Climate Variability and Predicability

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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 Variability and Predicability

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: NOAA-OAR-CPO-2018-2005492

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

Dates: 1. Letter of Intent
Letters of intent (LOIs) for all competitions should be received electronically by 5:00 p.m. ET on April 2, 2018.

2. Full Applications
Full applications for all competitions must be received by 5:00 p.m. ET on May 18, 2018. Applications received after this time will not be considered for funding. Applications must be submitted via http://www.grants.gov. For applications submitted through grants.gov, the basis for determining timeliness is the receipt notice issued by http://www.grants.gov, which includes the date and time received. Emailed or faxed copies of applications will not be accepted.

Funding Opportunity Description: The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is focused on providing the essential and highest quality environmental information vital to our Nation’s safety, prosperity and resilience. Toward this goal, the agency conducts and supports weather and climate research, oceanic and atmospheric observations, modeling, information management, assessments, interdisciplinary decision-support research, outreach, education, and partnership development.

Climate variability and change present society with significant economic, health, safety, and security challenges and opportunities. In meeting these challenges, and as part of NOAA’s climate portfolio within the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR), the Climate Program Office (CPO) advances scientific understanding, monitoring, and prediction of climate and its impacts, to enable effective decisions.

This funding opportunity focuses on the Climate Variability and Predictability (CVP) Program. The CVP Program supports research that enhances our process-level understanding of the climate system through observation, modeling, analysis, and field studies. This vital knowledge
is needed to improve climate models and predictions so that scientists and society can better anticipate the impacts of future climate variability and change. To achieve its mission, the CVP Program invests in NOAA mission-critical research, which is carried out at NOAA and other federal laboratories, NOAA Cooperative Institutes, academic institutions and private sector research entities. The Program also coordinates its sponsored projects with major national and international scientific bodies including the World Climate Research Programme (WCRP) - especially CLIVAR (Climate and Ocean Variability, Predictability and Change) and GEWEX (Global Energy and Water Cycle Exchanges) programs - and the U.S. Global Change Research program (USGCRP). Specific details of this funding opportunity are contained in the Full Announcement Text.
I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Program Objective

The goal of the Climate Variability and Predictability (CVP) Program is to advance the knowledge of the dynamics, and sources of predictability, of the coupled ocean-atmosphere-land-ice system across all climate time scales by using observations, modeling, research, analysis, and field studies to gain a process-level understanding of how the system interacts. This vital knowledge is needed to improve climate models and predictions so that scientists and society can better anticipate the impacts of future climate variability and change. To achieve its mission, the CVP Program invests in NOAA mission-critical research, which is carried out at NOAA and other federal laboratories, NOAA Cooperative Institutes, and academic institutions. The Program also coordinates its sponsored projects with major national and international scientific bodies including the World Climate Research Programme (WCRP) - especially CLIVAR (Climate and Ocean Variability, Predictability and Change) and GEWEX (Global Energy and Water Cycle Exchanges) programs - and the U.S. Global Change Research program (USGCRP).

The CVP Program is a critical component of the integrated research enterprise at the NOAA Climate Program Office (CPO), and maintains important connections to the other CPO program areas. In order to improve understanding of the climate system and its representation in models we need high-quality, consistent, long-term observations of the many parameters of the climate system. The Ocean Observing and Monitoring Division (OOMD) of CPO provides high-quality long-term global observations, climate information, and products that are used by CVP-supported scientists to build improved theories for the complex dynamics of the many components of the climate system, and in turn OOMD is informed by the needs of the process modeling and climate variability community.

The fundamental overarching goal of the Tropical Pacific Observing System 2020 (TPOS) effort is to enhance and redesign international observations of the tropical Pacific. In the First Report of TPOS 2020 (tops2020.org), many recommendations and proposed actions were identified. The use of process studies that will inform further refinement of TPOS was noted as a critical part of the implementation process that can guide the development of the system design. Two of the studies that are recommended in the report are called “Pacific Upwelling and Mixing Physics (PUMP)” (section 6.2.1) and “Air–sea Interaction at the eastern edge of the Warm Pool” (section 6.2.3). Each of these studies focus on improved predictability of the overall evolution of the Pacific climate system on seasonal to interannual timescales (MJO, ENSO, etc.), which is beneficial to NOAA’s mission of
improved environmental prediction.

B. Program Priorities

Through this Announcement, the CVP Program is seeking applications for one individual competition in FY 2018. Prior to submitting applications, investigators are highly encouraged to learn more about CPO and CVP Program, as well as specific Program priorities for FY 2018. This information, along with the names and contact information of relevant Competition Manager, is provided in information sheets that can be found at the following website: http://cpo.noaa.gov/Grants.

