

## 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: Climate Program Office FY 2016

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: NOAA-OAR-CPO-2016-2004413

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 11.431, Climate and Atmospheric Research

Dates: Letters of Intent for all Competitions (with exception of "MAPP - NOAA Climate Test Bed - Accelerating Transition of Research into Operations") should be received electronically by July 30, 2015 5:00 p.m. Letters of Intent for "MAPP - NOAA Climate Test Bed - Accelerating Transition of Research into Operations" should be received electronically by August 14, 2015.

Full applications for all Competitions (with exception of "MAPP - NOAA Climate Test Bed - Accelerating Transition of Research into Operations" and "RISA competition for the Midwest and Mid-Atlantic regions only"-see RISA section for the deadline) must be received by 5:00 p.m. Eastern, September 23, 2015. Full Applications for the MAPP - Climate Test Bed competition should be received electronically by October 7, 2015 5:00 p.m. Applications received after these times will not be considered for funding.

Funding Opportunity Description: Climate variability and change present society with significant economic, health, safety, and national security challenges. NOAA advances scientific and technical programs to help society cope with and adapt to today's variations in climate and to prepare for tomorrow's. Toward this end, the agency conducts and supports climate research, essential oceanic and atmospheric observations, modeling, information management, assessments, interdisciplinary decision-support research, outreach, education, and partnership development. These investments are key to NOAA's mission of "Science, Service, and Stewardship" and are guided by the agency's vision to create and sustain enhanced resilience in ecosystems, communities, and economies, as described in NOAA's Next Generation Strategic Plan (NGSP).

Fostering climate adaptation and mitigation, and, specifically, the development of an informed society anticipating and responding to climate and its impacts is one of the primary pathways through which NOAA plans to advance its mission. The NGSP outlines NOAA's long-term climate goal, with the following objectives: 1) improved scientific understanding of the changing climate system and its impacts; 2) assessments of current and future states of the climate system

that identify potential impacts and inform science, service, and stewardship decisions; 3) mitigation and adaptation choices supported by sustained, reliable, and timely climate services; and 4) a climate-literate public that understands its vulnerabilities to a changing climate and makes informed decisions. NOAA works in partnership with all levels of governing structures (e.g., federal, state, tribal, regional, local) as well as academic, private, and international research entities, and it places a substantial emphasis on productive partnerships and interactions with decision-makers and other stakeholders.

Within this context, NOAA's Climate Program Office (CPO) manages competitive research programs through which NOAA funds high-priority climate science, assessments, decision support research, outreach, education, and capacity-building activities designed to advance our understanding of Earth's climate system and to foster the application of this knowledge to enable effective decisions. CPO supports research that is conducted across the United States and internationally. CPO also provides strategic guidance for the agency's climate science and services programs and supports NOAA's contributions to the U.S. Global Change Research Program (USGCRP) and its National Climate Assessment and similar international endeavors.

In seeking to advance the NGSP climate objective of an improved scientific understanding of the changing climate system and its impacts, CPO supports research that advances core capabilities in (a) observing systems, climate monitoring and data stewardship (b) understanding and modeling, (c) predictions and projections, and (d) informing decisions.

These core capabilities are, in turn, intended to advance NOAA's ability to provide sustained, reliable, and timely climate services dealing with the following broad, societal challenge areas: (a) climate impacts on water resources, (b) coasts and climate resilience, (c) sustainability of marine ecosystems, and (d) changes in extremes of weather and climate.

## FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

### I. Funding Opportunity Description

#### A. Program Objective

Climate variability and change present society with significant economic, health, safety, and national security challenges. NOAA advances scientific and technical programs to help society cope with and adapt to today's variations in climate and to prepare for tomorrow's. Toward this end, the agency conducts and supports climate research, essential oceanic and atmospheric observations, modeling, information management, assessments, interdisciplinary decision-support research, outreach, education, and partnership development. These investments are key to NOAA's mission of "Science, Service, and Stewardship" and are guided by the agency's vision to create and sustain enhanced resilience in ecosystems, communities, and economies, as described in NOAA's Next Generation Strategic Plan (NGSP).

Fostering climate adaptation and mitigation, and, specifically, the development of an informed society anticipating and responding to climate and its impacts is one of the primary pathways through which NOAA plans to advance its mission. The NGSP outlines NOAA's long-term climate goal, with the following objectives: 1) improved scientific understanding of the changing climate system and its impacts; 2) assessments of current and future states of the climate system that identify potential impacts and inform science, service, and stewardship decisions; 3) mitigation and adaptation choices supported by sustained, reliable, and timely climate services; and 4) a climate-literate public that understands its vulnerabilities to a changing climate and makes informed decisions. NOAA works in partnership with all levels of governing structures (e.g., federal, state, tribal, regional, local) as well as academic, private, and international research entities, and it places a substantial emphasis on productive partnerships and interactions with decision-makers and other stakeholders.

