

NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

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Executive Summary

Federal Agency Name

Fisheries Headquarters Program Office (FHQ)

Funding Opportunity Title

FY 2024 – 2026 Broad Agency Announcement (BAA), National Marine Fisheries Service

Announcement Type

Broad Agency Announcement

Funding Opportunity Number

NOAA-NMFS-FHQ-2024-27611

Assistance Listing Number(s)

11.015

Dates

Applications may be submitted to Grants.gov up to 11:59:59 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time on September 30, 2026. Applications received after this time will not be reviewed or considered for funding. Applications will be considered on a continuing/rolling basis as they are received.

Funding Opportunity Description

This BAA is for the National Marine Fisheries Service, also known as NOAA Fisheries. The purpose of this notice is to request applications for special projects and programs associated with the NOAA Fisheries strategic plan and mission goals, as well as to provide the general public with information and guidelines on how NOAA will select applications and administer discretionary Federal assistance under this Broad Agency Announcement (BAA). This notice is not a mechanism to fund existing NOAA awards.

Each NOAA Line Office that supports financial assistance (National Marine Fisheries Service, National Ocean Service, National Weather Service, Office of Atmospheric Research, Office of Education, and National Environmental Satellite Data Information Service) has a separate BAA found in Grants.gov, so applicants should submit their application to the BAA for the Line Office that best fits their application. A description of NOAA Line Offices is found at <https://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/public/lineoffices.html> and <https://www.noaa.gov/office-education>. Applicants may also contact the Agency Contact below for more information. If you submit the same application to more than Line Office, mention this in your application and notify the relevant contacts so that NOAA may coordinate internally.

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Program Objective

This Broad Agency Announcement (BAA) is a mechanism to encourage research, education and outreach, innovative projects, or sponsorships that are not addressed through NOAA Fisheries's competitive discretionary programs. This announcement is not soliciting goods or services for the direct benefit of NOAA.

Funding for activities described in this notice is contingent upon the availability of appropriations in the fiscal years applicable to the application. Applicants are hereby given notice that funds have not yet been appropriated for any activities described in this notice. Publication of this announcement does not oblige NOAA to review an application beyond an initial administrative review, or to award any specific project, or to obligate any available funds.

B. Program Priorities

As an agency with responsibilities for maintaining and improving the viability of marine and coastal ecosystems; for delivering valuable weather, climate, and water information and services; and for supporting the global commerce and transportation upon which we all depend, NOAA must remain current and responsive in an ever-changing world.

We do this in concert with our partners and stakeholders in Federal, state, and local governments and private organizations, applying a systematic approach that links our strategic goals through multi-year plans to the daily activities of our employees. Every year we re-evaluate our progress and priorities, look for efficiencies, and take advantage of new opportunities to improve our information, products, and services.

In furtherance of this objective, NOAA Fisheries issues this BAA for extramural research, innovative projects, and sponsorships (e.g., conferences, newsletters, etc.) that address one or more of the following mission goal descriptions contained in the NOAA Fisheries 2022-2025 Strategic Plan:

Strategic Goal 1: Adaptively Manage Fisheries for Sustainability and Economic Competitiveness

Rapidly changing ocean conditions are disrupting fisheries, fishing communities, and seafood economics as the geographic ranges of fish stocks expand, contract, or shift poleward or offshore, and the productivity of fish and other living marine resources becomes less predictable. The challenge moving forward will be to provide the science model and forecast the effects of changing ocean conditions and habitats on fish stocks, fisheries, and seafood productivity in a timely manner. Deploying economic tools and forecasts to promote responsible and sustainable industry growth, diversify market opportunities, strengthen supply chains, and ensure participation of underrepresented communities will build resilience to fishery disasters and market shocks in our fishing and seafood industries. Combating the threat of IUU (illegal, unreported, and unregulated) fishing and ensuring fair and reciprocal trade in fish products will protect U.S. competitiveness and sustainability goals, and prevent harm to protected resources globally. Domestic marine aquaculture production can help to supplement U.S. wild-caught fisheries while promoting business and employment opportunities. In furtherance of this strategic goal, NOAA Fisheries will pursue strategies to:

- Manage stocks for optimum yield and build economic resilience in U.S. seafood and fishing sectors

- Advance science and fishery management strategies to increase the sustainability of marine fisheries
- Mitigate and adapt to changes in fisheries habitat
- Diversify our data collection technologies and expand/modernize data products and services
-
- Counter IUU fishing activity

Strategic Goal 2: Safeguard Protected Species and Propel Their Recovery

NOAA Fisheries has been a first line of defense for more than 50 years in recovering threatened and endangered marine and anadromous species and in preventing harm or harassment of marine mammals and sea turtles. Increased human interactions (e.g., bycatch, incidental take, and anthropogenic noise) and changing environmental conditions (e.g., warming temperatures, acidification, pollution, sediment runoff, and habitat degradation) have contributed to the decline of many of these marine species. We conduct pioneering research to assess, evaluate, and monitor protected species populations, their health, health trends, and the human impacts they face. Working with partners, we develop conservation policies, guidance, and regulations to conserve and recover protected marine species, and consult on proposed actions to mitigate threats to their survival. Our proactive outreach and efforts to enforce and promote compliance with our conservation efforts help to protect these vulnerable marine species. In furtherance of this strategic goal, NOAA Fisheries will pursue strategies to:

