

Billing Code: 3510-JE

Department of Commerce

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

#### OVERVIEW INFORMATION

Federal Agency Name(s): Coastal Services Center (CSC), National Ocean Service

(NOS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce

Funding Opportunity Title: FY2004 Coastal Services Center Broad Area Announcement

(BAA).

Announcement Type: This is an initial announcement for this funding opportunity for fiscal year 2004. The NOAA Coastal Services Center (CSC) (will now be referred to as the “Center” throughout this document) is soliciting applications for federal assistance for the following program areas: (1) Landscape Characterization and Restoration (LCR), (2) Geographic Information Systems Integration and Development (GIS I&D), (3) Coastal Remote Sensing (CRS), (4) Information Resources (IR), and (5) Director’s Office (DO).

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 11.473, Coastal Services Center

Dates: Applicants applying for federal assistance for the LCR, GIS I&D, CRS, and IR programs, must submit their applications by 5 p.m. EDT, October 6, 2003. Applicants applying for federal assistance under the DO’s office must submit applications by 5 p.m EDT, on October 31, 2003.

All of these programs are covered by Executive Order (EO) 12372 so applicants for grants will need to meet the requirements of the intergovernmental consultation

process established by a particular State and its local governments before Federal agencies take action on the application.

#### Executive Summary

The Center has five programs soliciting proposals for various projects. The five programs are:

(1) Landscape Characterization and Restoration (LCR) program, seeking proposals where the Center will enter into a two-year cooperative agreement which the cooperator and the Center will jointly develop an environmental characterization of a coastal estuary, watershed, or special management area in the Northeastern United States located entirely or in part within Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, or North Carolina. Total anticipated funding for a two-year project is estimated to be \$300,000 and no more than one award is anticipated from this announcement.

(2) Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Integration and Development (I&D) program, seeks proposals for a one to two-year cooperative agreements under which cooperators and the Center will jointly develop technical projects related to the goal of the GIS I&D program, which is to provide relevant, easily accessible spatial data, tools, and support services to the coastal resource management community. The GIS I&D program is especially interested in state and local level coastal resource management organizations proposing geospatial solutions to issues related to coastal hazards, smart growth, marine protected areas, permitting systems, data access and distribution, or Internet mapping. Maximum anticipated funding is estimated to be \$200,000 which will

likely be spread across multiple projects. Typically, the GIS I&D program funds two to three projects with awards ranging from about \$50,000 to \$100,000 each.

(3) Coastal Remote Sensing (CRS) program, seeking proposals on applications of remotely sensed coastal spatial data to support coastal resource management decision-making and to help resolve coastal issues. The Center's goal is to aid coastal resource managers while promoting the use of remote sensing technologies and innovations. The Center seeks proposals for a two-year cooperative agreement under which the Center will acquire commercial remote sensing imagery and/or products to the identified issue. The cooperator must show how their management issue will benefit substantially by the inclusion of remotely sensed data. Total anticipated funding is \$25,000 per awards over the two-year period for support of the cooperative agreement. Between one and three awards are anticipated from this announcement.

(4) Information Resources (IR) program, seeking proposals for a one-year grant to make coastal data, products, and publications of importance to U.S. coastal resource managers available on-line using standard documentation formats and information retrieval protocols. Allowable documentation formats are the Federal Geographic Data Committee's (FGDC) content standard for geospatial data, commonly referred to as the FGDC metadata standard, and the Machine Readable Cataloging (MARC) 21 formats. Maximum anticipated funding is \$200,000 for a one-year grant period with projects ranging from \$25,000 to \$100,000. It is anticipated that multiple grants will be funded under this announcement.