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understanding of the changing climate system and its impacts, CPO supports research that advances core capabilities in (a) observing systems, climate monitoring and data stewardship (b) understanding and modeling, (c) predictions and projections, and (d) informing decisions.

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## B. Program Priorities

CPO supports competitive research through four major Programs: Climate Observations and Monitoring (COM); Earth System Science (ESS); Modeling, Analysis, Predictions, and Projections (MAPP); and Climate and Societal Interactions (CSI). Through this Announcement, CPO's Programs are seeking applications for 10 individual competitions in FY 2016. Investigators are highly encouraged to learn more about CPO and its Programs, as well as specific Program priorities for FY 2016, prior to submitting applications. This information, along with the names and contact information of relevant Competition Managers, is provided in Program information sheets that can be found at the following website: <http://cpo.noaa.gov/GrantsandProjects.aspx>.

The 10 competitions covered by this Announcement are as follows:

COM - In Situ Technologies to Contribute to the Tropical Pacific Observing System (TPOS 2020) Project

AC4 - Fires in the Western US: Emissions and Chemical Transformations

CVP - AMOC-Climate Linkages in the North and/or South Atlantic

MAPP - NOAA Climate Test Bed - Accelerating Transition of Research into Operations

MAPP - Research to Advance Prediction of Subseasonal to Seasonal Phenomena

COCA - Ecosystem Services for a Resilient Coast in a Changing Climate

SARP - Water Resources and Extreme Events

SARP - Coping with Drought Initiative in support of the National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS)

RISA - Existing Regions

## RISA - New Regions

### 1. Climate Observations and Monitoring

The Climate Observations and Monitoring (COM) Program supports projects that provide long-term, high-quality, timely, global observational data, information and products in support of climate, Arctic, weather, and ocean research communities, forecasters, and other service providers and users, for the benefit of society.

In FY 2016, COM is soliciting proposals to assess and advance the readiness of in situ technologies (e.g. floats, gliders, moorings, profilers, drifters) and their potential to address scientific and observational requirements and gaps in the tropical Pacific Ocean region. These advancements will contribute to the Tropical Pacific Observing System (TPOS 2020) Project (<http://tpos2020.org/>).

### 2. Earth System Science

The Earth System Science (ESS) Program aims to provide a process-level understanding of the climate system through observation, modeling, research, analysis, and field studies to support the development of improved climate models and predictions.

In FY 2016, the ESS Program is soliciting research proposals for the following two competitions:

AC4 - Fires in the Western US: Emissions and Chemical Transformations Smoke from fires in the Western US, both wild and prescribed, is important to understand, as it is detrimental to people's health and also affects climate. To better understand smoke as well as its chemical transformations, proposals are solicited for field, laboratory and modeling research projects, which are complementary to NOAA/ESRL's Chemical Science Division planned five year experiment FIREX. <http://esrl.noaa.gov/csd/projects/firex/>

CVP - Understanding the dynamics of the Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation (AMOC), and how it both drives and is driven by climate, is essential for seasonal to multi-decadal Earth system prediction, management of ecosystems including fisheries, and informing societal resilience to coastal hazards such as sea level rise. In FY 2016, the CVP program solicits projects that will refine the current scientific understanding of the AMOC state, variability, and change. Specifically, projects are sought that use newly deployed and existing observations in combination with modeling experiments to refine our understanding of the present and historical circulation (and related transports of heat and freshwater) in the North and/or South Atlantic. An emerging priority is to provide a more

detailed characterization of AMOC flow pathways and their impact on variability. Successful principal investigators will become members of the U.S. AMOC Science Team and are expected to participate in the Science Team meetings and report. (See <https://usclivar.org/amoc>)

### 3. Modeling, Analysis, Predictions, and Projections

The mission of the Modeling, Analysis, Predictions, and Projections (MAPP) Program is to enhance the Nation's capability to predict variability and change in Earth's climate system. The MAPP Program focuses on the coupling, integration, and application of Earth System models and analyses across NOAA, among partner agencies, and with the external research community. Primary objectives include 1) improving Earth System models, 2) supporting an integrated Earth System analysis capability, 3) improving methodologies for global to regional- scale analysis, predictions, and projections, and 4) developing integrated assessment and prediction capabilities relevant to decision makers based on climate analyses, predictions, and projections.

In FY 2016, MAPP is soliciting research proposals for the following two competitions:

1. MAPP - NOAA Climate Test Bed - Accelerating Transition of Research into Operation: Test and demonstrate the performance of experimental systems or methodologies to accelerate the transition of research advances from the scientific community toward improving NOAA's operational climate monitoring and predictions a few weeks to several seasons ahead.

