

ANNOUNCEMENT OF FEDERAL 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: National Sea Grant Library 2012

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: NOAA-OAR-SG-2012-2003207

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 11.417, Sea Grant Support

Dates: Applications must be received by December 1, 2011.

Funding Opportunity Description: NOAA's Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR), National Sea Grant College Program invites applications to establish or continue a National Sea Grant Library beginning in FY 2012. Anticipated start date is March 1, 2012. Applicants should provide a two-year grant proposal for a National Sea Grant Library that will be part of the larger National Sea Grant network, a partnership between the federal government and universities to conduct integrated research, education and outreach in fields related to ocean, coastal and Great Lakes resources.

FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Program Objective

The National Sea Grant College Program plays a leading role in the sustainable development of the Nation's marine resources. It accomplishes this through an extensive program of research, education, and outreach. Sea Grant meets national needs by providing information to citizens pertaining to a diverse set of concerns ranging from how best to educate K-12 children on coastal issues to advanced scientific research. However, as the development of various marine resources evolves, matures, and receives greater attention nationally and worldwide, it becomes increasingly important to ensure that Sea Grant research and outreach information is accessible to the public. Efforts to disseminate information about ocean and coastal research, outreach and policy, and to provide the Sea Grant College Programs and coastal citizens with access to books, papers, proceedings and other publications must be pursued in order to ensure that this information broadly available to these audiences.

All Sea Grant Programs publish information about research, education and outreach investments and the results of this work for their coastal constituents. However, it was felt that the work of individual Programs should be coordinated, communicated among Programs, and made available to a broader constituency. These needs gave rise to the concept of a Sea Grant Library--a centralized resource that could coordinate and make available to the public Sea Grant's publications in research, education and outreach related to coastal and ocean issues.

Now, the National Sea Grant College Program would like to use this Federal Funding Opportunity announcement to establish a formal long-term partnership with a grantee to maintain a National Sea Grant Library, so that subsequent awards for continuing the Library may be made on a noncompetitive "institutional" basis, as long as certain conditions of performance are met.

The major responsibilities of the Library would be:

1. To provide a full-service, online information center and resource that houses a complete collection of Sea Grant documents (physical and digital), including the collection currently maintained at the University of Rhode Island;

2. To maintain a robust, searchable website and back-end database system, providing: (a) bibliographic information on all documents; (b) information on the Sea Grant Program and project associated with that document (this information is provided by the Program contributing the document); (c) full-text online access to Sea Grant digital documents (of which there are currently more than 18,000); and, (d) archiving of additional electronic documents and reprints not available for publication online due to copyright, size or other restrictions;

3. To work closely with the Sea Grant Network on an ongoing basis to solicit, categorize, catalog, digitize and track Sea Grant publications, including, but not limited to journal reprints, technical reports, advisory reports, proceedings, books, newsletters, handbooks, videos, CD-ROMs, computer software, maps and other miscellaneous reports;

4. To serve as a focal point and clearinghouse for Sea Grant information and publications on a variety of coastal, ocean and Great Lakes issues;

5. To regularly (at least once per month) disseminate information about and outreach for the Sea Grant collection in order to promote new holdings and to ensure that members of the public, including the Sea Grant Network and its constituents are aware of Sea Grant's publications and products;

6. To work with the Sea Grant Network to respond to information requests about Sea Grant network research and communication products, including those needed for evaluation purposes.

B. Program Priorities

The program priorities for this opportunity support all of the following NOAA mission goals: Climate Adaptation and Mitigation; Weather-Ready Nation; Healthy Oceans; and Resilient Coastal Communities and Economies.

It is a programmatic priority to support applications that propose to carry out all five responsibilities in section I.A., and that score well in all five evaluation criteria in section V.A. (not just have a high total score).

C. Program Authority

Authority for this FFO is provided by 33 U.S.C. 1121 et seq., as amended.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number(s): 11.417, Sea Grant Support.

II. Award Information

A. Funding Availability

A total of \$235,000 of federal Sea Grant funds is anticipated to be available annually, depending on appropriations.

Proposal Federal funding requests, including for indirect costs, must be no higher than \$235,000 per year. Applications requesting more than this amount will not be reviewed.

