

ANNOUNCEMENT OF FEDERAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Federal Agency Name(s): National Ocean Service (NOS), National Oceanic And Atmospheric Administration, Department of Commerce

Funding Opportunity Title: FY 2008 Oceans and Human Health Initiative, External Grants Program

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: NOS-CSC-2008-2001090

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

Dates: Letters of Intent (LOIs) must be received by 5:00 p.m. ET on August 15, 2007. Full proposals must be received by 5:00 p.m. ET, November 15, 2007.

Funding Opportunity Description: This funding opportunity is offered as part of NOAA's Oceans and Human Health Initiative (OHHI) External Grants Program. The OHHI was established by the Secretary of Commerce pursuant to the Oceans and Human Health Act of 2004 and by the recognition of the Undersecretary of Commerce for Oceans (NOAA Administrator) that a national investment in research on oceans and human health would improve understanding of ocean and coastal ecosystems, allow prediction and prevention of ocean and coastal public health problems, and assist in realizing the potential of the oceans to contribute to the development of effective new treatments for human diseases and a greater understanding of human biology.

The mission of the OHHI is to improve understanding and management of the ocean, coasts and Great Lakes to enhance benefits to human health and reduce public health risks. Toward that end, as the nation's lead ocean agency, NOAA's OHHI investigates the relationship between environmental stressors, coastal condition and human health to maximize health benefits from the oceans, improve the safety of seafood and drinking waters, reduce beach closures, and detect emerging health threats.

This funding opportunity is intended to engage the non-federal research community in research across the physical, chemical, biological, medical, public health and social sciences on priority issues for the OHHI. The specific priority areas for this funding opportunity are:

- 1) Develop methods, tools, and technologies to identify, detect, or predict ocean-related public health risks from pathogens and chemical pollutants;

2) Assess the economic and socio-cultural risk of ocean-related health threats from pathogens or chemical pollutants, and the benefits and value of health early warning systems or related information;

3) Improve the healthful characteristics and minimize ocean-related contamination of seafood through either aquaculture techniques or tools to rapidly identify presence or virulence of toxins (e.g., ciguatera, domoic acid), chemical contaminants (including but not limited to pharmaceuticals and personal care products, flame retardants, current-use pesticides, surfactants and stain repellants), or pathogens.

Research proposed under this priority area should engage public health and natural resource managers and decision-makers in order to optimize relevance of the proposed research for the development and delivery useful products and services. Links to ocean observing systems and their enabling regional governance structures or public health surveillance systems are strongly encouraged.

The program priorities for this opportunity support NOAA's mission support goal of: Ecosystems _ To Protect, Restore, and Manage the Use of Coastal and Ocean Resources through an Ecosystem Approach to Management. Other goals are supported, but this is the goal the opportunity most closely addresses.

FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Program Objective

NOAA's Oceans and Human Health Initiative (OHHI) was established by the Secretary of Commerce pursuant to the Oceans and Human Health Act of 2004 and by the recognition of the Undersecretary of Commerce for Oceans (NOAA Administrator) that a national investment in research on oceans and human health would improve understanding of ocean and coastal ecosystems, allow prediction and prevention of ocean and coastal public health problems, and assist in realizing the potential of the oceans to contribute to the development of effective new treatments for human diseases and a greater understanding of human biology.

The mission of the OHHI is to improve understanding and management of the ocean, coasts and Great Lakes to enhance benefits to human health and reduce public health risks. Toward that end, as the nation's lead ocean agency, NOAA's OHHI investigates the relationship between environmental stressors, coastal condition and human health to maximize health benefits from the oceans, improve the safety of seafood and drinking waters, reduce beach closures, and detect emerging health threats. The OHHI seeks to 1) catalyze innovative and interdisciplinary oceans and human health research; 2) foster and facilitate strong partnerships among agencies, academia and the private sector on oceans and human health, and 3) develop and deliver useful tools, technology and environmental information to public health and natural resource managers and the public.