2. MAPP - Research to Advance Prediction of Subseasonal to Seasonal Phenomena: Explore the potential to advance extended-range prediction by examining how prediction system set-ups represent underlying predictability sources that influence the prediction of phenomena occurring on subseasonal to seasonal time scales.

### 4. Climate and Societal Interactions

The Climate and Societal Interactions (CSI) Program provides leadership on decision support research, assessments, and climate services development activities to help society adapt to a changing climate. CSI supports both U.S.- and internationally-focused projects to facilitate community building and learning about the challenges and solutions associated with understanding and meeting the climate-related needs of decision makers.

In FY 2016, CSI is soliciting research proposals for the following five competitions:

COCA will be holding one competition for FY 2016:

1. Ecosystem Services for a Resilient Coast in a Changing Climate

COCA will support interdisciplinary applied research projects focused on 1) the Development and application of methodologies to value ecosystems services and natural and nature-based approaches; and 2) mechanisms to incorporate these approaches into coastal climate adaptation and management decisions.

RISA will be holding two separate competitions for FY 2016:

1. The RISA Program is soliciting proposals to fund one RISA team in up to 4 regions of the US. Those regions have had RISA efforts underway: Alaska, California/Nevada, Carolinas (could also include southern Virginia for relevant issues), Southeast (including Alabama, Florida, and Georgia). We may only be able to fund 3 of these 4 regions depending on Congressional appropriations for FY 2016. Follow deadlines listed on page 1.

2. With a later proposal due date of December 15, the RISA program is soliciting proposals for two new regions:

1)Mid-Atlantic to include the Chesapeake Bay watershed (could include Delaware, DC, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia or a subset thereof)

2)Midwest to include a subset of the region of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, and Missouri (2-3 states would be a manageable RISA region); note that the Great Lakes watershed is already covered by an existing RISA team. The funding of these two new regions of the Mid-Atlantic and Midwest is dependent on Congressional appropriations and in particular on an increase in funding to the RISA program as stipulated in the President's Budget for FY 2016.

SARP will be holding two separate competitions for FY 2016:

1. Water Resources and Extreme Events - For FY16, SARP will again award grants focused on strategies for building sector-based community resilience for humans to the impact of extreme events on water resources and water-resource dependent activities.

Specifically, proposals will need to address (a) Preparing for anticipated near-term extreme precipitation events and (b) Planning for future extreme events.

2. Coping with Drought Initiative in support of the National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS) - In FY16, the Coping with Drought Initiative will solicit proposals that focus on advancing specific NIDIS regional drought early warning systems, concentrating research on monitoring and documenting drought impacts, clarifying the role of drought indicators in planning and implementation, and advancing methods of drought risk management.

Information sheets containing further details and Points of Contact for each competition can be found at <http://cpo.noaa.gov/GrantsandProjects.aspx>.

#### C. Program Authority

49 U.S.C. 44720(b), 15 U.S.C. 2904, 15 U.S.C. 2931-2934

## II. Award Information

### A. Funding Availability

In FY 2016, approximately \$14 million will be available for approximately 90 new awards pending budget appropriations (see section I.B above). It is anticipated that most awards will be at a funding level between \$50,000 and \$300,000 per year with exceptions for larger awards. Federal funding for FY 2017 may be used to fund some awards submitted under this Federal Funding Opportunity. Current or previous grantees are eligible to apply for a new award that builds on, but does not replicate, activities covered in existing or previous awards. Current grantees should not apply for supplementary funding through this announcement.

#### 1. Climate Observations and Monitoring

Projects for the COM competition should be at a funding level between \$400,000-\$500,000 per year. It is anticipated that approximately 4 grant awards will be made for this competition.

## 2. Earth System Science

ESS – It is anticipated that approximately \$3.5 million will be available over FY16 and FY17 for new projects. Projects for AC4 and AMOC competitions should be primarily in the \$50,000-\$200,000/year range. The ESS competitions will fund approximately 22 grant awards.

## 3. Modeling, Analysis, Predictions, and Projections

It is anticipated that approximately \$4 million will be available in FY 2016 for new projects selected from the FY16 MAPP competitions. Projects should be primarily up to \$170,000/year; exceptions apply for larger teams as specified in the MAPP FY 2016 information sheet. The MAPP competitions will fund approximately 18 grant awards.

## 4. Climate and Societal Interactions

It is anticipated that approximately \$7 million will be available in FY 2016 for new projects. Projects for the COCA and SARP competitions should be primarily in the \$50,000 - \$150,000/year range. RISA - anticipates funding each region at \$600,000-\$700,000 per year.

The CSI competitions will fund approximately 25 grant awards.

## B. Project/Award Period

1. Climate Observations and Monitoring: Projects under COM are expected to be funded for 3 years.

2. Earth System Science: ESS - AC4 Projects under AC4 are expected to last 1-3 years. Well-justified four-year proposals are, however, welcomed to allow sufficient time for pre-mission preparation, and for post-field data analysis and modeling.