- Implement actions to recover endangered and threatened species
- Model and predict the effects of habitat changes on protected marine species, to improve conservation outcomes
- Expand the use of advanced and innovative technologies
- Protect and restore important habitats necessary for the recovery of endangered marine species
- Protect marine species while supporting ocean-based economic growth

C. Program Authority

The specific program authority will vary depending on the nature of the proposed project. A list of the most prevalent assistance authorities are 15 U.S.C. 1540; 16 U.S.C. 1829; 16 U.S.C. 661; 16 US Code 753a; 33 USC 893a; and 33 U.S.C. 1442.

II. Award Information

A. Funding Availability

There are no funds specifically appropriated by Congress for this Broad Agency Announcement (BAA). Funding for potential projects in this notice is contingent upon the availability of appropriations in the fiscal years applicable to the application. Applicants are hereby given notice that funds have not yet been appropriated for any proposed activities in this notice.

B. Project/Award Period

The anticipated start date of the award generally will be three to six months after receipt of the application by NOAA. Applications should generally be submitted for a one-year award period, but this may be negotiated if the application is recommended for funding.

Note: The award must start on the first day of a month in the year, and end on the last day of a month in the year (e.g. 08/01/2025 – 07/31/2026)

C. Type of Funding Instrument

Selected applicants will either enter into a grant or a cooperative agreement depending upon the amount of NOAA's involvement in the project. Substantial involvement by NOAA in the project would require a cooperative agreement.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants may be institutions of higher education, nonprofits, commercial organizations, individuals, state, local, and Indian Tribal governments. Eligibility also depends on the statutory authority that permits NOAA to fund the proposed activity. Funding of Federal organizations is outside the scope of this announcement; if funding authority exists, Federal organizations seeking NOAA funds should contact relevant program officials about the interagency agreement process.

B. Cost Share or Matching Requirement

Cost sharing is not required unless it is determined that a project can only be funded under an authority that requires matching/cost sharing funds.

C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility

None.

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Address to Request Application Package

Applicants can obtain electronic application packages through Grants.gov by using Notice of Funding Opportunity Number NOAA-NMFS-FHQ-2024-27611 to conduct a search. Grants.gov requires applicants to complete a free annual registration process in the electronic System for Award Management (SAM), found at <https://sam.gov/SAM/>, as described in section IV.C. and IV.G. of this Announcement.

These registration processes can take several weeks and involve multiple steps. In order to allow sufficient time for these processes, applicants should register as soon as they decide to apply even if they are not ready to submit their application.

B. Content and Form of Application

1. Format Requirements.

All pages should be single-spaced and composed in at least 11-point font with one-inch margins on 8" x 11" paper. The project description may not exceed 15 pages, exclusive of title page, project synopsis, literature cited, budget information, resumes of investigators, and letters of support (if any). Failure to follow the requirements may result in the rejection of the application and its subsequent return.

Any PDF or other attachments that are included in an electronic application must meet the above format requirement when printed out.

2. Content Requirements.

The following information must be included:

- a. Signed SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance: The SF-424 must be signed by the Authorized Representative. Electronic signatures submitted through Grants.gov satisfy this requirement.
- b. Title Page (1-page limit): The title page identifies the project's title, total budget, start and end dates; and the Principal Investigator's (PI's) and co-PI's names, affiliations, complete mailing addresses, email addresses, telephone numbers and fax numbers. The title page must also identify the specific NOAA office (i.e., NMFS) and the NOAA program targeted by the application.
- c. Project Synopsis (1-page limit): It is critical that the project synopsis accurately describes the project being proposed and conveys all essential elements of the activities. It is imperative that potential applicants tie their applications to one of the NOAA mission goals described in Section I.B. of this announcement and state it here in the synopsis.
- d. Project Description (15-page limit): The applicant should describe and justify the project being proposed and address each of the evaluation criteria as described below in Section V. Project descriptions should include clear objectives and specific approaches to achieving those objectives, including methods, timelines, and expected outcomes.
- e. Literature Cited: If applicable
- f. Assurances: The SF-424B Assurances form must be completed and submitted for all non-construction applications, and the SF-424D Assurances form must be completed and submitted for all construction applications.
- g. Completed Form CD-511, Certification Regarding Lobbying.
- h. Resumes for each major participant: Key Personnel; Principal Investigator(s).

i. Standard Application Forms: Please refer to the application package available through Grants.gov. Please review each form to determine which are required with submission. Each applicant may not be required to submit all forms listed, depending on the project type or applicant type.

j. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Questionnaire: NOAA has a NEPA policy applicable to funding applicants, described in Section VI of this announcement. NOAA has a NEPA Questionnaire that may be applicable to some projects, but applicants do not need to provide answers to the NOAA NEPA Questionnaire at this time. However, NOAA may require additional information from the applicant regarding potential environmental impacts prior to reviewing the application.

k. Data Management Plan: If relevant for the proposed project, include a data sharing plan. Refer to Section VI.

l. Budget and Budget Justification: The SF-424A Budget Information Form must be completed, and there should be a detailed budget justification accompanying the SF- 424 budget forms (SF-424A non-construction or SF-424C construction, as appropriate). Indicate matching funds if provided in a separate column. Provide justifications for all budget items in sufficient detail to enable the reviewers to evaluate the appropriateness of the funding requested. The budget justification should be broken out and detailed using the same budget categories as the SF-424 budget form (SF-424A or SF-424C). 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 requesting indirect costs at a rate greater than the de minimis 15% must provide a signed copy of their organization's existing approved Federal indirect cost (IDC) rate agreement with the application package.

m. Indirect Costs: If an applicant has not previously established an indirect cost rate with a Federal agency, the applicant may choose to negotiate a rate with its cognizant agency (the agency from which the applicant receives the most grant funding), or use the de minimis indirect cost rate of 10% of Modified Total Direct Costs (as allowable under 2 C.F.R. §200.414). Applicants requesting indirect costs at a rate greater than the de minimis 10% must provide a signed copy of their existing approved Federal indirect cost (IDC) rate agreement with the application package.

If an applicant seeks to establish a new indirect cost rate agreement and NOAA would be the cognizant agency, the applicant must submit its indirect cost rate agreement documentation per the Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions (2019), https://www.osec.doc.gov/oam/grants_management/policy/documents/Department%20of%20Commerce%20Standard%20Terms%20Conditions%2030%20April%202019.pdf, or any amended versions that may be applicable (found at https://www.osec.doc.gov/oam/grants_management/policy/) within 90 days after award start date or those costs will not be allowed. The approval process may take several weeks. The indirect cost rate applications in these cases should be sent by mail or email (separately from the grant application) to:

Jennifer Jackson, Grants Officer
NOAA Grants Management Division,
Email: jennifer.jackson@noaa.gov

For applicants seeking to establish a new indirect cost rate agreement and NOAA would be the cognizant agency, the information that must be provided (separate from the application) to establish an Approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement is described below:

Submitted by Non-Profits and Commercial Entities

1. A chart showing the organizational structure during the period for which the application applies, along with a functional statement noting the duties and/or responsibilities of all units that comprise the organization. Please make sure this includes a brief narrative background statement outlining the financial operation of the organization.
2. The basic proposal including all other supporting schedules and financial and statistical information supporting the basic application. Any supporting schedules should be cross-referenced to the basic application (accounting records and related work papers to support the costs contained in the indirect cost application).

- a. The total costs shown in the basic proposal should also reconcile to the financial statements in the most recent audit report, which should also be provided.
- b. Reconciliations/Analyses
 - i. As stated above, detailed reconciliation between the proposal and the financial statements;
 - ii. Adjusted detailed trial balance which agrees to the audited financial statements;
 - iii. Trend Analysis Report - It must itemize expense account line items that support the totals of both direct and indirect expenses, for three years (only two years would be required if the entity has only been in business for two years). Comparisons or trends of the indirect cost rates only will cause your indirect cost proposal to be rejected, until the correctly prepared trend analysis report is received; an
 - iv. Calculations showing how applicable prior year carry-forward amounts were applied to formulate current year's rate submission.
3. A listing of directly awarded grants and contracts by Federal agency, Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number, dollar amounts separated by direct- indirect-total costs, period of performance, applicable cost principle, and the identification of any cost limitations and special award terms/conditions applicable to each.
4. Cost Policy Statement (e.g. Disclosure Statement) the purpose of which is to establish an unambiguous understanding between the grantee and the Federal Government as to what costs will be charged directly and what costs will be charged indirectly. If a Cost Policy Statement was submitted with last year's application and not proposing any changes to the current year's submission, the following suggested language should be included in their transmittal letter when a application is submitted: [ABC Organization] hereby confirms that no changes to its accounting practices as set forth in its Cost Policy Statement dated [date] have been made.
5. Statement of Total Costs contains all line items of cost included in the organization's chart of accounts and applicable columns for direct costs (by cost center/activity, Federal grants, non-Federal grants, fund raising, etc.), indirect costs (overhead, G&A, etc.), and unallowable costs (if applicable). These columns should show the type (e.g. labor, travel supplies, etc.) and amount of cost incurred by each activity. The total costs should reconcile to the organization's financial statements. If the reconciliation is not clear, the organization should provide a separate schedule supporting the difference.
6. Statement of Indirect Costs contains all line items of cost included in the indirect cost pool(s), the applicable base(s), and the resulting indirect cost rate(s). The allocation base should be traceable to the organization's total costs. If not clearly traceable, an additional schedule should be provided to support the reconciliation.
7. Specific Personnel Costs includes a list of all volunteers by job title, along with a description of the services they provided to the organization, if significant. Also required is a list of all management level employees, their position descriptions and salaries.
8. Certification of Indirect Costs - A completed Certification must be signed on behalf of the organization by an official at a level no lower than Executive Director or Chief Financial Officer. The Certification must identify the period of coverage for the indirect cost proposal, asserting that it has been prepared in accordance with the applicable cost principles and guidelines [2 CFR Part 200 (non-profits), FAR Part 31 (commercial)].
9. Identification of Other Items to be included within the indirect cost proposal package. If these items are not provided with the organization's proposal, it may be necessary for them to be provided later during the review process as circumstances dictate.
 - a. Identify assets purchased with Federal sponsored program funds or Non-Federal sponsored program funds, if any, and specify if ownership remains with sponsoring entity or transfers to recipient upon successful completion of the awards.
 - b. Identify all related party transactions.
 - c. Identify idle facilities, if any.