The three main goals of the OHHI are:

- * Lead the development of early warning systems to forecast threats and predict long-term risks to human health throughout U.S. coastal and Great Lakes waters
- * Investigate and optimize health benefits from the sea
- * Develop a robust oceans and human health community working across disciplines and institutions to improve public health

The purpose of this document is to advise the public that the OHHI is soliciting proposals for the Oceans and Human Health Initiative External Grants Program. For the purposes of this announcement, _oceans_ are defined as inclusive of the Great Lakes, estuaries and the ocean. The OHHI is designed to enhance NOAA's capability in oceans and human health through partnerships with academia, the private sector, and other Federal, State, and local agencies. Toward that end, this funding opportunity is intended to engage the non-federal research community in research across the physical, chemical, biological, medical, public health and social sciences on priority issues for the OHHI. A non-federal partner shall lead the proposal. Participation of federal scientist(s) on the team is allowed but no federal

expenses will be covered. Applicants are encouraged to collaborate with the NOAA Oceans and Human Health Centers of Excellence < <http://www.eol.ucar.edu/projects/ohhi/> >, the National Science Foundation/National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences Centers of Excellence in Oceans and Human Health, NOAA scientists and other federal and non-federal researchers working on OHHI or related issues as described in this announcement.

Applicants will be required to provide a plan for management and submission of data to NOAA from any supported research, to participate in an annual OHHI research meeting, and to provide information for the development of an annual OHHI report required by Congress.

B. Program Priorities

This funding opportunity solicits proposals from non-federal scientists focusing on:

1. The development of early warning systems to forecast threats and predict long-term risks to human health throughout U.S. coastal and Great Lakes waters. For this funding cycle, priority areas under this goal are aimed at the development and evaluation of prototype early warning systems to reduce human health risks, and include research to:

" Develop methods, tools, and technologies to identify, detect, or predict ocean-related public health risks from pathogens and chemical pollutants. Of specific interest, but not limited to, are:

- o development of methods and tools to rapidly identify and determine the source of pathogens (viral, bacterial, and protozoan) of human or animal origin or chemical pollutants in ocean and coastal environments that are a risk to human health;
- o development of models, forecasts, and other approaches which integrate information on coastal ecosystem change, in response natural factors and environmental stressors (such as climate change, land-use, and pollution) and epidemiological data, to predict short-term or long-term public health risks;
- o Identification and validation of appropriate sentinel species (including finfish, shellfish, marine mammals and other marine organisms, except coral) to serve as integrative indicators of ocean health threats to humans and to be incorporated into an early warning system to predict public health risks;
- o Identification of appropriate physical, biological, social and epidemiological data, through research, field study, data collection and/or modeling, applicable to human health to integrate into ocean observing systems in order to improve provide early warning of public health risks.

" Assess the economic and socio-cultural risk of ocean-related health threats from pathogens or chemical pollutants, and the benefits and value of health early warning systems or related information.

Research proposed under this priority area should engage public health and natural resource managers and decision-makers in order to optimize relevance of the proposed research for the development and delivery useful products and services. Links to ocean observing systems and their enabling regional governance structures or public health surveillance systems are strongly encouraged.

2. Investigate and optimize health benefits from the sea. For this funding cycle priority areas under this goal are aimed at research to:

" Improve the healthful characteristics and minimize ocean-related contamination of seafood through either aquaculture techniques or tools to rapidly identify or detect presence or virulence of toxins (e.g., ciguatera, domoic acid), chemical contaminants (including but not limited to pharmaceuticals and personal care products, flame retardants, current-use pesticides, surfactants and stain repellants), or pathogens.

Research proposed under this priority area should engage the appropriate aquaculture and fishery community partners in order to demonstrate the need for the research and the usefulness of research, products, or services delivered.

C. Program Authority

31 USC 3102(d)

D. Cost Principles

N.A.

II. Award Information

A. Funding Availability

Total anticipated funding for all awards is expected to be between \$1,000,000 and \$5,000,000 and is subject to the availability of FY 2008 appropriations for this program. Multiple awards are anticipated from this announcement. The anticipated federal funding per award (min-max) is \$100,000 to \$1,000,000. The anticipated number of awards ranges from 7 to 14, approximately, and will be adjusted based on available funding.

B. Project/Award Period

This is a multiple year funding opportunity. All funds will be FY 2008 funds, but projects can last from one to three years.