## 3. Modeling, Analysis, Predictions, and Projections:

Projects are expected to be funded for up to 2 years for MAPP Program FY 2016 Competition 1 and for up to 3 years for Competition 2.

## 4. Climate and Societal Interactions:

COCA and SARP awards are expected to last 1 - 2 years in length.

RISA awards are expected to last up to 5 years in length.

### C. Type of Funding Instrument

The funding instrument for awards will be a grant. If, however, it is anticipated that NOAA will be substantially involved in the implementation of the project, the grant may be administered as a cooperative agreement. Examples of substantial involvement may include, but are not limited to, applications for collaboration between NOAA scientists and a recipient scientist or contemplation by NOAA of detailing Federal personnel to work on proposed projects. NOAA will make decisions regarding the use of a cooperative agreement on a case-by-case basis. Funding for contractual arrangements for services and products for delivery to NOAA is not available under this announcement.

If the applicant is at an institution that has a NOAA Cooperative Institute (CI), the applicant is encouraged to submit a proposal that references the CI by attaching a cover letter to the proposal stating the desire to have the grant associated with the CI. This letter should specify the name of the cooperative institute, the CI cooperative agreement number, and the NOAA-approved research theme and task that applies to the proposal. The proposal will use the Facilities and Administrative (F&A) rate associated with main CI agreement.

If the proposal is selected for funding, NOAA will notify the university that a separate award will be issued with its own award number. However, the award will include two Special Award Conditions (SACs): (1) the existing University/NOAA Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) would be incorporated by reference into the terms of the competitive award, and (2) any performance report(s) for the competitive project must follow the timetable of the funding program and be submitted directly to the funding program. Report(s) will be copied to the CI's administrator when due, to be attached to the main cooperative agreement progress report as an appendix. This will allow the CI to coordinate all the projects submitted through the CI, since the terms of these awards will specify that this is a CI project via the MOA.

### III. Eligibility Information

#### A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are institutions of higher education, other nonprofits, commercial organizations, international organizations, and state, local and Indian tribal governments. Federal agencies interested in receiving financial support for projects should contact the appropriate competition manager.

#### B. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

None.

#### C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility

None

### IV. Application and Submission Information

#### A. Address to Request Application Package

For applicants without Internet access, please contact the CPO Grants Manager Diane Brown by mail at NOAA Climate Program Office (R/CP1), SSMC3, Room 12734, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910 to obtain an Application Package.

#### B. Content and Form of Application

##### 1. Letter of Intent (LOI)

The purpose of the LOI process is to provide information to potential applicants on the relevance of their proposed project to the Competition in advance of preparing a full application. Full applications will be encouraged only for LOIs deemed relevant. Applicants who have not been encouraged may still submit a full application. While LOIs are strongly encouraged, applicants are not required to submit them and may submit a full application even if they have not submitted an LOI.

LOIs should be submitted by email to the identified NOAA Competition Manager by the deadline specified in section IV.C below. The LOI should provide a concise description

of the proposed work and a statement regarding its relevance to the targeted Competition. The LOI should be no more than two pages in length and should include the items listed below. If these items are not included or the LOI is submitted late, the LOI may not be considered:

1. Identification of the Competition that is being targeted in the LOI.
2. A tentative project title.
3. Name(s) and institution(s) of the Lead Principal Investigator(s) and other Principal Investigator (s).
4. Statement of the problem.
5. Brief summary of work to be completed, methodology to be used, data sets needed or to be collected, and approximate cost of the project.
6. Relevance to the Competition that is being targeted.

A response to the LOI from the Competition Manager (e-mail or letter) will be sent to the investigator within four weeks after the LOI's due date encouraging or discouraging a full application based on its relevance to the targeted Competition. The final decision to submit a full application will be made by the investigator.

## 2. Full Application

Failure to comply with these provisions will result in applications being returned without review. Full applications are limited to 35 pages using 12-point font type with one-inch margins on standard 8.5 by 11 inch paper. For full applications with three or more Principal Investigators, the page limit is increased to 40. For the RISA competitions, full applications may be up to 50 pages in length. The page limit includes:

1. the title page, abstract,
2. results from prior research,
3. statement of work,
4. budget justification,
5. budget table,

6. vitae,
7. current and pending support,
8. associated figures,
9. references, and appendices.

For applications to the MAPP Competitions, the form to request the use of NOAA's high-performance computing platforms is considered part of the full proposal, but it will not be included in the page count. For the RISA competitions, budget tables, budget justifications, and subcontract information are not included in the page count.

The full proposal, and Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (IDCRA) should be put into one electronic file. The budget table/justification should be submitted in a file labeled budget narrative. The Federal Forms (SF424, SF424A, SF424B, CD511), and other mandated forms should be inserted in separate files when submitted and are not included in the page count.