10. Lobbying Certificate – A completed Certification must be signed on behalf of the organization by an official at a level no lower than Executive Director or Chief Financial Officer. Completion of this Certification indicates the organization has complied with the requirements and standards on lobbying costs in the development of the indirect cost rate.

11. DOC's Indirect Cost Proposal Checklist. Please mark the Checklist item number on the corresponding document (or start of section) within the final proposal package. Follow this link to view a copy of the IDC Proposal Checklist: <https://rates.psc.gov/fms/dca/icpchecklist.pdf>

Submitted by States and Local Government and Indian Tribe

All entities receiving this Guidance desiring to claim indirect costs under Federal awards using an indirect cost rate must prepare and maintain their completed indirect cost rate proposal for review, as set forth in 2 CFR Part 200, Uniform Administrative Requirements for Federal Grants.

Proposals submitted in response to this Announcement must include a Data Management Plan (up to 2 pages). See Section VI.B., Administrative and National Policy Requirements, below for additional information on what the plan should contain.

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 by the Federal awarding agency 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 (UEI) 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

Applications can be submitted on a rolling basis starting from the publication date of this Broad Agency Announcement up to 11:59:59 p.m., Eastern Daylight Time on September 30, 2026. Applications received after this time will not be reviewed or considered for funding. Applications shall be evaluated for funding generally within three to six months of receipt. An applicant can expect to receive either a rejection notice based on the initial prescreening review (if found ineligible), a rejection notice based on merit review or program restrictions, a request for additional information, and/or an award within that time frame.

E. Intergovernmental Review

Applications submitted by state and local governments are subject to the provisions of Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs." Any applicant submitting an application for funding is required to complete item 16 on the SF-424 regarding clearance by the State Single Point of Contact (SPOC) established as a result of EO 12372.

To find out about and comply with a State's process under EO 12372, the names, addresses and phone numbers of participating SPOCs are listed in the Office Management and Budget's home page at https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc

F. Funding Restrictions

None, unless required by the statute under which the award is funded.

G. Other Submission Requirements

Applicants must register with Grants.gov before any application materials can be submitted. An organization's one time registration process may take up to three weeks or more to complete. To use Grants.gov, an applicant must have a Unique Entity ID (UEI) number and be registered in the System for Award Management (SAM) (both of which require periodic renewals). Applicants can receive a UEI number and a SAM registration at no cost by visiting <https://sam.gov/content/entity-registration> . **Please do not register in SAM as a "Private" entity.**

Allow a minimum of five days to complete the SAM registration, which will require the applicant's Employer Identification Number. The entire registration process, including Grants.gov, UEI, and SAM, it may take more than three weeks to complete., and the registration must be renewed annually. **Please allow sufficient time for these steps.**

The Grants.gov site contains directions for submitting an application, the application package (forms), and is also where the completed application is submitted. The downloadable application package is available on Grants.gov. The package will be available for this solicitation's Workspace or download a copy of the application package, complete it offline, and then upload and submit the application via the Grants.gov site. Use the Notice of Funding Opportunity Number NOAA-NMFS-FHQ-2024-27611 to conduct a search and obtain electronic application packages.

After electronic submission of the application through Grants.gov, the person submitting the application will receive up to three email messages from Grants.gov updating them on the progress of their application. In the first 24 to 48 hours after submission, the first email will confirm receipt of the application by the Grants.gov system, and the second will indicate that the application has either been successfully validated by the system before transmission to the grantor agency or has been rejected because of errors. Only validated applications are sent to NOAA for review. After the application has been validated, this same person will receive a third email, generally within two days, when the application has been downloaded by NOAA. If an applicant has not received an email verifying that the application has been downloaded by NOAA, the applicant is responsible for contacting the federal program officer for this Announcement and providing documentation that demonstrates the application was submitted to Grants.gov ahead of the deadline.