C. Type of Funding Instrument

Awards may be grants or cooperative agreements. A cooperative agreement is appropriate when substantial NOAA involvement is anticipated. This means that the recipient can expect substantial agency collaboration, participation, or intervention in project performance, such as involvement with other NOAA scientists or NOAA facilities, or results of research are needed as direct and timely input to the management of NOAA trust or living marine resources. Substantial involvement exists when: responsibility for the management, control, direction, or performance of the project is shared by the assisting agency and the recipient; or the assisting agency has the right to intervene (including interruption or modification) in the conduct or performance of project activities.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible funding applicants are institutions of higher education, non-profit and for-profit organizations, international organizations, and state, local and Indian tribal governments. Federal agencies or institutions and foreign governments may not be the recipient of awards under this announcement or receive any federal funds, but are encouraged to partner with applicants.

If applicants will have partners who would receive grant funds, the lead grantee will be expected to move funds using subcontracts or other appropriate mechanisms to the project partners.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

There is no requirement for cost sharing.

C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility

Permits and Approvals

It is the applicant's responsibility to obtain all necessary Federal, state and local government permits and approvals for the proposed work to be conducted, with special, but not exclusive, attention given to permits associated with: a) the Institutional Review Board (regarding research on human subjects); b) the Marine Mammals Act; c) the Endangered Species Act; and d) the National Environmental Policy Act. Permits for proposed projects can be held by any formally and substantially involved co-investigator, provided that the co-investigator is receiving funds, or is a substantially involved federal partner, associated directly with this announcement and related awards. Only one co-investigator needs to hold a valid permit for operations conducted under the proposal and related awards. Applicants are expected to design and conduct their proposed operations so that they minimize any potential adverse impact on the environment. Documentation of all required permit requests and all existing approvals must be submitted with the proposal. The submitted documentation will not count against any page limitations. Lack of appropriate permits and approvals may result in the proposal being rejected for funding regardless of the peer review ranking.

Applications will be reviewed to confirm that they have sufficient environmental impact documentation for program staff to designate the proposal as Categorically Excluded from further National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis, or as needing an Environmental Assessment in conformance with requirements of NEPA. For those applications needing an Environmental Assessment, and not already having it done, by the proposal due date, affected applicants will be allowed to prepare the assessment, and fax a copy to the Program Officer until 3:00 p.m. ET, June 30, 2008.

Failure to apply for and/or obtain Federal, state, and local permits, approvals, letters of agreement, or failure to provide environmental analysis where necessary (i.e. NEPA environmental assessment) will preclude and further consideration of the proposed project for funding. No waiver will be granted.

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Address to Request Application Package

There is no application package for Letters of Intent.

Application packages for full proposals are available through Grants.gov APPLY. If an applicant does not have Internet access, application packages can be requested from James Lewis Free at 2234 South Hobson Avenue, Charleston, South Carolina,

29405-2413; or contact him at 843-740-1185 or via e-mail < James.L.Free@noaa.gov >.

B. Content and Form of Application

Applicants must follow the LOI guidance and full proposal application requirements stated in this announcement, or LOIs and full proposal applications will not be considered.

1. Letters of Intent: The Letter of Intent (LOI) process is intended to provide potential funding applicants with information regarding the relevance of their project idea to the program objectives in advance of preparing a full proposal. An LOI is not required prior to submitting a full proposal.

The LOI should provide a concise description of the proposed work and its relevance to the OHHI program priorities contained in this announcement. The LOI should include the components listed below. If these components are not included, the funding applicant risks not receiving a programmatic response and not being invited to submit a full proposal application. The LOI should include the following information on a cover page:

- a. Identification of the NOAA Oceans and Human Health Initiative External Grants Program as the target of the LOI
- b. Project title
- c. Names and institutions of all principal investigators (PI), and specification of the Lead PI, the PI_s organization, and contact information for the lead PI
- d. Proposed focus area (as identified in this announcement)

The body of the LOI should be 2 pages or less, double-spaced 12-point font, and should include the following components:

- e. Statement of the Purpose - state the intent, goal, and output of proposed work
- f. Summary of work to be completed, including the methodology, products, data sets needed or generated, and approximate cost
- g. Description of intended deliverable(s) and expected use of the results to meet the goals of the OHHI
- h. Description of the partnerships to be employed in the development and completion of the proposed work.