The following forms and elements are required in each application.

(1) Title page: The title page shall identify the Principal Investigator(s) (PI) and institutional representative and clearly indicate which Competition is being addressed by name and Competition number. The title page should also include co-PIs from Federal Institutions. If more than one investigator is listed on the title page, please identify the lead investigator. The lead PI and institutional representative should be identified by: full name, title, organization, telephone number, email, and address. For paper submissions, the lead PI and the institutional representative must sign the title page. The total amount of Federal funds being requested should be listed for each budget period. If there are several institutions submitting separate applications associated with the same project, the names of all component institutions along with their lead PI name, e-mail, and amount requested per year must also appear on the title page of all applications that anticipate being funded under the same project.

(2) Abstract: A one-page abstract must be included and should contain the project title, an introduction to the problem, rationale, and a brief summary of the work to be completed. Abstracts must identify the name of the Competition that is being targeted and must also include a paragraph describing the work's relevance to the Competition that is being targeted as well as NOAA's long-term climate goal as described in NOAA's Next-Generation Strategic Plan (NGSP; see section I.A). For multiple applications associated with the same project, the abstract must be identical in all applications. Failure to include this paragraph can result in the application being denied without additional review.

(3) Results from prior research: The results of each prior research project led by the

Principal Investigator(s) during the last three years relevant to the proposed effort should be summarized in brief paragraphs. Because NOAA believes it is important that data sets developed with its support should be shared with the scientific community, PIs should also indicate how and when they have made their data accessible and useable by the community in the past. This section should not exceed two pages. For multiple applications associated with the same project, this section must be identical in all applications.

(4) Statement of work: The proposed project must be completely described, including identification of the problem, scientific objectives, proposed methodology, and relevance to the Competition to which you are submitting the proposal and to NOAA's long-term climate goal. Benefits of the proposed project to the general public and the scientific community should be discussed. The statement of work, excluding references, figures, and other visual materials, must not exceed 15 pages of text. Applications from three or more investigators may include a statement of work containing up to 20 pages of overall project description. For the RISA competition, the statement of work, excluding references and figures, should be no more than 25 pages. For multiple applications associated with the same project, all applications must have an identical statement of work, including a clear statement of the roles and responsibilities of each applicant. For the RISA competition, only one application per team will be accepted.

(5) Data/Information Sharing Plan: Environmental data and information collected and/or created under NOAA grants/cooperative agreements must be made visible, accessible, and independently understandable to general users, free of charge or at minimal cost, in a timely manner (typically no later than two years after the data are collected or created), except where limited by law, regulation, policy or security requirements. To satisfy this requirement, a Data/Information Sharing Plan of no more than two pages is required. A typical plan should include descriptions of the types of environmental data and information 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; policies addressing data stewardship and preservation; procedures for providing access, sharing, and security; and prior experience in publishing such data. The Data/Information Sharing Plan (and any subsequent revisions or updates) must be made publicly available at time of award and, thereafter, will be posted with the published data. Failing to share environmental data and information in accordance with the submitted Data/Information Sharing Plan may lead to disallowed costs and be considered by NOAA when making future award decisions.

The Data/Information Sharing Plan must also contain a section that addresses easy public search, analysis of, and access to peer-reviewed scholarly publications and corresponding metadata pursuant to the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) Memorandum Increasing Access to the Results of Federally Funded Scientific Research issued 22 February 2013. All grantees are required to include a reference

to the NOAA Climate Program Office using the FundRef mechanism, if available through the publisher, and must refer to the award number of the grant or cooperative agreement in the acknowledgements section of any publications resulting from NOAA funding. Finally, authors are encouraged to use other open data standards such as Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs) and Open Researcher and Contributor IDs (ORCID) to uniquely identify their work and themselves respectively.

Failing to share environmental data and information in accordance with the submitted Data/Information Sharing Plan may lead to disallowed costs and be considered by NOAA when making future award decisions.

(6) Budget Table and Justification:

**Budget Table:** An itemized budget for all years and a total itemized budget must be included as a separate spreadsheet that breaks down the budget per object class category. Travel must be itemized to include destination, airfare, per diem, lodging, and ground travel.

For multiple applications associated with the same project, the Lead Principal Investigator should include a spreadsheet that displays the total budget for all partners. All partners, including the Lead Principal Investigator and any co-PIs from Federal Institutions, should include a separate budget for their portion of the project.

**Budget Justification:** A brief description of the expenses listed on the budget table and how they address the proposed work. Item justifications must include salaries, equipment, publications, supplies, tuition, travel, etc. Investigators who will not be requesting funds for salaries must also be listed, indicating their estimated time of commitment. Purchases of equipment greater than \$5000 must include a purchase versus lease justification.