One award is anticipated to be made, depending on appropriations and the number and quality of applications received.

B. Project/Award Period

Awards are anticipated to start on March 1, 2012. Projects should run for two years.

C. Type of Funding Instrument

The application selected for funding will be funded through a cooperative agreement because the proposed project will include substantial NOAA involvement that will be described in the award. Examples of substantial NOAA involvement may include collaboration in management of shared information resources, participation in selection of key personnel, or approval of the timing, content, or format of certain information products key stages in the project before they are produced or disseminated. Contact the name shown in Section VII, Agency Contacts,

with questions about cooperative agreements.

A cooperative agreement award made under this FFO will be made competitively, but any subsequent awards for continuation of the National Sea Grant Library may be made on a noncompetitive institutional basis, provided that the grantee performs satisfactorily and submits the appropriate application document, and the results of the periodic reviews validate the effectiveness and continued desirability of the use of institutional awards for the program.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

Institutions of higher education, nonprofit organizations, commercial organizations, State and local and Indian tribal governments are eligible.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

Matching funds are not required, but applicants may propose matching funds that will be considered under evaluation criteria (4), Project costs, in section V.A., below.

(Because the National Sea Grant Library is intended to be a national resource providing no favored treatment to any state or locality, we believe that applicants will have no reasonable means of meeting the normal Sea Grant requirement for non-Federal matching funds. As the benefit of the National Sea Grant Library outweighs the benefit of the matching fund requirement and this benefit couldn't be obtained with a grant that required match, the award is expected to be made as a "special grant" under 33 USC 1134(b), which allows the Sea Grant match requirement to be waived under limited circumstances.)

C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility

None.

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Address to Request Application Package

Applications are available through grants.gov (<http://grants.gov>) under FFO number NOAA-OAR-SG-2012-2003207. If an applicant does not have internet access, please contact the name listed in VII. Agency Contacts, to request an application package.

B. Content and Form of Application

Applications that do not meet the following requirements will not be reviewed.

All pages should be single-spaced and composed in at least a 12-point font with one-inch margins on 8½" x 11" paper.

The following information must be included:

1. Signed Title Page. The title page must be signed by the Principal Investigator and the institutional representative. Electronic signatures submitted through grants.gov satisfy this requirement. Identify the Principal Investigators and collaborators and the institutional representative by affiliation and contact information. List the total amount of Federal funds being requested, and total amount of matching funds (if any), for each budget year. For projects involving multiple institutions, the total should include all sub-recipient budgets. An optional general Title Page template is available at <http://www.seagrant.noaa.gov/funding/forms.html>.

2. Project Summary. It is critical that the project summary accurately conveys all essential elements of the activities. Applicants must use the Sea Grant Project Summary Form 90-2 (OMB Control No. 0648-0362), available at <http://www.seagrant.noaa.gov/funding/forms.html>.

3. Project Description. This section must not exceed 15 pages, and should include:

(a) Introduction/Background/Justification

(b) Work Plan. Include objectives to be achieved, methodologies to be employed, role of project personnel, project planning approach to be used, activities to be

conducted, proposed nature of interactions with Sea Grant programs and their constituents.

(c) Outcome. Identify the planned outcomes in objective, quantifiable terms. The outcome must be a description of the desired end state to be achieved, not just a description of the activities to be performed. Describe how the outcomes of the project will be measured and reported.

4. Literature cited.

5. Budget information. There must be a separate budget for each year of the project, as well as a cumulative annual budget for the entire project provided on Sea Grant Budget Form 90-4 (OMB Control No. 0648-0362), available at <http://www.seagrants.noaa.gov/funding/forms.html>.

Subcontracts must also have a separate budget 90-4 form. Indicate matching funds if provided. Provide justification for all budget items, especially travel and equipment, in sufficient detail to enable the reviewers to evaluate the appropriateness of the funding requested.

Sea Grant currently maintains a physical collection at the University of Rhode Island. A budget to maintain, move or convert the current physical collection to another format must be included. A national Sea Grant Week meeting is planned for 2012; budgets should include funds for attendance at this meeting.