Each LOI must have a unique project title. LOIs must be sent via e-mail to < OHHI2008LOI@noaa.gov >. Funding applicants submitting a LOI should reference the Funding Opportunity Title (FY 2008 OHHI External Grant-LOI) as the subject line of the e-mail containing the LOI. Applicants submitting more than one LOI must submit separate e-mails containing each LOI. The lead PI identified in the LOI cover page should be from the organization that would receive the grant award. See instructions in Section IV, Part E (Other Submission Requirements) if your organization does not have Internet access and if you must submit your LOI by mail.

Full proposal applications must total no more than 20 pages (double-spaced, 1-inch margins, 12-point font and exclusive of appendices). The 20-page limit does not include the proposal title page, a table of contents if one is included, the project summary referenced below under item two (2), and any appendices. Appendices should be limited to materials that directly support the main body of the proposal (e.g., detailed budget information, support letters, resumes, references, lists of data sources, and maps).

Applicants should paginate their proposal and any appendices. Appendices may be paginated as stand alone documents (individually) or collectively. All funding application packages must contain the following components:

1. Title Page (Proposal Cover Sheet). Include proposal title, complete contact information including signature for the Principal Investigator and Financial Representative, duration of proposed project, funding type (grant or cooperative agreement), and funding request by year and total funding request. Multi-institution proposals must also identify the lead investigator for each institution and the requested funding for each fiscal year for each institution on the title page, but no signatures are required on the title page from the additional institutions. Lead investigator and separate budget information is not requested on the title page for institutions that are proposed to receive funds through a subcontract to the lead institution; however, accompanying budget justification must be submitted for each subcontractor. For further details on budget information, please see Section (g) Budget below.
2. Standard Form 424. At time of proposal submission, all applicants anticipating direct funding shall submit the Standard Form, SF-424, *Application for Federal Assistance*, to indicate the total amount of funding proposed for the whole project period. Multi-institutional proposals must include signed SF-424 forms from all institutions requesting funding.
3. Project Summary. Provide a one to two-page summary of the proposed project. The summary should be prepared to be readable to a broad audience and contain the following sections:
 - a. Proposal Title
 - b. Recipient Institution(s)
 - c. Principal Investigator(s) Contact (name, address, phone, fax, e-mail)
 - d. Brief Project Summary including introduction of the problem, objectives, intended benefits or deliverables, total proposed cost
 - e. Partners
4. Project Description The project description (including relevant results from prior support) should not exceed 20 pages. Page limits are inclusive of figures, and other visual materials, but are exclusive of references, a milestone chart, letters of collaboration from unfunded collaborators, letters of endorsement, and curriculum vitae which may not exceed 4 pages for each principal, co-, or senior investigator. All project descriptions (proposals) must include the following sections:
 - a. Problem identification. Provide sufficient background information for NOAA and non-NOAA reviewers to independently assess the significance of the proposed project. Summarize the problem to be addressed and the status of ongoing efforts to

address the identified needs

b. Goal(s) and Objective(s). Describe the priority area(s) addressed and specific scientific goals and objectives to be achieved. Goals and objectives should be specific for each year of the work plan presented. Project goals and objectives must specifically relate to the OHHI goals and priorities outlined in this announcement. Recipients will be required to submit semi-annual progress reports in which progress against these goals and objectives will be reported.

c. Statement of Work. Describe the work to be conducted, including specific tasks to be accomplished; proposed methods, data sets, modeling or other techniques to be used in the proposed research; the roles of the investigators and other partners including overall project management; and potential obstacles to successful completion of the goals and objectives. The proposal must demonstrate that the investigators have a clear understanding of and access to any data sets to be used, and a data management plan compliant with federal regulations. If the project includes federal partners, the roles and responsibilities of the federal partners must be clearly identified. Also describe the role and responsibility of any public health or natural resource manager or decision maker, or other end-users involved in your project.

d. Benefits. Identify, with a high degree of specificity, any tangible results, products, or services that are likely to result from this proposed research. Also identify the public health, natural resource, or observing community users, or other potential users of the information derived from the work, and the benefits that will be achieved for those users, as well as society as a whole. As appropriate, describe how the information from the project will be delivered to those users, and any special considerations or requirements for ensuring or improving the delivery of information. Explain how this project contributes to the establishment of prototype early warning system for ocean-related public health risks or to enhancing the healthful characteristics of seafood.

e. Milestone Schedule. Display time lines for major tasks, target milestones for important intermediate and final products, and key project outcomes.