(7) Federal Budget Forms: Budget numbers corresponding with the descriptions contained in the statement of work and budget table must be included. In addition to including the total budget on the SF424, the application must include the total budget and budgets for years 1, 2, and 3 in separate columns in Section B on page 1 on the SF424A. (Note that this revised 424A Section B format is a NOAA requirement that is not reflected in the Instructions for the SF 424A). For the RISA competition, submit two SF424A forms, one for years 1-4 and the second for year 5. Note that these forms are not part of the required page limit.

For multiple applications associated with the same project, each application requesting funding from NOAA needs to complete the federal budget forms for their specific institution. For the RISA competition, only one application per team will be accepted.

(8) Indirect Costs: A copy of the institution's current Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (IDCRA) must be included. The IDCRA does not, however, count as part of the required

page limit. To obtain an indirect cost rate if your institution does not already have one, a grantee must submit an indirect cost proposal to its cognizant agency and negotiate an indirect cost agreement.

If an applicant has not previously (ever) established an 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 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 Section B.06. 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, Maryland 20910  
lamar.revis@noaa.gov

(9) Vitae: Abbreviated curriculum vitae are requested with each application. Reference lists should be limited to all publications in the last three years with up to five other relevant papers. For multiple applications associated with the same project, each application should include identical vitae for all applications. For the RISA competition, short (1- or 2-page) bios of the main investigators are sufficient.

(10) Current and pending support: For each Principal Investigator and Co-Principal Investigator(s), submit a list of all current and pending Federal support that includes project title, supporting agency with grant number, investigator months per year, dollar value, and duration. Requested values should be listed for pending support. For the RISA competition, only lead investigators need to list current and pending support. All letters of support must be submitted as part of the proposal and are included in the page limit for proposals.

For multiple applications associated with the same project, each application should include identical current and pending support information for all applications.

(11) DUNS Number: 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 (2013),

[http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=1ccffb4c1d4de03add6a041113460f9&mc=true&node=se2.1.200\\_1300&rgn=div8](http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=1ccffb4c1d4de03add6a041113460f9&mc=true&node=se2.1.200_1300&rgn=div8)

(12) National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA): NOAA must analyze the potential environmental impacts, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), of each applicant's project that is seeking NOAA federal funding opportunities. Detailed information on NOAA's compliance with NEPA can be found at the following NOAA NEPA website: <http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/>, including the NOAA Administrative Order 216-6 for NEPA, [http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/NAO216\\_6\\_TOC.pdf](http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/NAO216_6_TOC.pdf), and the Council of Environmental Quality implementation regulations, [http://ceq.eh.doe.gov/nepa/regs/ceq/toc\\_ceq.htm](http://ceq.eh.doe.gov/nepa/regs/ceq/toc_ceq.htm).

No NEPA information is required with the initial application. However, after review of the application, NEPA information may be requested if NOAA determines such information is required.

Consequently, applicants may be 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 may also be required to cooperate with NOAA in identifying feasible measures to reduce or avoid any identified adverse environmental impacts of their application. 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.

### C. Submission Dates and Times

Letters of Intent for all Competitions (with exception of “MAPP - NOAA Climate Test Bed - Accelerating Transition of Research into Operations”) should be received by the Competition Manager via electronically by email by July 30, 2015 5:00 p.m. Eastern. Letters

of Intent for the MAPP-Climate Test Bed competition should be received by email by August 14, 2015 5:00 p.m. Applicants who have not received a response to their Letter of Intent within four weeks following the due date should contact the Competition Manager.

Full applications for all Competitions (with exception of “MAPP - NOAA Climate Test Bed - Accelerating Transition of Research into Operations” and the “RISA competition for the Midwest and Mid-Atlantic regions only”) must be received by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time, September 23, 2015 via grants.gov. Applications for the MAPP-Climate Test Bed competition should be received by email by October 7, 2015 5:00 p.m. Applications for the RISA competition for the Midwest and Mid-Atlantic regions must be received by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time, December 15, 2015, via grants.gov. Faxed or emailed copies of applications will not be accepted.

#### D. Intergovernmental Review

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

#### E. Funding Restrictions

Fees and profits are disallowed.

#### F. Other Submission Requirements

##### 1. Full Application

Applications are submitted through grants.gov "Apply for Grants". If an applicant does not have Internet access, CPO Grants Manager Diane Brown should be contacted by mail at NOAA Climate Program Office (R/CP1), SSMC3, Room 12734, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910 for hard copy submission instructions.

Please refer to the information about submission dates and times above to help ensure your application is received on time. Applications are submitted through grants.gov "Apply for Grants".

In order to submit an application through Grants.gov, an applicant must register for a Grants.gov user ID and password. Note that this process can take between three to five business days or as long as four weeks if all steps are not completed correctly. To avoid delays, applicants are strongly encouraged to start early and not wait until the approaching application deadline before registering, logging in, reviewing the application instructions,

and applying. Information about the Grants.gov registration process for organizations can be found at [http://grants.gov/applicants/organization\\_registration.jsp](http://grants.gov/applicants/organization_registration.jsp).