6. Current and pending support. Provide information on all current and pending Federal support for ongoing projects and proposals, including subsequent funding in the case of continuing grants. Include the proposed project and all other projects or activities using Federal assistance and requiring a portion of time of the principal investigator or other senior personnel. Describe the relationship between the proposed project and these other projects, and the number of person-months per year to be devoted to the projects. Similar information must be provided for all proposals already submitted or submitted concurrently to other possible sponsors.

7. Investigator resumes. Maximum of two pages per investigator.

8. Letters of support.

9. Standard Application Forms: Applications submitted through grants.gov will include several mandatory electronic standard forms provided in the electronic application package. Applicants without internet access who plan to submit an application in hardcopy will need to submit hardcopy equivalents. Please seek guidance from the name listed in section VI., Agency Contacts, below.

Submission of the NOAA NEPA Questionnaire (OMB Approval Number 0648-0538) is not required for this application.

C. Submission Dates and Times

Applications submitted through grants.gov must be received by 4:00 pm Eastern time on December 1, 2011. Applications submitted in hardcopy must be received by the National Sea Grant Office by 4:00 pm Eastern time on December 1, 2011. Submissions through grants.gov will have a date and time indicator on them. Hard copies will be date and time stamped upon receipt. Applications that are not received by the deadline will not be reviewed.

D. Intergovernmental Review

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

E. Funding Restrictions

Federal funding received under this Opportunity is prohibited by 33 USC 1124(d)(2) from being used for the purchase or rental of any land or the purchase, rental, construction, preservation, or repair of any building, except for short-term rental of buildings or facilities for meetings in direct support of the project.

F. Other Submission Requirements

Applications should be submitted to grants.gov. Applicants who are eligible to submit in hardcopy should send an original and two copies to: NOAA R/SG, National Sea Grant College Program, R/SG, Attn: Library Competition, Rm 11732, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Phone number for delivery

services is 301-734-1088.

V. Application Review Information

A. Evaluation Criteria

The five evaluation criteria and weighting of the criteria are as follows:

1. Importance and/or relevance and applicability of proposed project to the program goals (15 percent). This assesses whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and/or relevance to NOAA, Federal, regional, State, or local activities. For this competition, this criterion assesses:

(a) whether the proposal addresses how the applicant will provide library services, such as online (digital/electronic, full-text) access to Sea Grant documents, to the state Sea Grant programs and the general public

(b) whether the proposal shows how the proposed Library will add value to the information services provided by Sea Grant, beyond what could be provided by individual Sea Grant programs or their partners

2. Technical/scientific merit (20 percent). This assesses whether the approach is technically sound and/or innovative, if the methods are appropriate, and whether there are clear project goals and objectives. For this competition, this criterion assesses:

(a) the quality of the proposed library services provided to patrons

(b) whether the proposal includes the components necessary to achieve the desired outcome

(c) whether the proposal includes a way to objectively determine its success in achieving its outcome

3. Overall qualifications of applicants (25 percent). This assesses whether the

applicant possesses the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project. For this competition this criterion assesses:

(a) does the applicant have the necessary infrastructure, administrative, and other support to maintain an effective National Sea Grant Library?

(b) does the applicant have a demonstrated record of success (past performance) in working with Sea Grant Programs?

(c) does the applicant have a demonstrated record of success (past performance) in managing a national library?

4. Project costs (15 percent). The Budget is evaluated to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time-frame. For this competition, this criterion also assesses the degree to which costs have been minimized, and whether inter-institutional and partnership activities have been incorporated in order to leverage funds and resources. Does the proposal include plans to partner with other libraries or university-based institutions or programs to leverage funds and resources?

5. Outreach and education (25 percent). NOAA assesses whether this project provides a focused and effective education and outreach strategy regarding NOAA's mission to protect the Nation's natural resources. For this competition, this criterion assesses the quality of proposed outreach and education activities to contribute to achieving the desired objective, as well as to effectively communicate the results of this project after it is completed, to maximize its usefulness in future similar efforts. Does the proposal address how the applicant will promote the library and disseminate information about Sea Grant documents and other holdings?