The assistance listing number will vary depending on the nature of the proposed project. The applicant should consult the assistance listing series available at <https://sam.gov/>. The applicant should review the assistance listing numbers associated with the "National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration" (Generally 11.400 - 11.481 as well as 11.008, 11.011, 11.012, 11.015, 11.017 and 11.021) and select the most accurate program for the proposed project. The assistance listing will also provide the applicant with the eligibility requirements in order to determine if an applicant can apply under that particular assistance listing.

NOAA uses the eRA system to electronically administer their Grants Management Portfolio. eRA commons, public.era.nih.gov, is the public facing portal that recipients will use to manage any awarded applications. You can register at the You can register at the public.era.nih.gov. If you require assistance you can review the instructions here <https://www.era.nih.gov/register-accounts/register-in-era-commons.htm>.

The first listed PD/PI on the application must include their eRA Commons ID in the "Credential, e.g., agency login" field of form. Failure to register in eRA Commons and to include a valid PD/PI Commons ID in the Applicant Identifier field on the SF-424 form will prevent the successful submission of an electronic application. Additional personnel included on the form do not need to include this information, however eRA will create a warning recommending those personnel also have valid eRA Commons IDs. Again - it is not required that those additional personnel include valid eRA Commons IDs regardless of the warnings created by the eRA system.

H. Address for Submitting Proposals

Each NOAA Line Office that supports financial assistance has a separate BAA found in Grants.gov, so applicants must submit their application to the BAA for the Line Office that best fits their application. A description of NOAA Line Offices is found at <https://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/public/lineoffices.html>. If you submit the same application to more than one Line Office, please state this in your application. Contact officials for each Line Office is listed below.

National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)
 Jeffrey Kulnis
 jeffrey.kulnis@noaa.gov
 (301) 427-8771
 SSMC3 Rm: 14358
 1315 East-West Hwy
 Silver Spring, MD 20910-3282

V. Application Review Information

Evaluation Criteria

1. Importance/relevance and applicability of proposed projects to the program goals	Maximum Points: 20
<p>This ascertains whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and/or relevance to NOAA, Federal, regional, state, or local activities: i.e., How does the proposed activity enhance NOAA's strategic plan and mission goals? Applications should also address significance/possibilities of securing productive results, i.e., Does this study address an important problem? If the aims of the application are achieved, how will scientific knowledge be advanced? What will be the effect of these studies on the concepts or methods that drive this field? What effect will the project have on improving public understanding of the role of the ocean, coasts, and atmosphere in the global ecosystem?</p> <p>Applications may also be scored for innovation, i.e., Does the project employ novel concepts, approaches or methods? Are the aims original and innovative? Does the project challenge existing paradigms or develop new methodologies or technologies?</p>	
2. Technical/scientific merit	Maximum Points: 20
<p>This assesses whether the approach is technically sound and if the methods are appropriate, and whether there are clear project goals and objectives. Applications should address the approach/soundness of design: i.e., Are the conceptual framework, design, methods, and analyses adequately developed, well-integrated, and appropriate to the aims of the audiences to be engaged through the project? Does the applicant acknowledge potential problem areas and consider alternative tactics?</p> <p>This criterion should also address the applicant's proposed methods for monitoring, measuring, and evaluating the success or failure of the project, i.e., What are they? Are they appropriate?</p> <p>Additionally, if needed, a data sharing 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.</p>	
3. Overall qualifications of applicants	Maximum Points: 20
<p>This ascertains whether the applicant possesses the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project. If appropriate, applications should also address the physical environment and collaboration, if any, i.e., Does the environment in which the work will be done contribute to the probability of success? Do the proposed experiments or activities take advantage of unique features of the intended environment or employ useful collaborative arrangements?</p>	
4. Project costs	Maximum Points: 20
<p>The budget is evaluated to determine if the cost is realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time-frame.</p>	
5. Outreach and Education	Maximum Points: 20

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. NOAA assesses whether this project aligns with NOAA's education vision, for an informed society that uses ocean, coastal, Great Lakes, weather, and climate science to make the best social, economic, and environmental decisions. Evaluation of these criteria will include if the project addresses any of the goals or employ any of the strategies of the NOAA Education Plan (<http://www.noaa.gov/explainers/noaa-education-strategic-plan>), as well as how the outcomes of the project will be communicated to NOAA and the interested public.

Review and Selection Process

NOAA will conduct an initial administrative review to determine eligibility for award, compliance with requirements and completeness of the application. This review includes determining whether:

1. Sufficient funds are available in the budget of the program office receiving the application to support the proposed project;
2. Statutory authority exists to provide financial assistance for the project or organization;
3. A complete application package has been submitted, that is, all required elements of the application are included and application follows format requirements;
4. The Project Description/Narrative is consistent with one or more of NOAA's mission goals;
5. The application falls within the scope of an existing NOAA competitive announcement (found at www.Grants.gov) or duplicates an existing non-discretionary project announced or awarded in FY22, FY23, FY24, FY25, or FY26, in which case it cannot be funded under this announcement;
6. The work in the application does not directly benefit NOAA (if it will, it should be supported by a procurement contract, not a financial assistance award which cannot be funded under this announcement, as provided in 31 U.S.C. 6303).

