

Program Information Sheet

Program Name

Climate Program Office, Climate and Societal Interactions Division
Climate Adaptation Partnerships (CAP) Program

Program Mission

The CAP program expands regional capacity to adapt to climate variability and change. CAP Regional Teams build sustained relationships between decision makers and researchers that support collaborative and equitable adaptation to climate risks.

Climate Adaptation Partnerships

Advancing equitable adaptation through sustained regional research and community engagement



Climate Adaptation Partnerships
Formerly RISA

Central to achieving the CAP mission are:

- **Regional Relevance, Local Expertise**

CAP teams carry out a variety of projects focused on regional issues related to climate change and extreme weather. These projects span disciplinary, sectoral, environmental, and social concerns, but are based in bottom-up expressions of local need. In order to build trusted partnerships to address these needs, CAP teams are composed of place-based experts from universities, non-profits, and other organizations commanding local knowledge and engaged with community solutions.

- **Integrated Scientific Approaches**

CAP teams generate cutting-edge and applied interdisciplinary research on the impacts of climate on communities. CAP scientists develop unique ways of bringing together natural, physical, and social sciences around complex climatic concerns related to human-environmental interactions. CAP teams generate new scientific knowledge of how broader contexts for risk and resilience shape the successful implementation of adaptation strategies, resiliency plans, and risk-reducing activities. This work includes understanding the social and cultural impacts of climate change, governance structures, laws, and fiscal policies that shape climate adaptation and implementation processes, and how this impacts equitable adaptation strategies.

- **Knowledge to Action Partnerships**

CAP teams engage in co-production and other processes for working across organizational lines, and include scientists, cooperative extension and outreach professionals, local planners and decision makers, community members, and communicators to ensure knowledge-to-action tools, technologies, and other products that increase capacity for making decisions in a rapidly changing environment. The experimental and innovative nature of CAPs extends beyond “snapshot” assessments, tools, or other products alone. The dialogue between scientists and stakeholders also provides an ideal setting for social scientists and outreach experts, working with practitioners, to evaluate how well science is informing societal outcomes.

- **A National Network of Resilience Researchers and Adaptation Science Specialists**

Relationships across CAPs ensure that information and expertise are shared between regions to develop national capacity to adapt to climate change. This network not only spans the CAPs but also draws upon other NOAA entities and federally-funded state and regional partners, where relevant. This network ensures best practices, data access, coordinated efforts, and leveraged funding. CAPs also build the network through education and professional development, engaging a variety of early career professionals, including students across undergraduate, graduate, post-graduate, and continuing education/professional levels in learning and mentoring activities that equip them to effectively address climate variability and change in the workforce.

Focus for FY24

Through this NOFO, CAP is soliciting applications to support a maximum of one CAP team to conduct research and engagement in each of the following regions:

1. **Upper Northeast** - Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, western Massachusetts, upstate New York
2. **Southeast** - Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia, Florida

Funding for FY24

Proposals being solicited for a full CAP team award should be up to \$1,100,000/year, a total of \$5,500,000, for core CAP work. A minimum of \$200,000 within the total budget must directly fund community-based organizations or local governments serving under-resourced frontline communities. It is anticipated that a maximum of one CAP team will be funded per region, depending on funding availability. CPO anticipates that funding decisions on applications will be made during spring 2024. Such decisions are contingent upon the final FY24 appropriation for NOAA by Congress and the final allocation of funds to CPO by NOAA.

Competition Information

1. Determining Geographic Scope

Regions have been an organizing influence for both decision makers and scientists working on climate adaptation. Beginning with shared climate shifts and extreme weather events, critical resources for society like water, electricity, and transportation are managed in a context of regional systems. Regions also possess a cultural identity (or identities), a set/s of practices and beliefs shaped by the subgroups of people living within and interacting with a common climate and environment. These identities, along with the historical context and other social structures of a landscape, make decision-making within a region unique. Climate information (i.e. data, science, research, etc.) working across spatial and temporal scales must resonate with people making decisions on the ground and their socio-cultural frameworks. The role of CAP as a federally funded, regional scale, climate adaptation and resilience program is to understand and build relationships and capacity across state lines and jurisdictions, that include a variety of local, state, federal, and tribal governments, and public and private institutions to improve shared knowledge and management efforts.