B. Review and Selection Process

An initial administrative review is conducted to determine compliance with requirements and completeness of the application. All complete and timely proposals will be subjected to technical peer review by the National Sea Grant Office based on the evaluation criteria listed above. Evaluation will be by a review panel of government, academic, NGO and/or private subject matter experts. Scores will be

provided by each member of the panel based on the evaluation criteria contained in this request for proposals. The Competition Manager will review the ranking of the proposals and the review panel comments and make recommendations to the Selecting Official. Awards will be made in rank order unless a proposal is justified to be selected out of rank based upon one or more of the selection factors described in the next section.

C. Selection Factors

1. Availability of funding

2. Balance/distribution of funds

(a) Geographically

(b) By type of institutions

(c) By type of partners

(d) By research areas

(e) By project types

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

4. Program priorities and policy factors

5. Applicant's prior award performance

6. Partnerships and/or Participation of targeted groups

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

For Selection Factor 4, the program priorities and policy factors are set out in Section 1.B. Selection Factor 5 includes performance in reporting of results.

Applicants may be asked to respond to questions or modify objectives, work plans, or budgets prior to final approval of the award. Subsequent grant administration procedures will be in accordance with current agency grants procedures. A summary statement of the evaluation by the review panel will be provided to each applicant.

D. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

Subject to the availability of funds, awards are expected to be made by March 1, 2012. That start date that should be used on the Application for Federal Assistance (Form 424) for successful applications.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

Successful applicants will receive notification that 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 Principle Investigator of the project either electronically via Grants Online or in hard copy. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified that their proposal was not selected for recommendation.

To enable the use of a universal identifier and to enhance the quality of information available to the public as required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006, to the extent applicable, any proposal awarded in response to this announcement will be required to use the Central Contractor Registration and Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System and be subject to reporting requirements, as identified in OMB guidance published at 2 CFR Parts 25, 170 (2010), http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr25_main_02.tpl, http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr170_main_02.tpl

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements. Administrative and national policy requirements for all Department of Commerce awards are contained in the Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements contained in the Federal Register notice of February 11, 2008 (73 FR 7696) and are applicable to this solicitation. A copy of the notice may be obtained at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/granule/FR-2008-02-11/E8-2482>.

Limitation of Liability. In no event will NOAA or the Department of Commerce be responsible for proposal preparation costs. Publication of this announcement does not oblige NOAA to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). NOAA must analyze the potential environmental impacts, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), for applicant projects or proposals which are seeking NOAA federal funding opportunities. Detailed information on NOAA compliance with NEPA can be found at the following NOAA NEPA website: <http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/>, including our NOAA Administrative Order 216-6 for NEPA, http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/NAO216_6.pdf, and the Council on Environmental Quality implementation regulations, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/ceq/initiatives/nepa>. 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 of 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. The 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.

Paperwork Reduction Act: This notification involves collection of information requirements subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act. The use of Sea Grant Project Summary Form Forms 90-2 and 90-4 has been approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under Control No. 0648-036. Estimated time to fill out these forms: 90-2: 20 minutes, 90-4: 15 minutes. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall any person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with, a collection of information subject to the requirements of the PRA unless that collection of information displays a currently valid OMB control number.

C. Reporting

Award recipients will be required to submit financial reports to the Grants Officer and performance (technical) reports to the Federal Program Officer. These reports are to be submitted electronically, unless the recipient does not have proven Internet access, in which case hard copy submissions may be accepted; however, no facsimiles will be accepted.

The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 includes a requirement for awardees of applicable Federal grants to report information about first-tier subawards and executive compensation under Federal assistance awards issued in FY 2011 or later. All awardees of applicable grants and cooperative agreements are required to report to the Federal Subaward Reporting System (FSRS) available at www.FSRS.gov on all subawards over \$25,000.

VII. Agency Contacts

Ms. Amy Painter, NOAA R/SG, National Sea Grant Office, 1315 East West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910-3283, telephone: 301-734-1076, email: oar.hq.nsgo.competitions@noaa.gov

VIII. Other Information

Award of a grant under this Federal Funding Opportunity does not confer on the recipient the designation of a Sea Grant Institution or Sea Grant College as defined by regulation at 15 CFR 918.