f. References cited. Reference information is required. Each reference must include the names of all authors in the same sequence they appear in the publications, the article title, volume number, page numbers, and year of publication. While there is no established page limitation, this section should include bibliographic citations only and should not be used to provide parenthetical information outside of the 20-page proposal descriptions.

g. Project Budget. Provide a budget description that follows the categories and formats in the NOAA grants package (Standard Form 424-A) and a brief narrative justification of the budget. Describe products/services to be obtained and indicate the applicability or necessity of each to the project. Provide separate budgets for each sub grantee or contractor regardless of the dollar value and indicate the basis for the cost estimates.

h. Budget Justification. All applications must include a budget narrative justification to support all proposed budget categories. Any ship time needs must be clearly identified in the proposed budget. The proposer is responsible for requesting ship time through appropriate channels and for meeting all requirements to ensure the availability of requested ship time. Copies of relevant ship time request forms

should be included with the proposal. The budget justification must also provide the cost and description of anticipated travel. Applicants should allocate travel funds for an annual OHHI Investigators meeting

i. Data Management Plan. In conformance with the Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements section 15 CFR 14.36, any data collected in projects supported by OHHI shall be delivered to a National Data Center (NDC), such as the National Oceanographic Data Center (NODC), and the National Climate Data Center (NCDC), or other Data Center in a format to be determined by the institution, the data recipient, and the Program Officer. It is the responsibility of the institution for the delivery of these data. A plan for data management and submission that includes the timeline for delivery is to be detailed by the applicants; the DOC will not provide additional support for delivery beyond the award.

j. Current and pending support. Describe all current and pending federal financial/funding support for all principal and co-investigators, including subsequent funding in the case of continuing grants. Describe the capability of the investigator and collaborators to complete the proposed work in light of present commitments to other projects. Therefore, please discuss the percentage of time investigators and collaborators have devoted to other Federal or non-Federal projects, as compared to the time that will be devoted to the project solicited under this notice.

k. Evaluation of Project. The applicant is required to provide a plan for evaluation of project accomplishments with specific criteria and performance measures. If the project is selected for funding the evaluation plan may be further refined with the Program Manager.

l. Federal, state and local government activities. The proposal should include a list of related Federal, state and local government activities, including other efforts funded through OHHI, that the proposed work would affect and describe the relationship between the proposed project and those plans or activities.

m. List of suggested reviewers. The cover letter may include a list of individuals qualified and suggested to review the proposal. It also may include a list of individuals that applicants would prefer to not review the proposals. Such lists may be considered at the discretion of the Program Manager.

5. Appendices

a. Mandatory Detailed Budget Information, such as a repeat of the information in Form SF-424A along with more details and including budgets of subawards should be included in an appendix. Multi-institution proposals must include an SF-424A for each institution, and multi-investigator proposals using a lead investigator with a contractor/subgrantee approach must submit an SF424A for each contractor/subgrantee. Each contractor or sub grantee should be listed as a separate item. Applicants must itemize and describe the intended use of equipment greater than \$5,000 in value to be purchased under the award. . Applicants should allocate travel funds including for an annual OHHI Investigators meeting. The budget should clearly show where all funds will go and how the funds will be used.

Funds can not go to NOAA or any other Federal Agency or Institution, however, partnership is encouraged. If NOAA or any other Federal Agency or Institution is requested to perform any work as part of the project, please be advised that the work

to be performed must be reflected in the project description. Any contribution of time or resources from NOAA or other Federal Agency or Institution can be listed separately but should not be included in the overall budget or budget request.

b. Resumes. Provide abbreviated resumes of the Principal Investigator for the project and other key personnel critical to the success of the project. Ensure that resumes address qualifications relevant to conducting the proposed work. This information will also be used to assist in identifying potential conflicts or bias in the selection of reviewers. Please limit resumes to a maximum of four pages for each key investigator and include the following:

- (i) A listing of professional and academic credentials and mailing address;
- (ii) A list of up to five publications most closely related to the proposed project and five other significant publications. Additional lists of publications and lectures should not be included;
- (iii) A list of all persons (including their organizational affiliation) in alphabetical order, with whom the investigator has collaborated on a project or publication within the last 48 months, including collaborators on the proposal and persons listed in the publications. If no collaborators exist, this should be so indicated;
- (iv) A list of persons (including their organizational affiliation) with whom the individual has had an association like thesis advisor or postdoctoral scholar sponsor;
- (v) A list of the names and institutions of the individual's own graduate and postgraduate advisors.

c. 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 Web site: < <http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/> > including our NOAA Administrative Order 216-6 for NEPA, < <http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/NAO216--6--TOC.pdf> > and the Council on Environmental Quality implementation regulations, < http://ceq.eh.doe.gov/nepa/regs/ceq/toc_ceq.htm >.