The one competition covered by this Announcement is as follows:

CVP – Pre-Field Modeling Studies in Support of TPOS Process Studies, a Component of TPOS 2020

In the First Report of TPOS 2020 (Tropical Pacific Observing System 2020, tpos2020.org), many recommendations and proposed actions were identified. The use of process studies that will inform further refinement of TPOS was noted as a critical part of the implementation process that can guide the development of the system design. Two of the studies that are recommended in the report are called “Pacific Upwelling and Mixing Physics (PUMP)” (section 6.2.1) and “Air–sea Interaction at the eastern edge of the Warm Pool” (section 6.2.3). Each of these studies focus on improved predictability of the overall evolution of the Pacific climate system on seasonal to interannual timescales (MJO, ENSO, etc.), which is beneficial to NOAA’s mission of improved environmental prediction. This solicitation is intended to contribute to the goals of TPOS 2020.

In FY 2018, the CVP program solicits modeling projects that will refine the current scientific understanding of the equatorial Pacific climate system with a specific focus on two process studies identified in the TPOS 2020 First Report, “Pacific Upwelling and Mixing Physics (PUMP)” (section 6.2.1) and “Air–sea Interaction at the eastern edge of the Warm Pool” (section 6.2.3). The CVP Program encourages a hierarchy of modeling approaches. Outcomes from these projects will be used for pre-cruise planning and field campaign development.

Please download the information sheet for more information: (http://http://cpo.noaa.gov/Grants)

C. Program Authority

II. Award Information

A. Funding Availability

CVP – Pre-Field Modeling Studies in Support of TPOS Process Studies, a Component of TPOS 2020

It is anticipated that $2 million will be available in FY18, depending on budget appropriation. It is anticipated that most awards will be at a funding level between $150,000 and $300,000 per year for up to 2 years, depending on the availability of funding. Projects will start either in FY18 or FY19, depending on the needs of the project and the availability of funding. 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.

B. Project/Award Period

CVP awards are intended to last up to 2 years from the start date.

C. Type of Funding Instrument

The funding instrument for awards made under this NOFO 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 the 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 CPO
funding program and be submitted directly to the CPO 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 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

Application packages are at grants.gov. 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 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:

- Identification of the Competition that is being targeted in the LOI.
- A tentative project title.
- Name(s) and institution(s) of the Lead Principal Investigator(s) and other Principal Investigator(s).
- Statement of the problem.
- Brief summary of work to be completed, methodology to be used, data sets needed or to be collected.
- Approximate cost of the project.
- 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, single spaced, 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. The page limit includes:

- The title page
- Abstract
- Results from prior research
- Statement of work
- Budget justification
- Budget table
- Vitae
- Current and pending support
- Associated figures
- References
- Diversity and Inclusion section should be included in the official 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, SF424 C & D if applicable, SF-LLL, and 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. 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 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 goals stated in 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 usable 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 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 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.

(5) **Data/Information Sharing Plan:**
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 of what the plan should contain.

(6) **Statement of Diversity, Inclusion, and Broader Impacts:** This section should provide a discussion of the broader impacts of the proposed activities including a statement on diversity and inclusion. Broader impacts may be accomplished through the research itself, through the activities that are directly related to specific research projects, or through activities that are supported by, but are complementary to the project. NOAA CPO values the advancement of scientific knowledge and activities that contribute to the achievement of societally relevant outcomes. Such outcomes include, but are not limited to: full participation of women, persons with disabilities, and underrepresented minorities in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM); increased public scientific literacy and public engagement with science and technology; improved well-being of individuals in society; development of a diverse, globally competitive STEM workforce; increased partnerships between academia, industry, and others; improved national security; increased economic competitiveness of the US; and enhanced infrastructure for research and education.

(7) **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, and other miscellaneous expense items. 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

(8) 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). 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.

(9) 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. For more information about indirect costs rates, see Section VI.B below.

(10) 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.

(11) 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. The list of support will be included in the page limit for the proposals.
For multiple applications associated with the same project, each application should include identical current and pending support information for all applications.

(12) All letters of support must be submitted as part of the proposal and are included in the page limit for the proposals.

(13) DUNS Number: All applications must have a DUNS (Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System) number when applying for federal grants. No application is deemed complete without the DUNS number, and only the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) may grant exceptions.
(14) 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, and the Council of Environmental Quality implementation regulations, 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. See VI.B., Administrative and National Policy Requirements, below for more information.

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

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 System for Award Management (SAM), which may be accessed online at https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/. Applicants are also required to use the Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System and will be subject to reporting requirements, as identified in OMB guidance published at 2 CFR Parts 25, 170 (2013), which may be accessed at https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/textidx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr25_main_02.tpl

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.

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

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:
  o Print any error message received
  o Call the Grants.gov Contact Center at 1-800-518-4726 for immediate assistance
  o Contact NOAA using the contact information in section VIII. of this NOFO prior to the close of the competition
  o Ensure that 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:
  o Complete the required registration
  o Ensure that a registered Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) submits the application
  o Read an email message with guidance from Grants.gov

D. Submission Dates and Times

Letters of Intent for all Competitions should be received electronically by the Competition Manager via email by April 2, 2018 5:00 p.m. ET. 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 must be received by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time, May 18, 2018.

Applications received after this time will not be considered for funding. Applications must be submitted via grants.gov. Faxed or emailed copies of applications will not be accepted.

