Feedback from LOI Review Process for All Potential Applicants to the AdSci FY24 NOFO

1. Summary Sentence: We encourage applicants to ask themselves if they can articulate in one sentence what they will be accomplishing and/or producing through this research, and to consider putting that one sentence summary in the abstract - this kind of clarity can help focus both the proposal writing and review processes.

2. We recognize that two years is not a long time to accomplish such critical research, so please make sure that the objectives and the proposed work can be accomplished within 24 months. Proposals that seem overly ambitious (and not appropriately resourced) are often questioned by the review panel. If you are leveraging previous investments or ongoing activities, please identify the relationships clearly in the proposal; it is also important in these cases to distinguish what support is being sought from NOAA and ensure that the work is not duplicative.

3. Applicants should carefully review and consider the Statement of Diversity and Inclusion section (pg. 13 of 35) in the NOFO. Based on our experience, applicants that take the time to write a thoughtful response (not only in the required section of the proposal, but also reflect these principles in their approach and methods) fare better in the review process.

4. Proposals should clearly articulate the long-term implications of their proposed work. If a database, repository, or new knowledge generation processes are proposed as a part of their work, applicants should address the sustainability/maintenance of these outcomes/products, beyond the project period.

5. Proposals that are more competitive are typically those that demonstrate and build on what is already known from practitioner experience, traditional knowledge and the published academic and gray 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, and not duplicate other efforts.

6. We encourage applicants to maximize readability by using plain language, structuring content logically, placing figures near relevant text, and using graphics, maps, or tables for appropriate content.

7. Remember to clearly describe the proposed methodology for the research project, and how it will be accomplished over the two year period in a reasonable timeline. There have been a number of proposals over the years that have been well received until the review panel begins to discuss how the applicants will actually accomplish their work. Applicants need to be specific when describing all elements of the project (e.g., identify which methods, rationale for specific study site, techniques, models or data sets you anticipate using, describe who will be involved in the analysis and what credentials they have to successfully undertake the proposed work).

8. Indicate all of the PIs (Lead- and co-PIs), partners, participants, etc. for the project; clearly describe their roles and responsibilities (who is doing what) for each. While optional, we very

strongly encourage applicants to provide a letter of support or commitment acknowledging the involvement/role of non-PI partners. (If you have too many involved, you can reduce these letters and place more than one on a page.) Letters of support show the reviewers that you have the institutional arrangements and partnerships in place to make the project a success. Proposals that have clearly identified and demonstratively committed partners fare better than those who plan to scope the landscape for partners included as part of the work plan. ***We find that this element of the proposal is particularly important during the review process for those applicants who do not reside in the region where the research will take place.***

9. Please make sure to include the necessary disciplinary expertise within your group of Co-PIs. If you are enhancing your capabilities through unfunded partnerships, please indicate through a letter of support that the individual/institution is fully committed and resourced to collaborate on the proposed work.

10. Please note that if appropriate to the proposed work, the applicant must provide documentation of human subjects research approval or exemption from their organization (and any subsequent renewals). We recommend noting plans for an IRB if appropriate in the Data and Information Management Statement.

11. Given AdSci's programmatic objectives and approach, projects with a strong emphasis on participatory stakeholder engagement that shape the project and foster the integration of the outcomes in resilience planning and implementation are typically more successful with our review panels. If your proposed work includes a stakeholder engagement component, proposals should include a clear plan for engaging with stakeholders throughout the project, from the beginning to the end and for sharing the outcomes beyond the traditional research community.

12. FOR COMPETITION 1: While implementation and capacity-building activities are an important part of adaptation and resilience, the Adaptation Sciences (AdSci) program is a research program seeking proposals that utilize research and engagement methods to advance the objectives and outcomes of this competition. Proposals that include elements of implementation and/or capacity building activities should clearly demonstrate how the entirety of the proposed project will pursue and satisfy the stated research objectives of the competition.

13. FOR COMPETITION 1: There are many worthy concepts and projects that can promote economic and social resilience, but the FY24 AdSci NOFO specifically focuses on evaluation and evaluation research, and the identification of key social science research questions to advance adaptation to climate changes. While an enhanced understanding of measuring/evaluating climate impacts, risks and vulnerabilities (e.g. exposure to climate hazards) is important for advancing adaptation and resilience knowledge and approaches, this funding opportunity focuses on *evaluation and evaluation research to advance adaptation and resilience, as opposed to the evaluation of climate impacts, risks and vulnerabilities*. These connections should be clearly laid out and be reflected in the methodology and outcomes of the proposals.

