutions to coastal resilience issues.

Note: Applicants and their partners do not need to have been previously funded by USCRP; rather, proposals should address the needs or gaps that have been identified by or are evident from previously-funded USCRP projects.

It is a program priority that successful proposals will:

--Include at least one Sea Grant Program as a collaborator

--Address the needs or gaps that have been identified by or are evident from USCRP-funded projects, to move research project findings toward application through service delivery and decision support for coastal community decision-makers, planners, and other coastal stakeholders (i.e., the translation of societally-relevant coastal and estuarine physical processes science to science-based solutions that address coastal community needs related to resilience). USCRP research that has been funded by the program can be found in the USCRP Story Map here:

<https://bit.ly/uscrp-projects>

--Include multiple partners with a clear connection to coastal stakeholders and needs.

Academic collaborations are encouraged.

--Support students who are developing research and leadership skills by placing at least one graduate student in a leadership role and potentially by bringing STEM undergraduates into the coastal field. This is a higher priority than, for example, a post-doctoral researcher who already has expertise in these areas. One of the USCRP's goals is to train the next generation of coastal scientists and engineers. Applicants are encouraged to include a diversity of disciplines in student support, as appropriate.

C. Program Authority

Statutory authority for this program is provided under the National Sea Grant College Program Act of 1966, as amended (33 USC 1121 et seq.).

The National Sea Grant College Program was enacted by the U.S. Congress in 1966 (amended in 2020, Public Law 116-221) to support leveraged federal and state partnership that harness the intellectual capacity of the nation's universities and research institutions to solve problems and generate opportunities in coastal communities.

II. Award Information

A. Funding Availability

Subject to the availability of funding, this announcement describes how eligible applicants should apply for this funding opportunity. It is anticipated that approximately \$4,000,000 may be available to fund approximately 10-20 projects in the following categories for proposals that address the program priorities:

- Tier 1: Up to \$150,000 in federal funds over two years can be requested for projects that address one or more previously-funded project(s) and are relevant to program priorities.
- Tier 2: Up to \$500,000 in federal funds over four years can be requested for projects proposing multi-partner efforts that address one or more previously-funded projects(s) and are relevant to the program priorities.

There is no guarantee that funds will be available to make awards, or that any application will be selected for funding. If an applicant incurs any costs prior to receiving an award agreement signed by an authorized NOAA official, it does so at its own risk of not being selected or of these costs not being included in a subsequent award. NOAA and DOC will not be responsible for any incurred project costs if a project fails to receive full funding.

B. Project/Award Period

The anticipated start date for all awards is January 1, 2023. Two year projects should be

completed by December 31, 2024 and four year projects should be completed by December 31, 2026.

C. Type of Funding Instrument

Cooperative Agreement

The funding instrument is a cooperative agreement to an eligible institution. A cooperative agreement is used when substantial involvement of the federal government during performance of the proposed work is anticipated. The nature of the substantial involvement includes interaction with the federal partners through the lifetime of the award and cooperation on extending results.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

The following entities are eligible to submit to this opportunity: Sea Grant College Programs, Sea Grant Institutional Programs, and Sea Grant Coherent Area Programs. For the remainder of this document, these entities are collectively referred to as “Sea Grant Programs.” A Sea Grant program may submit or participate in more than one proposal.

The following entities are encouraged to participate in this funding opportunity, in conjunction with a Sea Grant program: any individual; any public or private corporation, partnership, or other association or entity (including any Sea Grant Program or other institution); or any State, political subdivision of a State, Tribal government or agency or officer thereof. Federal agencies and their personnel are not permitted to receive federal funding under this competition; however, federal scientists and other employees can serve as uncompensated partners or co-Principal Investigators on applications. Federal labs and offices can also make available specialized expertise, facilities or equipment to applicants but cannot be compensated under this competition for their use.

Contact information for Sea Grant programs can be found at:

<https://seagrants.noaa.gov/About>. If you need further assistance in identifying a Sea Grant program to partner with, please contact the competition manager listed below in Section VII. Agency Contacts.