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).

NOAA may require follow-up information after the application process has been completed. 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 of an environmental assessment, if NOAA determines an assessment is required. Applicants will also be required to cooperate with NOAA in identifying and implementing feasible measures to reduce or avoid any identified adverse

environmental impacts of their proposal. The failure to do so shall be grounds for the denial of 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.

Applicants are required to answer the questions indicated in this Announcement of Federal Funding Opportunity. Applicants should answer the NEPA questions to the best of their ability with as much detail as possible. If the applicant does not answer all of the questions indicated in the Announcement of Federal Funding Opportunity the application may be considered incomplete.

Some of the questions may overlap with material provided in other parts of the application. This overlap occurs because the answers to the questionnaire are provided to NOAA staff who do not review the other parts of the application. If appropriate, the applicant may copy the information from other parts of the application and paste it into the answers to the questionnaire. Many questions have a _yes_ or _no_ response. If the response is _no_ the applicant does not need to elaborate on their answer. If the response is _yes_ the question will have a second part asking the applicant to provide more information.

Applicant NEPA questions are as follows:

Question C1. Is the proposed activity going to be conducted in partnership with NOAA or would the proposed activity require NOAA_s direct involvement, activity, or oversight? If yes, describe NOAA_s involvement, activity, or oversight, including the name of the office or program that is involved.

Question C2. Would the proposed activity involve any other federal agency(ies) partnership, direct involvement, activity, or oversight? If yes, provide the name(s) of the agency(ies) and describe its involvement, activity, or oversight.

Question D1. Provide a brief description of the location of the proposed activity.

Question E1. List any federal, state, or local permits, authorizations, or waivers that would be required to complete the proposed activity. Provide the date the permit, authorization, or waiver was obtained or will be obtained. Provide copies of the permit, authorization, or waiver as appropriate. Was a NEPA analysis prepared for the permit, authorization, or waiver? If yes, state the title of the NEPA analysis and provide copies of the NEPA analysis.

Question F1. Is there the potential for the proposed activity to cause changes that would be different from normal ambient conditions (e.g., temperature, light, turbidity, noise, other human activity levels, etc.)? If yes, describe the changes and the circumstances that would cause these changes.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement

Public reporting burden for this collection of NEPA information is estimated to average 3 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other suggestions for reducing this burden to Ms. Shelby Mendez, NOAA Office of Program Planning and Integration, SSMC 3, Room 15718, 1315 East West Highway, Silver Spring, MD, 20910. The information collection does not request any proprietary or confidential information. No confidentiality is provided.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of the law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall any person be subjected to a penalty for failure to comply with, a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act, unless that collection of information displays a currently valid OMB Control Number.

C. Submission Dates and Times

The deadline for receipt of Letters of Intent (LOIs) is 5:00 p.m.. ET on August 15, 2007. For LOIs submitted by e-mail, applicants are required to consider potential Internet delivery delays. Delays of a few hours could occur. LOIs are required to be received by NOAA and because potential server delays could result in LOIs being rejected applicants are encouraged to submit LOIs before the final deadline day. LOIs will not be reviewed or considered if not received by the OHHI program by 5:00 p.m. ET on August 15, 2007.

Full proposals must be received through Grants.gov no later than 5:00 p.m. ET, November 15, 2007. If applicants do not have Internet access and submit through surface mail, full proposals must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. ET, November 15, 2007. For proposals submitted through < <http://www.grants.gov> >, a date and time receipt indication by Grants.gov will be the basis of determining timeliness. Hard copy applications delivered by mail will be date and time stamped when they are received. Applications received after that time will not be reviewed or considered.

D. Intergovernmental Review

Funding applications under the Center 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 (SPCO) 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 are listed in the Office of Management and Budget_s home page at < <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/spoc.html> >.

E. Funding Restrictions

N.A.