14. If your proposal addresses specific knowledge and information gaps identified in the recently released Fifth National Climate Assessment (NCA5), please note and reference this in your proposal (note: referencing the NCA is not required but it helps us track linkages between assessment and research where appropriate).

15. Funded projects should reflect the priorities, needs and cultures of the research locations, and demonstrate plans to develop or build on partnerships and engagement with local and indigenous communities, organizations, networks and/or institutions located in the area of the study site (if applicable).

16. Discuss the transferability of the project's outputs and outcomes. This project should not be beneficial just to your study area – but should show relevance to other regions/contexts and how you will share this information.

17. Identify linkages to existing NOAA programs or infrastructure (e.g., the Climate Adaptation Partnerships program- formerly known as RISA, the Regional Climate Centers, the National Sea Grant Program, the National Integrated Drought Information System, NOAA's Office of Coastal Management Programs (*National Coastal Zone Management, National Estuary Research Reserve systems, Coral Reef Conservation Program, and the Digital Coast Partnership*), and the NOAA Marine Protected Area Center).

Important Reminders:

- Full proposals must be submitted by **11:59 p.m. Eastern Time**, **March 20th, 2024**. Application packages can be found and should be submitted at https://www.grants.gov. Late submissions *cannot* be accepted. The official mode of proposal delivery is either via the Grants.gov portal or, if you have no Internet access, via actual delivery to our office by the time and date stipulated; **emails and faxes are NOT acceptable**. We suggest that you consider submitting your proposal at least one to two weeks before the deadline to ensure that there are no computer outages, glitches, last minute storms, etc. Every year we have to turn down proposals thought to have been sent in time, but unbeknownst to the sender, had not been submitted in the correct manner.

- Please note that all organizations applying for funding need to take a series of administrative steps prior to submitting proposals. These are outlined in the NOFO and slides from information sessions posted on the funding webpage. This year, applicants will also have to register with eRA Commons before submitting- **this is a new system for NOAA**, and it could add extra time to submitting a proposal when compared to previous years. Please check with your institutions and organizations about their registration status *well ahead of the deadline*; if your institution is not registered, we recommend that they do so as soon as possible, **as the registration process can take between three and fourteen days if all goes smoothly.**

- Institutional Review Board (IRB): Please read the following carefully. We encourage applicants to note their IRB approach in the proposal, if appropriate, which is generally applicable to CSI work. As required by the Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and

Conditions and 15 C.F.R. Part 27, Protection of Human Subjects, the recipient must obtain Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval or exemption for proposed work in this project involving human subjects research, if deemed necessary by institutional procedures. If renewal of IRB approval is required by the institution, that must be submitted to NOAA for review and approval during the award's period of performance. No other involvement of human subjects in research may be undertaken or conducted, or costs involving human subjects research incurred or charged to the project, except as specified in the study plan and the informed consent forms that were received and approved by the IRB. Notwithstanding this prohibition, work may be initiated or costs charged to the project for protocol or instrument development related to human subjects research. *Please address the IRB issue in the Data and Information Management section of the project narrative if appropriate.*

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

- Please visit the [AdSci FY2024 Competition FAQs](#) web page frequently prior to submitting a full proposal. We will continue to update this page as we receive questions via email and through the information session.

- All budget numbers should be rounded to the nearest dollar. **Please do not use cents anywhere in your budget documents.**

- Applications with subawards should include an SF-424a and budget narrative/ justification (with budget table included) for each sub-recipient.

- The SF-424, SF-424b and CD-511 should be signed by the authorized representative (as listed under the "authorized representative" section of the SF-424.) Should the authorized representative be unavailable, please indicate under the signature that the signatory is signing on behalf of the authorized representative, or provide a signature delegation memo.

Please use the following information to facilitate the online submission of your proposal:

FY 24 AdSci Funding Opportunity Number: NOAA-OAR-CPO-2024-2008252

FY 24 AdSci Competition Names and ID numbers:

Competition 1: Evidence-building, Evaluation, and Learning Approaches to Support Adaptation to a Changing Climate (Competition ID: 3208827)

Competition 2: Developing a Social Science Research Agenda in Support of Adaptation and Resilience (Competition ID: 3208828)

Start Date: Please use **Sept. 1, 2024** as the project start date. Projects cannot exceed 24 months. If you do not use this start date, and your proposal is recommended for funding, you will need to redo all of your paperwork; so please ensure that you have the correct date in the application.