The National Sea Grant College Program champions diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) by recruiting, retaining, and preparing a diverse workforce, and proactively engaging and serving the diverse populations of coastal communities. Sea Grant is committed to building inclusive research, extension, communication, and education programs that serve people

with unique backgrounds, circumstances, needs, perspectives, and ways of thinking. We encourage program applications to reflect diverse participation with regards to age, race, ethnicities, national origins, gender identities, sexual orientations, disabilities, cultures, religions, citizenship types, marital statuses, education levels, job classifications, veteran status types, income, and socioeconomic status.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

Standard Sea Grant cost sharing is not required for this call as this funding is from USACE Coastal Inlets Research Program (CIRP). This source does not require matching funds.

C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility

None.

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Address to Request Application Package

Application packages are available online and can be downloaded from www.grants.gov under opportunity NOAA-OAR-SG-2022-2007298. If an eligible applicant does not have access to the internet, please contact the Agency Contacts listed in Section VII for submission instructions.

B. Content and Form of Application

Letters of Intent (LOIs) will allow the NSGO to gauge interest and projects that may be submitted. To be eligible to submit a full proposal, LOIs must be received via email by the Program Managers (oar.hq.sg.competitions@noaa.gov) by 5:00 p.m. local time of the submitting Sea Grant Program on June 15, 2022.

Letters of Intent must provide the following information (maximum of 3 pages):

1. Cover page

a. Project title and names, titles, affiliations, and contact information (email and phone number) of PIs (lead and co-PIs)

b. Identify anticipated Tier (1 or 2) for which a full proposal will be submitted (applicants may move between Tiers if needed after LOI submission)

c. Budget overview - Estimate total cost and annual breakdown of requested funding by partner

2. Project Plan

- a. Describe proposed collaboration(s)
- b. A brief discussion of the focal topic, project objectives, approach, and expected results and deliverables
- c. Statement describing plan for community engagement and co-production
 - i. How will the project partners work together throughout the entire duration of the proposed work to meet societal needs (i.e. from conceptualization to development of tools or products)? What are the responsibilities of each team member? How often will team members meet to discuss the project?
 - ii. Discuss how this proposal will incorporate community participation, including diverse perspectives.

Emails will be sent to applicants acknowledging receipt of the LOI. Late LOIs will not be considered and any associated full applications will not be accepted. The NSGO, in consultation with the USCRP, may provide feedback to applicants encouraging but not requiring collaboration with another submitted application where projects may overlap. Such collaboration after submission of the LOI may result, for example, in applications moving between Tier 1 and Tier 2 for full proposal submission.

Full Proposal Requirements (please also see VIII. Other Information for additional post-application required elements for submission):

1. Project Narrative

The proposal project narrative should clearly describe which previously-funded USCRP project(s) this proposal builds upon, how it responds to the priorities of the competition, and how it will lay the foundation for future work. The proposal should also identify appropriate user groups and demonstrate their involvement throughout the project. Applicants must also include travel funds for at least one student and one PI for one in-person meeting for Tier 1 applications and up to two in-person meetings for Tier 2 applications. Dates and location will be announced at a later date. For budgeting purposes, this may be in connection with a national conference or in the Washington, DC area for a period of 3 days.

The Project Narrative should include the following documents in the following format:

- a) Project Description. The total number of pages in the project description must be not more than 6 pages for Tier 1 and no more than 10 pages for Tier 2, inclusive of footnotes, tables, figures and appendices (single-spaced, 12 point font). Excess pages will not be included in

the review. The works cited, CVs, and letters of support do not contribute to this page limit.

1. Proposal Overview

--Lead PI Name, Title, Organization and Contact Information and any co-PIs.

--Proposal Title

--Identify if applying for Tier 1 or Tier 2

--Proposed project performance period (start and end dates)

--Funding request by year, as appropriate, and total funding

--Project Abstract

2. Goal and Objectives. Statements describing the goal and objectives of the project. If the proposal is for a multi-year project, goals and objectives should be specific for each year of the work plan presented.

3. Societal and Program Relevance. Provide sufficient background information for reviewers to independently assess the significance of the proposed project. Describe the previously-funded USCRP research findings that this work is meant to transfer. Summarize the problem, gap or need to be addressed and the status of ongoing efforts and coordination to address the identified needs or gaps. Describe benefits to coastal communities and/or federal agencies as applicable.