F. Other Submission Requirements

LOIs must be sent via e-mail to < OHHI2008LOI@noaa.gov >. Funding applicants submitting a LOI should reference the Funding Opportunity Title (FY 2007 OHHI External Grant-LOI) as the subject line of the e-mail containing the LOI. Applicants submitting more than one LOI must submit separate e-mails containing each LOI. The lead PI identified in the LOI cover page should be from the organization that would receive the grant award

If an applicant does not have Internet access, the applicant must submit through surface mail one original and two copies of the LOI to the Coastal Services Center. No fax copies will be accepted. U.S. Postal Service correspondence should be sent to the attention of James Lewis Free, NOAA Coastal Services Center, 2234 South Hobson Avenue, Charleston, South Carolina, 29405-2413.

Full proposal application packages should be submitted through Grants.gov APPLY. If an applicant does not have Internet access, the applicant must submit through surface mail one set of originals (signed) and two copies of the proposals and related forms to the Coastal Services Center. No e-mail or fax copies will be accepted. U.S. Postal Service correspondence should be sent to the attention of James Lewis Free, NOAA Coastal Services Center, 2234 South Hobson Avenue, Charleston, South Carolina, 29405-2413.

All proposal package material must be submitted through Grants.gov or through surface mail by the submission deadline, including any letters of support.

V. Application Review Information

A. Evaluation Criteria

Evaluation Criteria for LOIs

LOIs will undergo internal programmatic and scientific review. LOIs will be evaluated on how well the proposed project addresses the OHHI priority focus areas for this funding opportunity, whether there are clear goals and objectives, and

whether the scientific approach and partnerships seem sound.

Evaluation Criteria for Full Applications

1. Importance/relevance and applicability of proposal to the program goals. This criterion ascertains whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and/or relevance to NOAA, federal, regional, state, or local activities. (30 percent). Questions relevant to this criterion include: Does the proposed work meet OHHI's goals and priority objectives listed in this announcement for developing a prototype early warning system, and enhancing healthful characteristics of seafood? How will the proposed work contribute to the development of an early warning system and the characterization of coastal conditions which affect human and public health?
2. Technical and scientific merit (30 percent). 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. Questions relevant to this criterion include: Is the approach appropriate for the stated goals and objectives? Are the project goals and objectives achievable within the proposed time-frame?
3. Overall qualifications of the applicants (15 percent). This criterion ascertains whether the funding applicant(s) possesses the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project. Questions relevant to this criterion include: Are the investigators qualified and is the organizational framework appropriate to conduct a project of the nature and scope proposed? Are investigators appropriately connected with other agencies and institutions involved in oceans and human health research or related activities?
4. Project costs (10 percent). This criterion evaluates the budget to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time-frame. Questions relevant to this criterion include: Does the proposal demonstrate that the budget is commensurate with project needs? Is the cost effectiveness of the project optimized through strategic partnerships with collaborating institutions, agencies, or private sector partners?
5. Outreach and education (15 percent). 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. Questions relevant to this criterion include: Does the proposed project demonstrate that the target user community has been appropriately engaged in development of the desired project outcomes? Does the proposal demonstrate that information generated by the project will reach its target audience and have a positive impact? Does the proposal train graduate and postdoctoral students in the interdisciplinary science needed to sustain a career in the oceans and human health arena?

B. Review and Selection Process

An initial administrative screening is conducted to determine compliance with requirements/completeness. A full merit review with an interdisciplinary panel, comprised largely of academia, and targeted mail reviews will be conducted. The

panel will have access to all mail reviews of proposals, and will use the mail reviews, if available, in discussion and evaluation of the entire slate of proposals. All proposals will be evaluated and individually ranked in accordance with the assigned weights of the above evaluation criteria by at least three independent peer reviewers. The independent peer reviewer ratings will be averaged for each application and presented to the Program Officer. These scores will be used to produce a rank order of the proposals. No consensus advice will be given by the independent peer mail review or the review panel. The Selecting Official will award in the rank order unless proposals are justified to be selected out of rank order based upon one or more of the selection factors provided below. The Selecting Official may negotiate the funding level of the proposal. The Selecting Official will make the final recommendation for award to the Grants Officer, who is authorized to obligate the funds and execute the award. In addition, proposals rated by the panel as fundable but that are not funded in the current fiscal period, may be considered for funding in another fiscal period without having to repeat the competitive, review process.