Please note that organizations already registered with Grants.gov do not need to re-register; however, all registered organizations must keep their Grants.gov password and SAM database (which now incorporates CCR) registration up-to-date or their applications will not be accepted by Grants.gov. Note that your CCR username will not work in SAM. You must create a new SAM user account to renew or update your registration. Registration on SAM is a requirement. To obtain additional information and to verify that all required registrations are current, please visit [www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM](http://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM).

If you experience a Grants.gov systems issue (technical problems or glitches with the Grants.gov website) that you believe threatens your ability to complete a submission before the application deadline, please do all of the following:

1. Print any error message received.
2. Call the Grants.gov Contact Center at 1-800-518-4726 for immediate assistance.
3. Contact NOAA using the contact information in section VIII. of this FFO prior to the close of the competition.
4. Ensure you obtain a case number regarding your communications with Grants.gov.

In the event of a confirmed systems issue, NOAA reserves the right to accept an application in an alternate format prior to the application deadline. Problems with an applicant organization's computer system or equipment are not considered systems issues. Similarly, an applicant's failure to do the following are not considered systems issues:

1. Complete the required registration.
2. Ensure that a registered AOR submits the application.
3. Read an email message with guidance from Grants.gov.

Diane Brown, by mail at NOAA Climate Program Office (R/CP1), SSMC3, Room 12734, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910

## V. Application Review Information

### A. Evaluation Criteria

1. Importance/Relevance and Applicability of Application to the Program Goals (Stage 1 Weight=0%) (Stage 2 Weight=100%) (Final Weight=25%)

This criterion ascertains whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and/or relevance to NOAA, federal, regional, state, tribal, or local activities. For the CPO Grant Program Competition, this includes importance and relevance to the scientific priorities of the selected Competition(s). The PI's record of making his/her data accessible and useable by the scientific community in the past, and the procedures described in Section IV.B(5) Data/Information Sharing Plan will also be considered when evaluating the importance and relevance of the application. For the CSI competitions, the above stated relevance score will also include the applicant's approach for engaging decision makers and building networks of relationships to help support decision makers with scientific information.

2. Technical/Scientific Merit (Stage 1 Weight=70%) (Stage 2 Weight=0%) (Final Weight=52.5%)

This criterion assesses whether the approach is technically sound and/or innovative, if the methods are appropriate, and whether the goals of the Competition will be realized through clear project goals and objectives. For CSI competitions, the above stated merit score will also include the applicant's credibility in capacity-building approaches. For RISA, the score will include how well the proposal clearly identifies an institutional framework for implementing the research articulated. (See the CSI information sheet for more details.)

3. Overall Qualifications of Applicants (Stage 1 Weight=20%) (Stage 2 Weight=0%) (Final Weight=15%)

This criterion assesses whether the applicant team possesses the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and/or administrative resources to accomplish the project. For CSI competitions, the above stated qualifications score will also include the PIs' record of collaborating with decision-making communities.

4. Project Costs (Stage 1 Weight = 10%) (Stage 2 Weight = 0) (Final Weight =7.5%)

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

5. Outreach and Education (Stage 1 Weight=0%) (Stage 2 Weight=0%) (Final

Weight=0%)

This criterion assesses whether the project provides a focused and effective education and outreach strategy regarding NOAA's mission to protect the Nation's natural resources. For the CPO Grant Program Competitions, this criterion is not scored.

## B. Review and Selection Process

Once a full application has been received, an administrative review will be conducted to determine compliance with requirements and completeness of the application. The reviews will take place in two stages. In Stage 1, independent peer mail reviewers and/or independent peer panel reviewers consisting of both Federal and/or non-Federal experts will evaluate applications using the following three criteria described above: technical/scientific merit, overall qualifications of applicants, and project costs. Relevance will be assessed separately in Stage 2. The panel will not give consensus advice. We protect the identities of reviewers to the extent permitted by law.

During Stage 1, each reviewer will provide one score for each of three criteria: technical/scientific merit, overall qualifications of applicants, and project costs for each application. The scores from the reviewers for each application will be combined using the weighting averages to produce a single numerical score for Stage 1. Occasionally a reviewer may, due to lack of familiarity in a particular area, choose not to score a particular application. Proposals that score a 3.0 or higher (out of a possible high score of 5) in Stage 1 will proceed to Stage 2.

If only a mail peer review is conducted for stage 1, proposals that score a 3.0 or higher (out of a possible high score of 5) in Stage 1 will proceed to Stage 2.