4. Qualifications. Provide a brief biographical sketch. The amount of information provided about co-investigators, if applicable, should be relative to the amount of work they will contribute to the total effort. Describe relevant past projects as they relate to the present effort. Describe the role of the student(s), explain the differences between the roles of the PI and the student(s), and outline opportunities for student research leadership. Include funding for the student in the detailed budget. The intent is to fund graduate students. Provide a brief description of existing capabilities that will help you to successfully complete the project (e.g. equipment, programs, partnerships, data, tools, etc.).

5. Approach to Community Engagement. Describe how the project PIs and partners will work with diverse coastal stakeholders throughout the entire duration of the proposed work to meet societal needs (i.e. from conceptualization of research to development of tools or products to advance coastal resilience). Include a scope of the project that details the procedures to be used, key assumptions, and expected outcomes.

6. Deliverables. Provide a brief description of and timeline for products, such as publications, tools, services, metadata, data sharing plan, communication of results to federal partners, etc. Acknowledge willingness to meet the following performance assessment and

communication requirements: annual presentation of research findings, quarterly written updates, and a research highlight for program communications.

7. Partners. If applicable, list partners and describe their expected role and responsibilities. Describe how the project implements strategies that align with USCRP and the partner(s) goals. Describe the approach to leveraging available resources such as programs, partnerships, data, and tools across the government, industry and NGOs. There are no restrictions on hiring subcontractors.

8. Diversity statement

--The NSGO recognizes that there is a particular and unique opportunity to support NOAA's commitment to diversity and inclusion by taking an intentional step that encourages applicants to consider diversity and inclusion as part of their scientific projects. This action has the potential to make an impact on not only the diversity and inclusion in science at NOAA, but also in the equity of services provided by NOAA and beyond the agency.

--In this section, describe how well the proposed activity broadens the participation of historically underrepresented or under-resourced groups and how these groups are given a voice in the project.

--Applicants are encouraged to review the resources and best practices compiled by NSGO related to diversity, equity and inclusion:

<https://seagrant.noaa.gov/insideseagrant/Implementation/Network-Visioning/DiversityInclusion>

9. Works cited (does not count towards page limit)

10. CVs (does not count towards page limit). Each person's CV should not be longer than 2 pages. Excess pages will not be included in the review.

11. Letters of Support, optional (does not count towards page limit)

b) Abbreviated Environmental Compliance Questionnaire (OMB Control No. 0648-0538)

A separate NEPA Questionnaire or NEPA Statement must be completed for each individual project in the application.

NEPA Questionnaire

A separate NEPA Questionnaire must be completed for each individual project in the application. The Questionnaire can be found here:

<https://seagrant.noaa.gov/insideseagrant/Implementation>. Applicants must ensure that the

Questionnaire is completed in full and includes detailed information regarding project location, methodology, and permits. Copies of all permits required for project activities should be included with application materials. If a permit is pending or planned, please provide this information. Guidance on how to complete the Questionnaire and example Questionnaires for different types of projects can be found here: <https://seagrant.noaa.gov/insideseagrant/Implementation>.

The NEPA Questionnaire is required for ALL research projects (those whose project ID starts with “R/”) even if the project is fully lab-based or relies on social science. The NEPA Questionnaire is also required for any project that meets the following criteria:

- Environmental permits, authorizations or waivers
- Biological take and/or release
- Environmental sampling
- Hazardous or toxic substances and waste
- Permanent or temporary environmental effects
- Endangered or threatened species and/or protected areas
- Known or unknown risks to human health or the environment
- Controversial environmental subject matter

NEPA Statement

The NEPA Statement can be used instead of the NEPA Questionnaire for certain low-impact projects. If none of the project’s activities will take place in the environment and the project is not research, you may include the NEPA Statement in place of the NEPA Questionnaire. However, NOAA has final responsibility to determine whether a project or action requires environmental compliance review. If NOAA determines that the NEPA Statement is not sufficient, staff may request that a NEPA Questionnaire be provided instead. Please use the following format for the NEPA Statement:

“This project’s activities include [list the activities]. Because no part of this project will take place in the environment or involve the collection of environmental data, the NOAA environmental compliance questionnaire is not needed.”