(5) Director's Office (DO) program, seeking proposals for grant projects that enhance the organization, implementation, and application of regional coastal ocean observing systems. Coastal observing systems are meant to include the sensors, personnel, and data management that obtain, process and apply regular and sustained in-situ and/or remote observations of the physical, chemical, and biological environment of Great Lakes, estuaries, and the near shore ocean of the United States. Of particular interest to the Center is the utility of such systems for management of coastal and ocean resources and for the benefit of coastal communities. Total available funding is expected to be between \$1,000,000 and \$15,000,000 depending on congressional appropriation. The DO's program desires to fund two types of projects to benefit the development of regional coastal ocean observing systems: (1) projects that facilitate building partnerships and regional organizational structures for regional observing systems, and (2) regional pilot projects. For the Regional Observation System Coordination, funding is expected to be between \$200,000 and \$500,000. The DO program expects to award two to five grants, ranging from \$20,000 to \$100,000 under the Regional Observation System Coordination. For the Regional Coastal Ocean Observation Pilot Projects, funding is expected to be between \$500,000 and \$14,000,000 dollars. The DO program expects to award two to ten grants ranging from \$100,000 to \$3,000,000 under the Regional Coastal Ocean Observation Pilot Projects.

For this announcement and for all Center programs, selected recipients will either enter into a cooperative agreement with the Center's programs or receive a grant depending upon the amount of the Center program's involvement in the project.

Substantial involvement means a cooperative agreement, while independent work requires a grant.

#### FULL TEXT OF ANNOUNCEMENT

The NOAA Coastal Services Center (Center) is soliciting applications for federal assistance for the following five program areas:

- (1) Landscape Characterization and Restoration (LCR) program
- (2) Geographic Information System, Integration and Development (GIS I&D) program
- (3) Coastal Remote Sensing (CRS) program
- (4) Information Resources (IR) program, and
- (5) Director's Office (DO) program.

This announcement provides guidelines for the Center's program areas and includes details for the evaluation criteria, and selection procedures of each program. Selected recipients will enter into either a cooperative agreement with the Center or receive a grant depending upon the amount of the Center's involvement in the project. Funding for these programs will be contingent upon availability of FY 2004 funding availability. Guiding the conservation and management of coastal resources is a primary function of NOAA. NOAA accomplishes this goal through a variety of mechanisms, including collaboration with the coastal resource management programs of the Nation's states and territories. The mission of the NOAA Coastal Services Center is to support the environmental, social, and economic well being of the coast by linking people, information, and technology. The goal of the Center is to build capabilities throughout

the nation to address pressing issues of coastal health and change by promoting resource conservation and efficient and sustainable commercial and residential development.

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**GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS INTEGRATION AND  
DEVELOPMENT (GIS I&D) PROGRAM - APPLICATIONS OF SPATIAL  
TECHNOLOGY FOR COASTAL MANAGEMENT**

**I. Funding Opportunity Title for the GIS I&D Program**

The Center's GIS I&D program seeks proposals for a one to two-year cooperative agreements under which cooperators and the Center will jointly develop technical projects related to the goal of the GIS I&D program, which is to provide relevant, easily accessible spatial data, tools, and support services to the coastal resource management community. The GIS I&D program and its partners will work towards this goal by addressing issues as defined in the project proposal, working with the impacted community or communities to design and develop a product that addresses local needs and skill sets, and considering the products broader applicability to other states or localities. A priority of the GIS I&D program is to fund state and local level coastal resource management organizations proposing geospatial solutions to issues related to the following; coastal hazards, smart growth, marine protected areas, permitting systems, data access and distribution, or Internet mapping.

NOAA is committed to continual improvement of the grants process and accelerating the award of financial assistance to qualified recipients. In order to fulfill these responsibilities, this solicitation announces that approximately \$200,000 may be available in FY2004, in award amounts to be determined by the proposals and available funds. Applicants are hereby given notice that funds have not yet been appropriated for this program. Note: Last year NOAA had approximately \$300,000 available for this program. Typically, the GIS I&D funds two to three projects with awards ranging from about \$50,000 to \$100,000 each. The award level is contingent on methodology, level of detail, and both the technical and geographic scope of the project.

There is no guarantee that sufficient funds will be available to make awards for all qualified projects. Publication of this notice does not oblige NOAA to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds. If one incurs any costs prior to receiving an award agreement signed by an authorized NOAA official, one would do so solely at one's own risk of these costs not being included under the award.