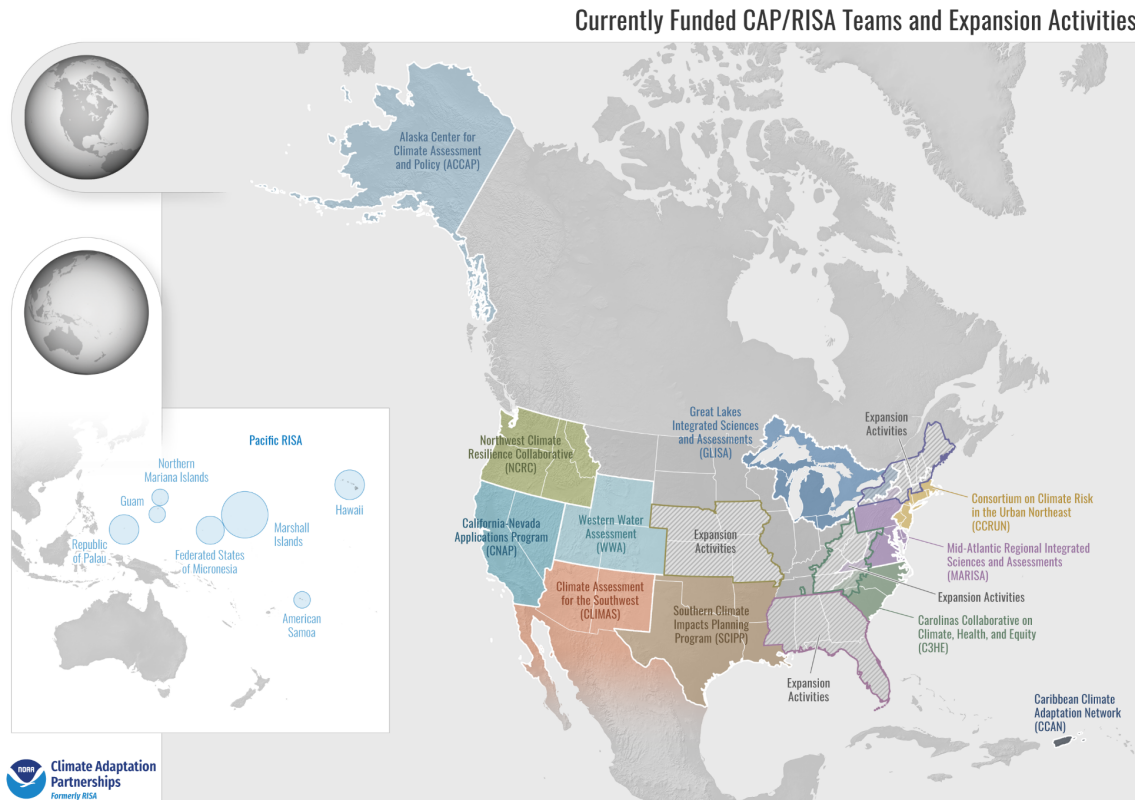
Proposals for CAP teams should cover a significant portion of the general regional geographies listed below and should strive for geographic balance across the region in terms of research expertise, community partners, project focus, and engagement activities. When determining the geographic scope of your CAP, applicants should consider what is manageable to effectively work with stakeholders. Current CAP regions (see map below) generally cover two to four states, large watershed boundaries, or issue-focused areas (e.g., the urbanized, heavily populated corridor along Boston, New York, and Philadelphia).

The geographic focus should allow for work within and across sectors. For example, a geographic focus defined by a watershed area should not preclude research on urban health or agriculture, and vice-versa. The focus of proposals that include both coastal and inland areas should be balanced across contexts. Proposals exclusively focused on coastal areas will not be deemed relevant because other NOAA programs such as Sea Grant and the Office of Coastal Management invest significantly along the coasts. An ideal proposal will include some coastal work focused on known gaps in research or service but otherwise have a majority of projects dedicated to inland or region-wide climate issues. The geographic scope does not need to follow state boundaries and can include border areas of neighboring regions when there are significant environmental or cultural similarities that would benefit from inclusion in the CAP. For example, portions of New York State are currently covered by multiple CAP teams based on the regional definition of their team.

The majority of team funds should be used for local to regional scale activity as defined above. Focal areas can also be relevant across multiple regions and contexts, therefore having a potential for scalability and national impact. Some mix of cross-regional collaboration is encouraged when aligned to multiple regional priorities and produces substantive benefits for local partners.

The following are the Geographic Areas being competed in FY24:

1. **Upper Northeast** - Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, western Massachusetts, upstate New York
2. **Southeast** - Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia, Florida



2. Additional Resources Related to CAP Teams

Developing Partnerships in New & Current CAP Teams

Establishing trust with partners takes time. Incumbent CAP teams have spent years building relationships prior to writing a proposal for a new region. New CAP applicants are not expected to have demonstrated the same level of cohesion across partner relationships. Rather, a new team should leverage existing relationships and establish a robust plan for developing partnerships in the first 2-3 years of the cooperative agreement. This may include activities such as workshops, listening sessions, surveys, and interviews among regional decision makers. A strong proposal will demonstrate how these activities formulate a team's research and project strategy. The statement of work and budget should reflect this planning and flexibility.