Some examples of projects that can use the NEPA Statement are:

- Program management (i.e., any projects be assigned the “M/” project ID)
- Placeholder projects (e.g., "Future Competed Projects"; these projects will have a Special Award Condition on the grant and undergo environmental compliance review at that time)
- Workshops or conferences that do not involve the above list of actions in the previous section

- Communication activities that do not involve the above list of actions in the previous section
- Fellowships where the Sea Grant Program does not have discretion over the fellow's externally funded research

c) Data Management Plan

For reference: https://nosc.noaa.gov/EDMC/documents/Data_Sharing_Directive_v3.0.pdf

See Section VI. B. (8)

All applications should include a Data Management Plan. If a proposal responding to this competition will not generate environmental data, the data management plan should say, "This project will not generate environmental data, therefore a data management plan is not required."

For reference: https://nosc.noaa.gov/EDMC/documents/Data_Sharing_Directive_v3.0.pdf

2. Budget Narrative

The budget narrative must include the following budget documents (Sea Grant 90-4 forms and budget justification) in the following order and format. Sea Grant 90-4 forms and budget justifications must be included for each individual project within an application. Additional budget narrative guidance can be found at:

https://www.noaa.gov/sites/default/files/atoms/files/gmd_budget_narrative_guidance_-_05-24-2017_final.pdf

Applicants must also include in their budget, travel funds for at least one student and one PI for one in person meeting for Tier 1 and up to two in person meetings for Tier 2 applications. Dates and location will be announced at a later date. For budgeting purposes, this may be in connection with a national conference or in the Washington, DC area for a period of 3 days.

Note: There are no restrictions on funds supporting international travel for scientific meetings and/or collaborations.

Explain whether this project is flexible in budget or scope of work (e.g., can modify the approach, can reduce the budget, if needed). Identify the cost of separable elements of the proposed work and identify the elements of the project that could be revised or eliminated if sufficient funding is not available for all proposed activities.

a) Sea Grant 90-4 Form (OMB Control No. 0648-0362)

Sea Grant 90-4 forms are required to provide budget breakdowns and budget justifications

by year and object class for the proposal. A completed Sea Grant 90-4 form should be completed for each project year, as well as a total budget for the entire project duration (i.e., Year 1, Year 2, Year 3, and Years 1-3). The Sea Grant 90-4 form can be downloaded at: [https://seagrant.noaa.gov/insideseagrant/Implementation Guidance](https://seagrant.noaa.gov/insideseagrant/Implementation%20Guidance) on filling out these forms is located in the Sea Grant General Application Guide.

b) Budget Justification

For each year of the project (or each individual project within an application), a budget justification is required. Each budget justification should explain the budget items in sufficient detail to enable review of the appropriateness of the funding requested. Each budget justification should be attached as a PDF to each Sea Grant 90-4 form, as appropriate. Guidance on completing the budget justifications is located in the Sea Grant General Application Guide.

3. Overall Application

In addition to the forms required above, standard Federal Forms and Assurances are required for the overall application and can be found with the application package on Grants.gov or on the Sea Grant website (links found below). These include:

a) SF-424 Form (Grants.gov, OMB Control No. 4040-0004)

This form, titled “Application for Federal Assistance,” must identify the entire funding period as well as the federal funding amount being requested by the applicant and the non-federal matching fund amount (note: non-federal match is not required for this opportunity) . The form must be completed with the institution’s accurate EIN and DUNS and Point of Contact, and signed by the institution’s authorized representative or designee.

b) SF-424A Form (Grants.gov, OMB Control No. 4040-0006)

This form, titled “Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs,” must describe the entire funding period (broken out by year if multi-year) in federal and non-federal dollars (note: non-federal match is not required for this opportunity), for the entire application. Fill out Section B of this SF-424A form to show the overall budget breakdown by object class by year with separate columns for each year of federal funding.

c) SF-424B Assurances (Grants.gov, OMB Control No. 4040-0007)

The form, titled “Assurances – Non-Construction Programs,” must be completed and signed by the institution's authorized representative or designee.

d) CD-511 (Grants.gov, US Department of Commerce)

The form, titled “Certification Regarding Lobbying,” must be completed and signed by the institution’s authorized representative or designee. In some instances, the SF-LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities form may also be required. See the instructions on the CD-511 for further information.

e) SF-LLL (Grants.gov, OMB Control No. 0348-0046), if relevant

The form, titled “Disclosure of Lobbying Activities,” must be completed and signed by the institution’s authorized representative or designee, if appropriate.