Statutory authority for the Center's GIS I&D program is 33 U.S.C. 883a (surveys and other activities), 33 U.S.C. 883c (geomagnetic data; collection, correlation, and dissemination) and 16 U.S.C. 1456c (Technical Assistance).

## II. Award Information

Total anticipated funding for a cooperative agreement is \$200,000 (two to three awards ranging from \$50,000 to \$100,000) and is subject to the availability of FY 2004 appropriations.

## III. Eligibility Information

## 1. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are institutions of higher education, hospitals, other non-profits, commercial organizations, foreign governments, organizations under the jurisdiction of foreign governments, international organizations, and state, local and Indian tribal governments. Federal agencies or institutions are not eligible to receive Federal assistance under this announcement, but may be project partners. Note: Federal agencies or institutions who are project partners must demonstrate that they have legal authority to receive funds from outside sources in excess of their appropriations.

## 2. Cost Sharing or Matching

There is no requirement for cost sharing in response to GIS I&D program announcement.

## IV. Application and Submission Information

### 1. Address to Request Application Package

All applicants are required to submit a NOAA grants application package, budget narrative, curriculum vitae for each principal investigator, and project proposal. The standard NOAA application package includes the SF-424 (Rev. 7-97), Application for Federal Assistance, SF-424A, Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs, SF-424B, Assurances, Non-Construction Programs, and CD-511, Certifications Regarding Debarment, Suspension, and other Responsibility Matters; Drug Free Workplace Requirements and Lobbying. SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities, should only be submitted to the government if applicant is actually reporting lobbying activities. The CD-512, Certifications Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary



Exclusion-Lower Tier Transactions, is a form that remains in the applicant's file.

Applicants should not submit CD-512 to the government. The CD-346, Applicant for Funding Assistance should only be submitted to the government if the applicant is a non-profit entity. All of these forms can be obtained from <

<http://www.ofa.noaa.gov/%7Egrants/appkit.html> > or from CSC's website <

<http://www.csc.noaa.gov/funding/CSCgrant.html> >. If for some reason the applicant has difficulty downloading the required forms, he or she should contact Violet Legette at 2234 South Hobson Avenue, Charleston, South Carolina 29405-2413 or phone her at 843-740-1222 or email her at < [Violet.Legette@noaa.gov](mailto:Violet.Legette@noaa.gov) >.

## 2. Content and Form of Application Submission

This announcement is a call for proposals for work under the Center's GIS I&D Program. The Center's GIS I&D program's principal products seek to link the technical benefits of GIS with the needs of the coastal resource management community to enhance visualization and decision making capabilities. Final products typically are in a digital format and distributed via a training module, CD-ROM, or the Internet. Products often include a spatial database, a customized GIS interface, and a narrative that provides a detailed overview of the focal management issues, how the accompanying information was used to examine potential solutions, how the product can be applied to other coastal areas, and how the overall product can be used in future decision-making. An overview of the program, and past and current projects, is available through the Internet at < <http://www.csc.noaa.gov/id/> >. This FY 2004 announcement is intended to accommodate a broad range of issues faced by state and local coastal resource management agencies

and organizations. The program's objective in considering a broad range of issues is to allow individual coastal communities the opportunity to propose projects that speak to the most relevant or urgent issues for their area and to guide discussion relative to the development of innovative approaches for addressing these issues.

#### Roles and Responsibilities

By establishing a cooperative partnership, the unique skills, capabilities, and experiences of the Center and the cooperator will be combined to offer an opportunity for each organization to further its goals. In order to clearly define the nature of this relationship, the proposal shall explicitly state the respective roles and responsibilities of the Center and the cooperator. Also, the work plan that is outlined within the proposal should demonstrate that the cooperator and partners have sufficient local knowledge of the management problem to devise an effective and systematic approach toward the development of appropriate solutions. Once the award has been made, a primary task for the Center and the cooperator will be to collectively review and develop the final implementation plan to describe how the resources of all parties will be leveraged to produce the final products, the time line for the project, and the process for accomplishing project tasks.

