

2024 NOAA Climate Adaptation Partnerships Letter of Intent Feedback Attachment

This document contains *all* feedback provided for 2024 Competition 1 & 2 letters of intent. Even if these comments are not directly related to your LOI, consider them as useful feedback about what makes a successful proposal.

Comments are based on a review of your LOI by federal officials involved in developing the competition priorities. These comments are based on the perspectives of those officials. Comments below are not an indication of potential funding; all proposals will be reviewed and discussed through a peer review process.

Please email the CAP/RISA Program Managers (oar.cpo.risa@noaa.gov) if you need clarification on any of this feedback. Additionally, you may schedule an appointment with us: [Schedule CAP/RISA Office Hours*](#).

*check back in if there are no appointments available, this will be continually updated.

Sections:

1. Scope Questions
2. Geography Questions
3. RISA Team Structure Questions

1. Scope Questions

- **Integrated Science:** It is important to articulate not only research areas and themes, but clear integrated and interdisciplinary research questions *for* climate adaptation. CAP teams need to bring together natural, physical, and social sciences around complex climatic concerns related to human-environment interactions. 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.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** In *addition* to the social science processes, CAP teams need a distinct and thoughtful approach to engagement that builds relationships, rather than extracts information. For the proposal, it is best to identify an initial set of targeted communities/decision makers even if that set expands over the 5 years. It is important to articulate how stakeholder knowledge and relationships will shape the CAP agenda as the team evolves over the five years. In many cases, it is important to identify an intermediary organization or trusted agent of communities, particularly frontline and underserved communities, to build out successful engagement processes.

- **Goal of CAP Teams is Adaptive Capacity Outcomes:** Remember that, fundamentally, the CAP Program is about outcomes that build climate adaptation capacity and solutions at regional levels. The knowledge, products, tools, and relationships developed in the program should build the capacity of decision makers to act on climate variability and change within their lives and professions. This requires careful consideration about how outputs will or will not be used, by whom, and to what end. The team's evaluation processes should show how adaptive capacity is being built in the region. Tool production alone is insufficient to show this. See "Next-user Adaptive Actions" on the [Common Characteristics Of Successful CAP/RISA Teams](#) page for more information.
- **Justice, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion:** Carefully consider the integration of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) in your statement of work based on the program information provided in Section I.B. of the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). Specifically, p.7 provides broad examples of the many ways application of JEDI principles will be considered by reviewers. Attention to these principles should go beyond the use of key terms and be considered in a team's plans for program management as well as research and engagement.
- **Multiple Climate Hazards:** CAP teams should consider multiple climate hazards, drivers, and impacts in their research and engagement activities. This includes consideration of concurrent or co-occurring impacts, as well as both physical and social contributions to societal vulnerability. Proposals with work focusing on a single climate driver/hazard/impact/issue are not generally competitive.
- **Partnerships, Data, and Products:** All partnerships will be evaluated in the context of how they are relevant to addressing issues identified by local decision makers and not by how well they make people aware of data and tools. Proposals are not required to promote or enhance the usability of NOAA data and tools, nor required to partner with NOAA offices specifically. Rather, applicants should think broadly about potential partners and give special consideration to partners with whom there is currently less direct engagement with climate science. Applicants should consider the guidance provided on collaborative relationships in the Notice of Funding Opportunity (p.8) and "Developing Partnerships" in the Program Information Sheet (p.5).

- **Alternative NOAA Funding Sources:** Several other NOAA programs fund climate-related research and engagement. A list of known offices with potential similarity is provided below. The CAP program is *not* funding work relevant to these programs unless they are a part of a portfolio that is multi-hazard, integrated, and responsive to regional decision makers. If work is proposed that complements the goals of any of these programs, care should be given in the proposal to distinguish the rationale for funding those activities under CAP:
 - Coastal Resilience
 - [Coastal Resilience Grants](#)
 - [Sea Grant](#)
 - Climate Modeling and Prediction
 - CPO/[Earth System Science and Modeling Division](#)
 - WPO/[Subseasonal to Seasonal Program](#)
 - Drought Prediction, Impacts, and Planning
 - NIDIS/[Coping with Drought](#)
 - Education
 - OEd/[Environmental Literacy Program](#)

- **Overlap with other Federal Climate Adaptation Networks:** In addition to the NOAA Climate Adaptation Partnerships program, the federal government supports other science-to-action networks such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture Climate Hubs and the Department of the Interior Climate Adaptation Science Centers (CASCs). For more information about these networks, read [this page](#). If proposed work in the NOAA CAP team overlaps with USDA or DOI mission areas, the applicant should articulate how it is in partnership and complementary to those missions while being appropriate for CAP funding. Ecosystem science and agriculture-related projects are particularly sensitive to this overlap.

2. Geography Questions

- **Geography Guidance:** When considering geographic scope, carefully read 1. Determining Geographic Scope on page 3-4 of the CAP [Information Sheet](#). Proposals need to have reasonable geographic reach across a state and will not be competitive if they cover only one State or territory. Applicants should consider how partners are included beyond their core institution and how they contribute to geographic coverage in the region. For example, consider where team members supported by the budget reside, which regional institutions are involved and where they are located, where and how included are key community partners, and what are the specific locations or communities where planned projects will take place.
 - **Upper Northeast:** Competitive proposal must show core team members and institutional relationships extend beyond a single state and show region-wide activities covering the states described in the Information Sheet. Applicants

must balance issues for both inland and coastal areas; proposals focused exclusively on coastal areas will not be deemed relevant.

- **Southeast:** Competitive proposal must show core team members and institutional relationships extend beyond a single state and show region-wide activities covering the states described in the Information Sheet. The program is particularly interested in assuring institutional representation in Alabama and/or Mississippi. Applicants must balance issues for both inland and coastal areas; proposals focused exclusively on coastal areas will not be deemed relevant.
- **Adjacent Teams:** If an applicant wants to propose work that includes part of an adjacent state/region, you are encouraged to coordinate with the CAP team(s) already covering that state/region if possible. For example, we have seen this expressed as letters of support as part of the final proposal submission.

3. CAP Team Management Questions

- **Team Structure and Governance:** Ensure a clear description of the structure of your CAP team in terms of program management and team integration, stakeholder engagement approach and process, advisory structures, evaluation, and communications (see [Characteristics of CAP Teams](#)). In this, it is important to carefully consider the team governance structure, including how both research and non-research partners are included in the governance decisions of the team. Please note that the inclusion of a full-time program manager as dedicated staff is a key component for successful team integration. Additionally, communications staff and an evaluator and/or evaluation plan are important components in a team's overall success.
- **Social Science Expertise:** The integration of social sciences is important for project design, team structure and overall approach. In our experience having active social science or science-policy expertise on the leadership team has been valuable. Proposals without sufficient social science integration are not generally competitive.
- **Experts in Region:** CAP projects are based on bottom-up expressions of local need. To build trusted relationships, the CAP team must be composed of place-based experts from within the region, including non-research partners. This enables stakeholders and decision makers to regularly interact with CAP team staff.
- **Team members on more than one CAP Team:** If team members listed on a proposal are already affiliated with an established CAP team, the applicant should describe the work associated with that commitment and articulate why the role of the team member warrants being on more than one regional team.

- **Full Budget:** The program strongly recommends that submitted applications develop budgets scoped to the full amount available for each award. Per section II. A. of the Notice of Funding Opportunity: *Proposals can request up to \$1,100,000/year for core CAP work, for a total of \$5,500,000. A minimum of \$200,000 within the total budget must be set aside to directly fund community-based organizations or local governments serving under-resourced frontline communities.*