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

Each applicant (unless the applicant is an individual or Federal awarding agency that is excepted from those requirements under 2 CFR 25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception approved under 2 CFR 25.110(d)) is required to: (i) Be registered in SAM before submitting its application; (ii) Provide a valid unique entity identifier in its application; and (iii) Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency. NOAA may not make a Federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time NOAA is ready to make a Federal award, NOAA may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another applicant.

D. Submission Dates and Times

Letters of Intent must be received via email by the Competition Manager (oar.hq.sg.competitions@noaa.gov) by 5:00 p.m. Local Time of the submitting Sea Grant Program on Wednesday, June 15, 2022. Please specify that your submission is for the Translating Coastal Research into Application funding opportunity in the subject line.

Applications to be received and validated by grants.gov by the deadline of 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on August 30, 2022. Applicants should be aware that the National Sea Grant Office will only be available to answer questions until 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time. Please note: validation or rejection of an application by Grants.gov may take up to two business days after submission.

E. Intergovernmental Review

Applications under the National Sea Grant College Program are not subject to Executive

Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs."

F. Funding Restrictions

No Restrictions.

G. Other Submission Requirements

Proposals must be submitted through Grants.gov. If an eligible applicant does not have access to the internet, please contact the Agency Contacts listed in Section VII for submission instructions.

V. Application Review Information

A. Evaluation Criteria

1. Importance/relevance and applicability of proposed projects to the program priorities (25 points). This criterion ascertains whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and/or relevance to NOAA, federal, regional, state, or local activities. For this competition, this includes addressing the program priorities of this NOFO and the degree to which the proposal connects to societal needs. The point scale is as follows: the application is unclear and does not adequately address the expectation outlined above (0-6 points); the application adequately addresses expectations outlined above (7-15 points); the application exceeds expectations outlined above (16-25 points).

2. Stakeholder Engagement (20 points). This criterion assesses whether the project provides a focused and effective stakeholder engagement strategy. For this competition, this means the degree to which the outcomes of the proposed work, specifically the knowledge and products that are responsive to U.S. coastal stakeholders, will be shared beyond the project team (i.e. to other coastal stakeholders). For this competition this includes identifying a strategy to work with diverse coastal stakeholders throughout the entire duration of the proposed work. The point scale is as follows: the application is unclear and does not adequately address the expectation outlined above (0-6 points); the application adequately addresses expectations outlined above (7-13 points); the application exceeds expectations outlined above (14-20 points).

3. Technical/scientific merit (15 points). This criterion assesses whether the approach is technically sound and/or innovative, if the methods are appropriate, and whether there are clear project goals, objectives, and data management considerations. For this competition, this includes assessing the degree to which the goals, objectives, and deliverables are clearly stated and described, the methods are novel or creative, and the technical approach is clearly

explained and efficiently and effectively transfers knowledge. The point scale is as follows: the application is unclear and does not adequately address the expectation outlined above (0-5 points); the application adequately addresses expectations outlined above (6-10 points); the application exceeds expectations outlined above (11-15 points).

4. Overall qualifications of applicants (15 points). This criterion ascertains whether the applicant possesses the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project. For this competition, this includes: demonstration of the appropriate experience, qualifications and skill for successful completion of the project; the capacity necessary to complete the work, and the meaningful collaboration and partnerships with previously funded research, if applicable. The point scale is as follows: the qualifications are unclear and do not adequately address the expectation outlined above (0-5 points); the qualifications adequately address expectations outlined above (6-10 points); the qualifications exceed expectations outlined above (11-15 points).

5. Project costs (10 points). This criterion evaluates the budget to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time frame. For this competition, this includes: assessing if the costs, including amount for partnerships, are justified and equitable; and the degree to which partners provide in-kind support or leverage available resources. The point scale is as follows: the proposal is unclear and does not adequately address the expectations outlined above (0-3 points); the proposal adequately addresses expectations outlined above (4-6 points); the proposal exceeds expectations outlined above (7-10 points).

6. Graduate Student Support (5 points). This criterion assesses how the project will advance training the next generation of coastal scientists and managers. For this competition, this includes plans for graduate student involvement and opportunities for leadership. The point scale is as follows: the proposal does not adequately address the expectations outlined above (0-1 points); the proposal adequately addresses expectations outlined above (2-3 points); the proposal exceeds expectations outlined above (4-5 points).

7. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (5 points). This criterion assesses how well the proposed activity broadens the participation of underrepresented groups in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). For this competition, this includes how the proposal describes plans to engage or partner with individuals or groups that are under-resourced or historically underrepresented. The point scale is as follows: the proposal does not adequately address the expectations outlined above (0-1 points); the proposal adequately addresses expectations outlined above (2-3 points); the proposal exceeds expectations outlined above (4-5 points).

8. Deliverables & Timeline (5 points). This criterion assesses how efficiently and effectively the proposed activity will deliver results. For this competition, this includes: describing the deliverables, such as publications, products, tools, services, metadata; understanding the requirements; describing the project phases and milestones; and the feasibility of the proposed workload given the project duration. The point scale is as follows: the proposal does not adequately address the expectations outlined above (0-1 points); the proposal adequately addresses expectations outlined above (2-3 points); the proposal exceeds expectations outlined above (4-5 points).

B. Review and Selection Process

Once a full proposal application has been received by NOAA, an initial administrative review is conducted to determine compliance with requirements and completeness of the application. Applications that are missing required elements listed in Section IV. B. above, or applications coming from ineligible applicants may be rejected without further review.

Applications that pass the administrative review will be reviewed by a technical panel drawn from experts in a range of disciplines that are relevant to the applications. Each proposal will receive at least three written reviews from the panelists assessing its merits with regard to the evaluation criteria.

The proposals, supplemented with information from the Abbreviated Environmental Compliance Questionnaire, will also be reviewed by the program manager to assess the environmental compliance of the proposed actions. The program manager, NEPA staff lead, or grants specialist may contact the applicants to discuss questions about the environmental effects, merit, or administrative correctness of the application, and may delay approval of the application, or impose conditions on the award preventing funding or execution of certain activities, until all questions are satisfactorily answered.

C. Selection Factors

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

- Availability of funding.
- Balance/distribution of funds:
 - geographically
 - by type of institution
 - by project types
- Duplication of other projects funded or considered for funding by NOAA/Federal agencies.
- Program priorities and policy factors.

- Applicant's prior award performance.
- Partnerships with/Participation of targeted groups.
- 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. Consequently, awards may not necessarily be made to the highest-scored applications. Investigators may be asked to answer questions; and/or modify objectives, work plans, and/or budgets (including overall funding level) to address the issues raised by the reviewers, the competition manager, the Selecting Official, or the Grants Officer before an award is made. Subsequent administrative processing will be in accordance with current NOAA grants procedures.

D. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

Subject to the availability of funds, awarded projects are expected to start January 1, 2023.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

Successful applicants will receive notification when the application has been recommended for funding to the NOAA Grants Management Division. This notification is not an authorization to begin performance of the project. Official notification of funding, signed by the NOAA grants officer, is the authorizing document that allows the project to begin. Notification will be issued to the authorizing official and the PI of the project either electronically or in hard copy. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified that their proposal was not selected. Anonymous copies of reviews and summaries of review panel deliberations, if any, will be made available to all applicants, regardless of whether they were selected to be funded.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

(1) 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 <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2014-12-30/pdf/2014-30297.pdf>.

(2) 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>.

(3) Department of Commerce 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 <https://grantsonline.rdc.noaa.gov/flows/home/Login/LoginController.jspf> and is also available at http://www.ago.noaa.gov/grants/external_links.html, as well as https://www.commerce.gov/sites/default/files/2020-11/DOC%20Standard%20Terms%20and%20Conditions%20-%202012%20November%202020%20PDF_0.pdf

(4) 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.

(5) National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

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

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

(6) 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.

(7) Data Sharing Plan - 1. 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. 2. Proposals submitted in response to this Announcement must include a data management plan of up to two pages describing how these requirements will be satisfied. The data management plan should be aligned with the data management guidance provided by NOAA in the announcement. The contents of the data management plan (or absence thereof), and past performance regarding such plans, will be considered as part of proposal review. A typical 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 costs of data preparation, accessibility, or archiving may be included in the proposal budget unless otherwise stated in the guidance. Accepted submission of data to the NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI) is one way to satisfy data sharing requirements; however, NCEI is not obligated to accept all submissions and may charge a fee, particularly for large or unusual datasets. 3. 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.