Applications not passing this initial review will not be considered further for funding through this BAA and will not receive further review. NOAA will evaluate application(s) that pass this initial review and comply with all the requirements under this BAA individually (i.e., applications will be not compared to each other). A merit review will be conducted by mail reviewers and/or peer panel reviewers. Each reviewer will individually evaluate the application(s) using the evaluation criteria provided above; a minimum of three merit reviewers per application is required. More than three reviewers may be used based on the complexity of the application. The reviewers may be any combination of Federal and/or non-Federal personnel. Reviewers may discuss an application, but if more than one non-Federal reviewer is used, the application(s) will be individually scored (i.e., a consensus is not reached). Otherwise, the Program Officer has the discretion to authorize a score based on consensus. NOAA selects evaluators on the bases of their professional qualifications and expertise as related to the unique characteristics of the application. The NOAA Program Officer will assess the evaluations and make a fund or do-not-fund recommendation to the Selecting Official with an explanation of the reasons for the recommendation. The selection official shall provide a rationale for funding the application and shall address any comments provided by the reviewers. Any applicant considered for funding may be required to address the issues raised in the evaluation of the application by the reviewers, Program Officer, Selecting Official, and/or Grants Officer before an award is issued.

Applications not selected for funding in the fiscal year the application is submitted may be considered for funding in a subsequent fiscal year, but may be required to revalidate the terms of the original application or resubmit in the next BAA cycle if one is published. The Program Officer, Selecting Official and/or Grants Officer may negotiate the final funding level of the application with the intended applicant. The Selecting Official makes the final recommendation for award to the NOAA Grants Officer who is authorized to commit the Federal Government and obligate the funds.

Selection Factors

Not applicable.

Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

Subject to the availability of funds, awards are expected to be made three to six months after receipt by NOAA of the full application. Given this time frame, applicants applying in Fiscal Year 2024 should take into consideration that submissions received after March 31, 2024 may not be able to be awarded in FY24 (October 1, 2023 through September 30, 2024). Submissions received after March 31, 2025 may not be able to be awarded in FY25 (October 1, 2024 through September 30, 2025). Similarly, submissions received after March 31, 2026 may not be able to be awarded in FY26 (October 1, 2025 through September 30, 2026).

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

PRE-AWARD COSTS. NOAA authorizes award recipients to expend pre-award costs up to 90 days before the period of performance start date at the applicant's own risk without approval from NOAA and in accordance with the applicant's internal policies and procedures. Such costs are allowable only to the extent that they would have been allowable if incurred after the date of the Federal award. This does not include direct proposal costs (as defined at 2 CFR 200.460). In no event will NOAA or the Department of Commerce be responsible for direct proposal preparation costs. Pre-award costs will be a portion of, not in addition to, the approved total budget of the award. Pre-award costs expended more than 90 days prior to the period of performance start date require approval from the Grants Officer. This does not change the period of performance start date.

GRANTS OFFICER SIGNATURE. Proposals submitted in response to this solicitation are not considered awards until the Grants Officer has signed the grant agreement. Only Grants Officers can bind the Government to the expenditure of funds. The Grants Officer's digital signature constitutes an obligation of funds by the federal government and formal approval of the award.

LIMITATION OF LIABILITY. Funding for programs listed in this notice is contingent upon the availability of funds. Applicants are hereby given notice that funds may not have been appropriated yet for the programs listed in this notice. Publication of this announcement does not oblige NOAA to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds.

The Notice of Award is executed by the NOAA Grants Officer and is the authorizing award document. It is generally provided electronically via the eRA system to the Authorized Representative of the recipient organization. The Authorized Representative for a successful applicant will accept the award via NOAA's electronic grants management system, eRA. NOAA will notify unsuccessful applicants in writing.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

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 applies to awards in this program. Refer to <http://go.usa.gov/SBYh> and <http://go.usa.gov/SBq4>.

RESEARCH TERMS AND CONDITIONS. For awards designated on the CD-450 as Research, the Commerce Terms, and the Federal-wide Research Terms and Conditions (Research Terms) as implemented by the Department of Commerce, currently, at <https://www.nsf.gov/awards/managing/rtc.jsp>, both apply to the award. The Commerce Terms and the Research Terms are generally intended to harmonize with each other; however, where the Commerce Terms and the Research Terms differ in a Research award, the Research Terms prevail, unless otherwise indicated in a specific award condition.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE PRE-AWARD NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR GRANTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.

The Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements contained in the Federal Register notice of December 30, 2014 (79 FR 78390) are applicable to this solicitation and may be accessed online at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2014-12-30/pdf/2014-30297.pdf>.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE (DOC) TERMS AND CONDITIONS. Successful applicants who accept a NOAA award under this solicitation will be bound by the DOC Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions. This document will be provided in the award package in eRA at <http://www.ago.noaa.gov> and at <https://www.commerce.gov/oam/policy/financial-assistance-policy>.

BUREAU TERMS AND CONDITIONS. Successful applicants who accept an award under this solicitation will be bound by bureau-specific standard terms and conditions. These terms and conditions will be provided in the award package in NOAA's Grants Online system. For NOAA awards only, the Administrative Standard Award Conditions for National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Financial Assistance Awards U.S. Department of Commerce are applicable to this solicitation and may be accessed online at <https://www.noaa.gov/organization/acquisition-grants/financial-assistance>

HUMAN SUBJECTS RESEARCH. For research projects involving Human Subjects an Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval or an exemption determination will be required in accordance with DOC Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions Section G.05.i "Research Involving Human Subjects" found at <https://www.commerce.gov/oam/policy/financial-assistance-policy>.

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.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT. 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.

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.

More information can be found on NOAA's Data Management Procedures at:

https://nosc.noaa.gov/EDMC/documents/Data_Sharing_Directive_v3.0_remediated.pdf and at NAO 212-15 Management of Environmental Data and Information:

<https://www.noaa.gov/organization/administration/nao-212-15-management-of-environmental-data-and-information>

NOAA SEXUAL ASSAULT AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE POLICY. NOAA requires organizations receiving federal assistance to report findings of sexual harassment, or any other kind of harassment, regarding a Principal Investigator (PI), co-PI, or any other key personnel in the award. NOAA expects all financial assistance recipients to establish and maintain clear and unambiguous standards of behavior to ensure harassment free workplaces wherever NOAA grant or cooperative agreement work is conducted, including notification pathways for all personnel, including students, on the awards. This expectation includes activities at all on- and offsite facilities and during conferences and workshops. All such settings should have accessible and evident means for reporting violations and recipients should exercise due diligence with timely investigations of allegations and corrective actions. For more information, please visit: <https://www.noaa.gov/organization/acquisition-grants/noaa-workplace-harassment-training-for-contractors-and-financial>.

SCIENCE INTEGRITY. 1. Maintaining Integrity. The non-Federal entity shall maintain the scientific integrity of research performed pursuant to this grant or financial assistance award including the prevention, detection, and remediation of any allegations regarding the violation of scientific integrity or scientific and research misconduct, and the conduct of inquiries, investigations, and adjudications of allegations of violations of scientific integrity or scientific and research misconduct. All the requirements of this provision flow down to subrecipients. 2. Peer Review. The peer review of the results of scientific activities under a NOAA grant, financial assistance award or cooperative agreement shall be accomplished to ensure consistency with NOAA standards on quality, relevance, scientific integrity, reproducibility, transparency, and performance. NOAA will ensure that peer review of "influential scientific information" or "highly influential scientific assessments" is conducted in accordance with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Final Information Quality Bulletin for Peer Review and NOAA policies on peer review, such as the Information Quality Guidelines. 3. In performing or presenting the results of scientific activities under the NOAA grant, financial assistance award, or cooperative agreement and in responding to allegations regarding the violation of scientific integrity or scientific and research misconduct, the non-Federal entity and all subrecipients shall comply with the provisions herein and NOAA Administrative Order (NAO) 202-735D, Scientific Integrity, and its Procedural Handbook, including any amendments thereto. That Order can be found at <http://nrc.noaa.gov/ScientificIntegrityCommons.aspx>. 4. Primary Responsibility. The non-Federal entity shall have the primary responsibility to prevent, detect, and investigate allegations of a violation of scientific integrity or scientific and research misconduct. Unless otherwise instructed by the grants officer, the non-Federal entity shall promptly conduct an initial inquiry into any allegation of such misconduct and may rely on its internal policies and procedures, as appropriate, to do so. 5. By executing this grant, financial assistance award, or cooperative agreement the non-Federal entity provides its assurance that it has established an administrative process for performing an inquiry, investigating, and reporting allegations of a violation of scientific integrity or scientific and research misconduct; and that it will comply with its own administrative process for performing an inquiry, investigation, and reporting of such misconduct. 6. The non-Federal entity shall insert this provision in all subawards at all tiers under this grant, financial assistance award, or cooperative agreement.

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 about any information concerning organizational performance listed in the Responsibility/Qualification section of SAM.gov for consideration by the awarding agency.

REVIEWS AND EVALUATION. 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 §200.303(e), applicants are reminded that they must take reasonable measures to safeguard protected personally identifiable information and other confidential or sensitive personal or business information created or obtained in connection with a Department of Commerce financial assistance award.