C. Selection Factors

The Selecting Official shall award according to rank order unless the proposal is justified to be selected out of rank order based upon one or more 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
7. 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.

D. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

The start date on proposals should be on August 1, 2008; or the first day of the month of a month after August 2008.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

Applications recommended for funding by the selecting official will be forwarded to the NOAA Grants Management Division (GMD) by the Program Office. The applicant will be notified by the program office by e-mail that their application was recommended for funding. 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 from the Grants Officer either by postal mail or electronically. Unsuccessful applications for all Coastal Services Center programs will be destroyed and not returned to the applicant.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

1. Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements

Administrative and national policy requirements for all Department of Commerce awards are contained in the Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements contained in the Federal Register notice of December 30, 2004 (69 FR 78389). A copy of the notice may be obtained at < <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/search.html> >.

2. Limitation of Liability: In no event will NOAA or the Department of Commerce be responsible for proposal preparation costs if these programs are cancelled because of other agency priorities. Publication of this announcement does not oblige NOAA to award any specific project or to provide special fishing privileges.

C. Reporting

Grant recipients will be required to submit financial and performance (technical) progress reports electronically through the NOAA Grants On-Line System. Instructions for submitting financial and progress reports will be provided by NOAA Grants Management Division.

VII. Agency Contacts

For administrative questions, contact James Lewis Free, NOAA CSC; 2234 South Hobson Avenue, Room B-119, Charleston, South Carolina, 29405-2413; or by phone at 843-740-1185, or by fax 843-740-1290, or via e-mail at < James.L.Free@noaa.gov >.

For technical questions regarding this announcement, contact Paul A. Sandifer, NOAA, National Ocean Service, c/o Hollings Marine Laboratory; 331 Fort Johnson Road, Room A112; Charleston, SC, 29412, or by phone at 843-762-8814, or by fax 843-762-8737, or via e-mail at < Paul.Sandifer@noaa.gov >.

VIII. Other Information

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 from an authorized NOAA grant official, one would do so solely at one's own risk of these costs not being included under the award.

The Coastal Services Center will not release the names of applicants submitting LOIs or proposals unless ordered by a court or requested to do so by an appropriate NOAA official and administrative protocol. Applicants can use a NOAA public search feature to find out information about NOAA awards < <https://grantsonline.rdc.noaa.gov/flows/publicSearch/begin.do;jsessionid=GbZDVT7JqmXqNlm84y2DBn5CpmGR2vJvQKfnX5CLd94YvywZQTZq!-1742093309> > or go through the Freedom of Information Act process to request more information about grant competitions. More information about the NOAA FOI process is on-line at < <http://www.rdc.noaa.gov/~foia/> >.

Successful applicants will be requested to ensure that all progress reports a) clearly state the resulting impact of their project and products in the coastal management community; and b) indicate whether financial reports have been submitted to NOAA's Grants Management Division and are up-to-date. Applicants in their final progress report will be asked to certify that Final financial reports have been submitted to NOAA's Grants Management Division and a final funding draw-down has been made through the Automated Standard Application for Payments (ASAP)._

Please be advised that potential funding applicants must register with Grants.gov before any application materials can be submitted. An organization's one time registration process may take up to three weeks to complete so please allow sufficient time to ensure applications are submitted before the closing date. To use Grants.gov, applicants must have a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and be registered in the Central Contractor Registry (CCR). Allow a minimum of five days to complete the CCR registration. (Note: Your organization's Employer Identification Number (EIN) will be needed on the application form.)

The Grants.gov site contains directions for submitting an application, the application package (forms), and is also where the completed application is submitted. Applicants using Grants.gov must locate the downloadable application package for this solicitation by the Funding Opportunity Number or the CFDA number (11.473). Applicants will be able to download a copy of the application package, complete it off line, and then upload and submit the application via the Grants.gov site. After electronic submission of the application, the person submitting the application will receive within the next 24 to 48 hours two e-mail messages from Grants.gov updating them on the progress of their application. The first e-mail will confirm receipt of the application by the Grants.gov system, and the second will indicate that the application has either been successfully validated by the system prior to transmission to the grantor agency or has been rejected due to errors. After the application has been validated, this same person will receive another e-mail when the application has been downloaded by the federal agency.