4. 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.

(8) Indirect Cost Rate - If an applicant does not have a current indirect cost rate with a federal agency they may choose to negotiate a rate with the Department of Commerce or use the de minimis indirect cost rate of 10% of Modified Total Direct Cost (MTDC) (as allowable under 2 C.F.R. §200.414). The negotiation and approval of a rate is subject to the procedures required by NOAA and the Department of Commerce Standard Terms and Conditions. Do not include participant support costs when determining the indirect cost base. Additionally, applicants should be aware that most indirect cost rate agreements require that participant support costs be excluded from the MTDC base when calculating indirect costs. Applicants should reference their official agreements. The NOAA contact for indirect or facilities and administrative costs is: Lamar Revis, Grants Officer, NOAA Grants Management Division, 1325 East West Highway, 9th Floor, Silver Spring, MD 20910, or lamar.revis@noaa.gov.

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

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

C. Reporting

The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (31 U.S.C. 6101 Note) includes a requirement for awardees of applicable federal grants to report information about first-tier subawards and executive compensation under federal assistance awards. All awardees of applicable grants and cooperative agreements are required to report to the Federal Sub-award Reporting System (FSRS) available at <https://www.fsr.gov/> on all sub-awards over \$30,000. Refer to 2 CFR Part 170.

VII. Agency Contacts

For questions about this competition, please contact Elizabeth Rohring or Nikola Garber at oar.hq.sg.competitions@noaa.gov. Please specify that your question is related to the FY 2022 NOAA-OAR-SG-2022-2007298 funding opportunity in the subject line.

VIII. Other Information

Potential applicants are encouraged to check Sea Grant's national website at <https://seagrant.noaa.gov/Funding> for information about a webinar and slides related to this announcement.

This will be a stand-alone (i.e., non-omnibus) award for which annual progress reporting in the form of the Research Performance Progress Report will be required.

Once applications have been selected for funding, applicants must submit a Sea Grant 90-2 Project Summary Form (for each project within the application) through the 90-2 Webform portal (<https://webform.pier.seagrant.noaa.gov/>). This is due within 30 calendar days after the applicant has been notified via email that their application has been awarded. A detailed step-by-step guide for completing the web-based 90-2 Form is available on Inside Sea Grant (<https://seagrant.noaa.gov/insideseagrant/Implementation>). Once the project is approved and funded, that information will be publicly available and searchable on the National Sea Grant College Program public website (<http://seagrant.noaa.gov>).

Recipients are required to use the National Sea Grant Planning Implementation and Evaluation Reporting (PIER) project database to communicate with the National Sea Grant Office on activities relating to this award. This includes tracking progress and impacts, in addition to performance metrics.

All public-facing products produced with funding from the award(s)/project(s) must ensure compliance with Section 508 of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The grant application and final report of all funded grants are public documents, except for privileged information or material that is personal, proprietary or otherwise exempt from disclosure under law. Appropriate labeling in the application will aid identification of what may be specifically exempt. The applicant acknowledges and understands that information and data contained in applications for financial assistance, as well as information and data contained in financial, performance and other reports submitted by applicants, may be used by the Department of Commerce in conducting reviews and evaluations of its financial assistance programs. For this purpose, applicant information and data may be accessed, reviewed and evaluated by Department of Commerce employees, other federal employees, and also by federal agents and contractors, and/or by non-federal personnel, all of whom enter into appropriate conflict of interest and confidentiality agreements covering the use of such information. As may be provided in the terms and conditions of a specific financial assistance award, applicants are expected to support program reviews and evaluations by submitting required financial and performance information and data in an accurate and timely manner, and by cooperating with the Department of Commerce and external program evaluators. In accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.303(e), applicants are reminded that they must take reasonable other 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.

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

There is no guarantee that funds will be available to make awards for this federal funding opportunity or that any proposal will be selected for funding. If an applicant incurs any costs prior to receiving an award agreement signed by an authorized NOAA official, they do so at their own risk of these costs not being included in a subsequent award. NOAA or the Department of Commerce are not responsible for any direct costs of proposal preparation. Recipients and sub-recipients are subject to all federal laws and agency policies, regulations, and procedures applicable to federal financial assistance awards.