E. Intergovernmental Review

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

F. Funding Restrictions

Fees and profits are disallowed.
G. Other Submission Requirements

All applications should be submitted through grants.gov. 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.

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. This includes importance and relevance to the scientific priorities of the Competition, the PI’s record of making his/her data accessible and useable by the scientific community in the past, the Statement of Diversity, Inclusion, and Broader Impacts described in Section IV.B(6), 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.

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.

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.

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.

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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>Stage 1 Weight</th>
<th>Stage 2 Weight</th>
<th>Final Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Importance and Relevance/Applicability</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical/Scientific Merit</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>52.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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.

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:
   o Availability of funding

   o Balance/distribution of funds

   o Geographically

   o By type of institutions

   o By type of partners

   o By research area

   o By project types

   o Duplication of other projects funded or considered for funding by NOAA/Federal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall Qualifications of Applications</th>
<th>20%</th>
<th>0%</th>
<th>15%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Costs</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Score</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
agencies

  o Program priorities and policy factors

  o Applicant’s prior award performance

  o Partnerships with/participation of targeted group

  o 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/Summer 2018. Such decisions are contingent upon the final FY 2018 appropriation for NOAA by Congress and the final allocation of funds to CPO by NOAA. Funding for successful applicants is expected to begin during August-September 2018 for most approved projects. Applications should use September 1, 2018 as the start date.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

The Grants Officer will provide notice to the applicant that they have received the award. 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 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

  UNIFORM ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS, COST PRINCIPLES, AND

DOC TERMS AND CONDITIONS. Successful applicants who accept a NOAA award under this solicitation will be bound by Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions. This document will be provided in the award package in NOAA’s Grants Online system at http://www.ago.noaa.gov and at http://go.usa.gov/hKbj.

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.

LIMITATION OF LIABILITY - Funding for programs listed in this notice is contingent upon the availability of continuing Congressional appropriations. Applicants are hereby given notice that funds have not yet been appropriated for the programs listed in this notice. In no event will NOAA or the Department of Commerce be responsible for proposal preparation costs. Publication of this announcement does not oblige NOAA to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds.

UNPAID OR DELINQUENT TAX LIABILITY. Certifications Regarding Federal Felony and Federal Criminal Tax Convictions, Unpaid Federal Tax Assessments and Delinquent Federal Tax Returns. In accordance with Federal appropriations law, an authorized representative of the selected applicant(s) may be required to provide certain pre-award certifications regarding federal felony and federal criminal tax convictions, unpaid federal tax assessments, and delinquent federal tax returns.

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, ttp://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.

REVIEW OF RISK - After applications are proposed for funding by the selecting official,
the Grants Office will perform administration reviews. These may include assessments of the
financial stability of an applicant and the quality of the applicant’s management systems,
history of performance, and the applicant’s ability to effectively implement statutory,
regulatory, or other requirements imposed on non-Federal entities. Special conditions that
address any risks determined to exist may be applied. Applicants may submit comments to
the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS) about any
information included in the system about their organization for consideration by the
awarding agency.

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. Administrative and National
Policy Requirements, below for additional information on what the plan should contain. 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.

INDIRECT COST RATE - If an applicant has not previously 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.

The NOAA contact for indirect or facilities and administrative costs is:

Lamar Revis, Grants Officer
NOAA Grants Management Division
1325 East West Highway, 9th Floor
Silver Spring, MD 20910
lamar.revis@noaa.gov

MINORITY SERVING INSTITUTIONS - The Department of Commerce/National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (DOC/NOAA) is strongly committed to increasing the participation of Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs), i.e., Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-serving institutions, Tribal colleges and universities, Alaskan Native and Native Hawaiian institutions, and institutions that work in underserved communities.
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT (FOIA) - In the event that an application contains information or data that you do not want disclosed prior to award for purposes other than the evaluation of the application, mark each page containing such information or data with the words "Privileged, Confidential, Commercial, or Financial Information - Limited Use" at the top of the page to assist NOAA in making disclosure determinations. DOC regulations implementing the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 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.

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT – This notification involves collection-of-information requirements subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act. The use of Standard Forms 424, 424A, 424B, and SF-LLL and CD-346 has been approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under control numbers 0348-0043, 0348-0044, 0348-0040, and 0348-0046 and 0605-0001. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall any person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with, a collection of information subject to the requirements of the PRA unless that collection of information displays a currently valid OMB control number.

C. Reporting

Award recipients 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 and all listed publications resulting from the grant should adhere to the requirements established in said section.

The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act, 31 U.S.C. 6101 note, includes a requirement for awardees of applicable Federal grants to report information about first-tier subawards and executive compensation under Federal assistance awards. All awardees of applicable grants and cooperative agreements are required to report to the Federal Sub-award Reporting System (FSRS) available at https://www.fsrs.gov/ on all sub-awards over $25,000. Refer to 2 CFR Parts 170.
VII. Agency Contacts

Please visit the CPO website for further information at or contact the CPO Grants Manager, Diane Brown, by mail (see address above) or at diane.brown@noaa.gov. Please allow up to two weeks after receipt for a response.

VIII. Other Information

None.