A successful CAP team will have the flexibility in later years to respond to new events or pursue partnerships that deliver at the appropriate scale for the partner while continuing to integrate across a regional context. An effective demonstration of this linkage between local and regional may include arranging a set of partners across the region, or creating outputs that will be tested and refined across the whole region. Teams should consider all partnership development within a lens of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion, acknowledging that the needs of partners vary by identity and context.

For more information on currently funded CAP teams please see:

<https://cpo.noaa.gov/CAP-RISA/Current-Teams#739083>

For information on key characteristics of impactful CAP teams please see:

<https://www.cpo.noaa.gov/CAP-RISA/team-structure#739056>

For an additional reference, see:

Combest-Friedman, C., C. Nierenberg, C. Simpson 2019. “Building a Learning Network: Reflections from the RISA Program” *Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability*. 39: 160-166

Parris, A.S., G. M.Garfin, K. Dow, R. Meyer, S.L. Close, Eds. 2016. *Climate in Context: Science and Society Partnering for Adaptation*. Hoboken, NJ:John Wiley & Sons, Ltd

3. Value and Importance of a NOAA CAP Network of Teams

Successful applicants for regional teams will become part of a nested impact network and collaboration space. CAP awards are cooperative agreements, which allow for the substantial involvement of federal program officers. The NOAA CAP program team stays involved by convening regional teams, weaving national-scale connections, facilitating smaller communities of practice, managing accumulated knowledge, synthesizing lessons, and catalyzing efforts to scale up, scale across, and scale deep. While CAP network activities are most often attended by the lead-PIs and team program manager/coordinator, we recognize that each team is itself a network reflecting relationships built over time across communities, organizations, agencies, sectors, and scales. Direct team members and their partners contribute to our unique gathering of experts, practitioners, decision makers, and rights holders. There is great value in cultivating this broader network. Promoting peer-to-peer learning and coordination across national, regional, and local scales within our network creates a strong foundation for adaptation action.

For more information about the common characteristics of successful CAP teams and the program theory that describes the actions & impacts of CAP teams, go to

<https://cpo.noaa.gov/CAP-RISA/team-structure#739056>

Additional Factors for Proposal Preparation

This section is intended to provide additional information for successful submission across all competitions

Proposal Writing Guidance

Competitive proposals will show that the work being produced will build on what is already known from practitioner experience, traditional knowledge and the published literature about the proposed topic. The proposal should demonstrate that the PIs have a comprehensive knowledge and expertise and that their proposed work will augment the existing knowledge and engagement. It is strongly encouraged to maximize readability by using plain language, structuring content logically, placing figures near relevant text, and using graphics, maps, or tables for appropriate content.

Nature of Investigator Teams

Multidisciplinary teams of investigators are best suited for addressing the complex issues related to climate, society, and enhanced adaptation through the use of science and technology in full CAP teams and collaborative planning activities . Previous successful projects/teams have integrated strong social with natural or physical science components to form a more comprehensive analysis of the dynamics of climate-human interactions. Prioritizing social science expertise that can investigate socio-cultural issues of climate risk and barriers, and opportunities for climate resilience and adaptation is highly encouraged. The proposal should include an explanation of the roles of the investigators and how the team will interact and integrate the multiple components. Investigators who will not be requesting funds for salaries must also be listed, along with their estimated time of commitment.

Partners

Partnerships and collaborations between researchers and critical decision-making institutions in the region of study are expected and might include: NOAA and other federal agencies, tribal governments, non-governmental organizations, boundary organizations, international organizations and regional networks, extension services, state and local governments, and representative private sector organizations. Any in-kind time should be reported within the proposal. It is highly encouraged to include a list or table of major partners with relevant information, such as their role or level of support to the project.

Letters of Support

Letters of support are not required. However, up to 10 letters may be submitted and can be used to supplement information included in the full proposal if submitted as part of the application. Letters will be taken into consideration when evaluating the proposal generally and the proposed partnerships specifically. When deciding who to gather letters of support from, consider the centrality of the partner's role in the project and the relevance of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion. The letters supplement the reviewers' understanding from the full proposal, so letters are particularly useful where they provide a sense of the prior relationship or level of interest from critical and/or nontraditional partners. In situations where partners represent underserved communities, letters indicate the community's willingness and choice to engage.

Required Frontline Community Investments

Details of these investments are required under the Statement on Integration of Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. The form of investment may vary. In the past, CAP teams have managed one-time small grant competitions and tailored the processes to reduce burdens for frontline communities. Others have established open-ended processes for investing in community partners throughout the lifetime of the CAP team. Many teams have integrated key frontline community partners into their team, advisory committees, and leadership boards. The NOAA CAP program is open to new approaches to ensure frontline community investments count. All disbursements of funds must follow rules and regulations governing the subawarding of federal funds.

Additional Proposal Questions:

See the Frequently Asked Questions at <https://cpo.noaa.gov/funding-opportunities/>

Contact Information

Questions for the competition should be directed to the CAP Program Managers at oar.cpo.risa@noaa.gov.