The Center's technical role in past projects has generally included, but is not limited to, the development of spatial data tools, analyses, and data to address a variety of management issues; the design of GIS and Web-based architectures; and the compilation of final products into a training module, CD-ROM, Web site, or other distribution mechanism. More information regarding the degree of involvement or potential role of

the Center in a given project may be found at < <http://www.csc.noaa.gov/id/> >. Any questions about appropriate roles for the Center can be directed to < [Hamilton.Smillie@noaa.gov](mailto:Hamilton.Smillie@noaa.gov) >.

General areas of responsibility that cooperators have had in the past have included the following: identifying the management issues that guide development of the information resource; identifying the information needed to address the issues; developing partnerships with other members of the coastal management community; developing, collecting, and synthesizing the information (e.g., spatial data, text, tables, graphics, charts, and maps) and tools needed to address the management issues; developing metadata; and determining how the products should be organized to maximize usefulness within the coastal management community. It is anticipated the cooperator will fully participate in the development of the final product design and implementation. All projects proposals must include sections on the following topics:

a. Project Background/Introduction. Briefly discuss the critical coastal management issue addressed within the proposal, as well as the data and/or analyses required to address this issue. Identify the basic project goals and any objectives. Discuss in the applicability of the issue and anticipated final product to a broader range of customers or areas.

b. Project Description/Methodology. Address the general work plan and deliverables. Methodology should specifically define methods to address the stated problem or issue, including a description of the types of technology or software that will be applied. Database format must be adequately described (if appropriate) and include a

supplemental descriptor file or metadata that contains the information necessary for completing an FGDC-compliant metadata record for any data that are created or used within the project.

c. **Project Partners and Subcontractors.** Identify any project partners and describe their respective roles. When formal partnerships already exist, include letters from partners that demonstrate that they understand their role in the project and the authority of the lead agency in product development, and that they are willing to participate in that manner. When formal partnerships do not already exist, describe plans for developing them. Describe the resources available to cooperators and partners to conduct the project, including personnel qualifications (i.e., education, experience, and time available to work on the project), facilities, equipment, and, to the extent practicable, the information and tools already available. Describe how widely the project is supported within the resource management community and offer evidence of that support.

d. **Milestone Schedule.** List target milestones and their respective time lines.

e. **Project Budget.** Proposals should provide a detailed budget breakdown that follows the categories and formats in the NOAA grants package and a brief narrative that justifies each item.

### 3. Submission Dates and Times

Applications are due by 5 p.m. EDT, October 6, 2003 to the attention of Hamilton Smillie, Room 153, at the NOAA Coastal Services Center, Charleston, South Carolina, 29405-2413. Applications received after that time will not be reviewed. The applicant must submit one original and two copies of the proposal(s).

#### 4. Intergovernmental Review

Applications under the Center's GIS I&D program are subject to Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs". It is the state agency's responsibility to contact their state's Single Point of Contact (SPOC) to find out about and comply with the State's process under EO 12372. To assist the applicant, the names and addresses of the SPOCs is listed in the Office of Management and Budget's home page at: < <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/spoc.html> >.

#### 5. Funding Restrictions

There are no funding restrictions under the Center's GIS I&D program. The Center's GIS I&D program is seeking applications for non-construction projects.

#### 6. Other Submission Requirements

In addition to the proposal(s), the applicant must submit a complete NOAA grant application package (with signed originals). No e-mail or fax copies will be accepted. All project proposals must total no more than 10 pages (double spaced, 10 or 12-point fonts, and exclusive of appendices). Appendices should be limited to materials that directly support the main body of the proposal (e.g., support letters, resumes, lists of data sources, maps). Letters of support may be mailed separately, but must be received by the October 6, 2003, deadline. All appendix material must be unbound.