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

WAIVERS. When necessary, recipients may apply for, and DOC may grant, a waiver from these requirements. DOC will notify the recipient for information on the process for requesting a waiver from these requirements. 1) When DOC has made a determination that one of the following exceptions applies, the awarding official may waive the application of the domestic content procurement preference in any case in which DOC determines that: a. applying the domestic content procurement preference would be inconsistent with the public interest; b. the types of iron, steel, manufactured products, or construction materials are not produced in the United States in sufficient and reasonably available quantities or of a satisfactory quality; or c. the inclusion of iron, steel, manufactured products, or construction materials produced in the United States will increase the cost of the overall project by more than 25 percent. A request to waive the application of the domestic content procurement preference must be in writing. DOC will provide instructions on the format, contents, and supporting materials required for any waiver request. Waiver requests are subject to public comment periods of no less than 15 days and must be reviewed by the Made in America Office. There may be instances where an award qualifies, in whole or in part, for an existing waiver described at whitehouse.gov/omb/management/made-in-america.

DEFINITIONS. “Construction materials” includes an article, material, or supply—other than an item of primarily iron or steel; a manufactured product; cement and cementitious materials; aggregates such as stone, sand, or gravel; or aggregate binding agents or additives²—that is or consists primarily of: non-ferrous metals; plastic and polymer-based products (including polyvinylchloride, composite building materials, and polymers used in fiber optic cables); glass (including optic glass); lumber; or drywall. “Domestic content procurement preference” means all iron and steel used in the project are produced in the United States; the manufactured products used in the project are produced in the United States; or the construction materials used in the project are produced in the United States. “Infrastructure” includes, at a minimum, the structures, facilities, and equipment for, in the United States, roads, highways, and bridges; public transportation; dams, ports, harbors, and other maritime facilities; intercity passenger and freight railroads; freight and intermodal facilities; airports; water systems, including drinking water and wastewater systems; electrical transmission facilities and systems; utilities; broadband infrastructure; and buildings and real property. Infrastructure includes facilities that generate, transport, and distribute energy. “Project” means the construction, alteration, maintenance, or repair of infrastructure in the United States. – 1 Excludes cement and cementitious materials, aggregates such as stone, sand, or gravel, or aggregate binding agents or additives. 2 IIJA, § 70917(c)(1).

C. Reporting

In accordance with 2 CFR 200.328-9 and the terms and conditions of the award, financial reports are to be submitted to the NOAA Grants Officer identified in the award and performance (technical) reports are to be submitted to the Program Officer. Reports are submitted electronically through eRA.

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 FFATA Subaward Reporting System (FSRS) available at <https://www.fsrs.gov/> on all subawards over \$30,000. Refer to 2 CFR Part 170.

Unless otherwise specified by terms of the award, program and financial reports are to be submitted semi-annually.

Program reports should include progress on identified milestones. Unless otherwise specified by the terms of the award, reports must be submitted electronically through eRA Commons (<https://public.era.nih.gov/commonsplus/public/login.era?TARGET=https%3A%2F%2Fpublic.era.nih.gov%3A443%2Fcommons>).

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 sub awards and executive compensation under Federal assistance awards. All awardees of applicable grants and cooperative agreements are required to report to the Federal Subaward Reporting System (FSRS) available at <https://www.fsrs.gov/> on all sub-awards over \$25,000. Refer to 2 CFR Parts 170.

VII. Agency Contacts

Each NOAA Line Office that supports financial assistance has a separate BAA found in Grants.gov, so applicants must submit their application to the BAA for the Line Office that best fits their application. A description of NOAA Line Offices is found at

<https://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/public/lineoffices.html>. If you submit the same application to more than one Line Office, please state this in your application.

National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)

Jeffrey Kulnis

jeffrey.kulnis@noaa.gov

(301) 427-8771

SSMC3 Rm: 14358

1315 East-West Hwy

Silver Spring, MD 20910-3282

VIII. Other Information

Information Audit Costs

Audits shall be performed in accordance with audit requirements contained in the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements found in 2 CFR part 200, Subsection F. Recipients expending \$750,000 or more in Federal funds during the recipient's fiscal year must conduct a single audit in accordance with guidelines outlined in 2 CFR §§200.500-.520. For-profit organizations not covered by the audit requirements in 2 CFR §§200.500-.520 are subject to the audit requirements set forth in the terms and conditions of the award. Recipients that expend less than \$750,000 during the recipient's fiscal year in Federal awards are exempt from Federal audit requirements for that year, except as noted in 2 CFR §200.503, but records must be available for review or audit by appropriate officials of the Federal agency, pass-through entity, and Government Accountability Office (GAO). Applicants are also reminded that other audits may be conducted by the Department of Commerce Office of Inspector General and by other authorized Federal agencies.

eRA Application Submission Guidance

Applications will be submitted through the eRA system. The process requires complete application forms to be validated and accepted. The following links provide additional guidance and assistance on the process, <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/funding-financial-services/grant-application-process> and <https://www.commerce.gov/ocio/files/tips-and-tricks-successful-era-submissions>.