If a mail review and a panel review are both conducted for Stage 1, the mail reviews will be provided to the Stage 1 review panel for use in its deliberations prior to providing its ratings, but the Competition Manager will use only the numerical rank order of the peer review panel to determine the average score for each proposal. Proposals that score a 3.0 or higher (out of a possible high score of 5) in Stage 1 will proceed to Stage 2.

In Stage 2, scores for Importance/Relevance and Applicability of Application to the Program Goals will be determined by a second panel comprising either Federal or a combination of Federal and non-Federal partners. Each panel reviewer will provide a relevance score for each application that moved forward from Stage 1. The Stage 2 panel will not give consensus advice. The applications and their associated scores from Stage 1 will be provided to the Stage 2 panel.

The Stage 1 and Stage 2 weighting of scores for the individual criteria is shown in the following table:

Criterion	Stage 1 Weight	Stage 2
Importance and Relevance/Applicability	0%	100%
25%		
Technical/Scientific Merit	70%	0%
52.5%		
Overall Qualifications of Applications	20%	0%
15%		
Project Costs	10%	
0%		
7.5%		
Outreach and Education	0%	0%
0%		
Stage Total	100%	
100%		
100%		
Final weighting for each stage score	75%	25%
100%		

To determine the final score, the scores from Stage 1 and Stage 2 will be combined, with a weighting of 75% for the Stage 1 score and 25% for the Stage 2 score, leading to the overall weightings for each criterion reported in section V.A above. The final score for each application will be used to determine the numerical rank order of proposals within each Competition.

The Competition Manager will recommend applications to the Selecting Official in numerical rank order unless a recommendation out of rank order is justified based upon any of the factors listed in the following section. Should applications receive a tie score, and funding is not available for every tied application, the Competition Manager may preferentially recommend applications for funding also according to any of the factors listed in the following section. The Competition Manager will review the amounts requested for each selected application (including costs for computing and networking services) and recommend the total duration and the amount of funding, which may be less than the application and budget requested.

### C. Selection Factors

The Selecting Official shall select awards in rank order unless a selection out of rank order is justified based upon any of the following 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 area
  - e. By project types
3. Duplication of other projects funded or considered for funding by NOAA/Federal agencies.
4. Program priorities and policy factors
5. Applicant's prior award performance
6. Partnerships with/participation of targeted group
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.

The Selecting Official makes final recommendations for awards to the Grants Officer who is authorized to obligate the funds.

### D. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

Subject to the availability of funds, review of applications will occur during the 6-7 months following the full applications due date. CPO anticipates that funding decisions on applications will be made during spring 2016. Such decisions are contingent upon the final FY 2016 appropriation for NOAA by Congress and the final allocation of funds to CPO by NOAA. Funding for successful applicants is expected to begin during spring-summer 2016 for most approved projects. Applications should use July 1, 2016, as the start date unless otherwise directed by the Competition Manager.

## VI. Award Administration Information

### A. Award Notices

Successful applicants will receive notification that the application has been recommended for funding by an official of the NOAA Climate Program Office. This notification is not an authorization to begin performance of the project. The NOAA Grants Officer will provide notice to the applicant that they have received the award. This official notification of funding, signed by a NOAA Grants Officer, is the authorizing document that allows the project to begin. Notifications will be issued to the Authorizing Official and the Principal Investigator of the project. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified that their application was not selected for recommendation.

### B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

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) is applicable to this solicitation.

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, you should 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) are found at 5 U.S.C 552, 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 you, the confidentiality of the content of funded applications will be maintained to the maximum extent permitted by law.

### C. Reporting

Award recipients are required to submit financial and technical progress reports. These reports are to be submitted electronically via <https://grantsonline.rdc.noaa.gov>. The first technical progress report covering the first nine months of a multi-year award is due 10 months after the start date of the award. Each subsequent technical progress report covering a period of 12 months is due 12 months after the previous report. The comprehensive final technical progress report is due 90 days after the expiration date of the award. Technical

progress reports should report on adherence to the Data/Information Sharing Plan (see IV.B.2(5) and all listed publications resulting from the grant should adhere to the requirements established in said section.

Unpaid or Delinquent Tax Liability: in accordance with current Federal appropriations law, NOAA will provide a successful corporate applicant a form to be completed by its authorized representatives certifying that the corporation has no Federally-assessed unpaid or delinquent tax liability or recent felony criminal convictions under any Federal law.

The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006: this Act includes a requirement for awardees of applicable Federal grants to report information about first-tier sub-awards 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 Sub-award Reporting System (FSRS) available at [www.FSRS.gov](http://www.FSRS.gov) on all sub-awards over \$25,000.

## VII. Agency Contacts

Please visit the CPO website for further information

<http://www.climate.noaa.gov/> or contact the CPO Grants Manager, Diane Brown, by

mail (see address above) or at <[diane.brown@noaa.gov](mailto:diane.brown@noaa.gov)>.

## VIII. Other Information

None.