### V. Application Review Information

#### 1. Evaluation Criteria (With Weights)

a. Importance/relevance and Applicability of proposal to the program goals (40 points). This criterion ascertains whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work

and/or relevance to NOAA, federal, regional, state or local activities. For the GIS I&D program this includes: How well the proposal demonstrates the local significance and regional importance of the issues(s) or management objective(s) that will guide development of the project. At a minimum, the proposal must identify coastal management goals that currently are not being achieved, describe how products from this project will significantly address that deficiency, and state the benefits that will result to the public and coastal management community. How well the applicant demonstrates that the project outcomes will significantly address the coastal management issue(s) targeted by the project and that the collective resources of the applicant and partners will ensure projected outcomes are met. If the project is scientifically based, how well the project integrates and applies the results to solve coastal management issues.

b. Technical/scientific merit (30 points). This criterion assesses whether the approach is technically sound and/or innovative, if the methods are appropriate, and whether there are clear project goals and objectives. For the GIS I&D program this includes: How well the proposed work takes an innovative approach to the application and integration of technology, spatial data, and policy to address issues and accomplish project goals and objectives. This criterion includes such factors as the technical merit of the process that the cooperator has outlined for developing the information resource and the perceived role for the Center in its development.

c. Overall qualifications of applicants (15 points). This criterion ascertains whether the applicant possesses the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project. For the GIS I&D program this

includes: How well the applicant demonstrates their qualifications and expertise in the topic areas related to the proposed project. How well the proposal divides the project into discrete tasks that make effective use of the capabilities of the cooperator, partner(s), and the Center. How partnerships developed for the project will enhance capacity to address coastal management issues through data and information sharing and collaborations.

d. Project costs (10 points). This criterion evaluates the budget to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time-frame. For the GIS I&D program this includes: How well the applicant demonstrates that the budget is commensurate with project needs and that the partnerships employed will improve the overall cost effectiveness of the project. Additionally, how well the proposal demonstrates: that the project is broadly supported by the coastal management community; that a broad group of coastal managers and constituents will benefit from contributing to design and assembly of product(s); and that a broad group of coastal managers will use the product(s) making them cost effective.

e. Outreach and education (5 Points). 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 GIS I&D program this includes: How well the proposed project addresses the goals of the National Spatial Data Infrastructure by making spatial data and tools accessible through documentation and distribution mechanisms such as clearinghouses. More information on the NSDI can be found at < <http://www.csc.noaa.gov/themes/nsdi/> >. Additionally, how well the proposal demonstrates that appropriate measures will be undertaken to ensure that the outreach and

education goals of the proposal are met. Outreach and educational materials and mechanisms may include presentations, papers, posters, workshops, flyers, data distribution mechanisms, courses, and other information sharing mechanisms.

## 2. Selection Process

An initial administrative review is conducted to determine compliance with requirements and completeness of the application. A review panel will be established to evaluate proposals on the basis of the evaluation criteria listed above. The panelists will provide individual evaluations on proposals, thus there will be no consensus recommendation. All proposals reviewed will be ranked according to the average score and the selecting official (the Center's Director) will award in rank order, unless the proposal is justified to be selected out of rank order based upon one or more of the selection factors below. Thus proposals with the highest scores may not necessarily be selected for an award. The Selecting Official makes the final recommendations for award to the Grants Officer who is authorized to obligate the funds.

## 3. Selection Factors

The merit review ratings shall provide a rank order to the Selecting Official for final funding recommendations. The Selecting Official shall award in the rank order unless the proposal is justified to be selected out of rank order based upon (1), (2), (3), (5) and (6) 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 areas
  - 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 groups

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VI. Award Administration Information (the following information applies for all five Center programs)

1. Award Notice

Applications recommended for funding by the selecting official will be forwarded to the GMD by the Program Office. The applicant will be notified by the program office, either by email or letter, that their application was forwarded to GMD. The applicant must be aware that the notification by the program office is NOT the official award notice. Official notification happens only when the applicant receives an award notice through the postal mail, signed by a Grants Officer.

Unsuccessful applications for all Center programs will be destroyed and not

returned to the applicant.

## 2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

The Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification of Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements contained in the Federal Register notice of October 1, 2001 (66 FR 49917), as amended by the Federal Register notice published on October 30, 2002 (67 FR 66109) is applicable to this solicitation.

Applications under this program are subject to EO 12372, “Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs”.

It has been determined that this notice does not contain policies with Federalism implications as that term is defined in EO 12132.

The recipients must comply with EO 12906 regarding any and all geospatial data collected or produced under grants or cooperative agreements. This includes documenting all geospatial data in accordance with the Federal Geographic Data Committee Content Standard for digital geospatial data.

This action has been determined to be not significant for purposes of EO 12866.

Prior notice and an opportunity for public comments are not required by the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) or any other law for this notice concerning grants, cooperative agreements, benefits, and contracts, 5 U.S.C. 553 (a) (2). Therefore, a regulatory flexibility analysis is not required for purposes of the Regulatory Flexibility Act (RFA), 5 U.S.C. 601 et. seq. And has not been prepared.

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 Paperwork Reduction Act, unless that collection displays a currently valid OMB control number. The use of the standard grants application package referred to in this notice involves collection-of-information requirements subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act. The use of Standard Forms 424, 424A, 424B, SF-LLL, and CD-346 have been approved by OMB under the respective Control Numbers 0348-0043, 0348-0044, 0348-0040, 0348-0046, and 0605-0001.

### 3. Reporting

Upon official notification of an award, the applicant will be required to submit the following reports:

Financial Status Reports (SF-269 and SF-272) are required semi-annually. These reports should be mailed directly to Grants Management Division, 1325 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, Maryland, 20190.

Performance or progress reports are required semi-annually. These reports are submitted directly to the program office, no later than 30 days following the end of each 6-month period from the start date of an award. The final report is due 90 days after the award expiration. These reports can be emailed to the program officer (see below for email addresses of individual Center program officers) or they can be mailed to the attention of the applicant program officer, at 2234 South Hobson Avenue, Charleston, South Carolina, 29405-2413.

### VII. Agency Contact(s)

For administrative issues contact Violet Legette at 843-740-1222 (phone) or 843-740-1232 (fax) or email her at < [Violet.Legette@noaa.gov](mailto:Violet.Legette@noaa.gov) >.

For technical questions for the LCR program, contact Linda Rowe at 843-740-1283 (phone) or 843-740-1315 (fax) or email her at < [Linda.Rowe@noaa.gov](mailto:Linda.Rowe@noaa.gov) >.

For technical questions for the GIS I&D program, contact Hamilton Smillie at 843-740-1192 (phone) or 843-740-1315 (fax) or email him at < [Hamilton.Smillie@noaa.gov](mailto:Hamilton.Smillie@noaa.gov) >.

For technical questions for the CRS program, contact Kirk Waters at 843-740-1227 (phone) or 843-740-1289 (fax) or email him at < [Kirk.Waters@noaa.gov](mailto:Kirk.Waters@noaa.gov) >.

For technical questions for the IR program, contact Hamilton Smillie at 843-740-1192 (phone) or 843-740-1315 (fax) or email him at < [Hamilton.Smillie@noaa.gov](mailto:Hamilton.Smillie@noaa.gov) >.

For technical questions for the DO program, contact Geno Olmi at 843-740-1230 (phone) or 843-740-1297 (fax) or email him at < [Geno.Olmi@noaa.gov](mailto:Geno.Olmi@noaa.gov) >.

#### VIII. Other Information

Applicants can refer to the Center's website for specific information about the history of the Coastal Services Center. Also, available on this website are specific instructions on filling out the NOAA standard forms for grants/cooperative agreement applications. The Center's website is < <http://www.csc.noaa.gov/funding/CSCgrant.html> >.

Applicants also need to remember that official notification of an award notice is provided by the Grants Management Division, not the program office. If one incurs any costs prior to receiving an award agreement signed by an authorized NOAA grant official, one would do so solely at one's own risk of these costs not being included under the award.