

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

National Estuarine Research Reserve System's Collaborative Science Program Federal Funding Opportunity

NOAA Office for Coastal Management
coast.noaa.gov

Technical Award Information

What is the National Estuarine Research Reserve System's Collaborative Science Program?

This comprehensive national program, supported by NOAA's Office for Coastal Management, funds extramural collaborative science projects that address the research and management needs of the reserve system. The research projects funded by the program incorporate user input into their design and implementation, which helps ensure that the outcomes of each project support the needs of stakeholders and the coastal management community.

What is the history of the program?

The Collaborative Science Program has been in existence for 10 years, and this is the third competition for the five-year program. Information on collaborative science projects previously funded by a collaborative science program in the reserve system can be found here:
<https://coast.noaa.gov/nerrs/research/science-collaborative-projects.html>.

How many awards will be made?

NOAA anticipates making one award.

How much funding is available?

Total anticipated funding is approximately \$20,000,000 over five years. The anticipated federal funding per year is approximately \$4,000,000. Funding in fiscal year 2019 and future years is subject to the availability of appropriations.

How much funding can each proposal request?

An applicant may request the full \$20 million.

Is a match required for this program?

No. Cost sharing is not required, and NOAA may not accept voluntary committed cost sharing in this program. There is no matching requirement.

When are proposals due?

Applicants will have approximately 90 days from the publishing date of the federal funding opportunity to submit an application. Applicants are strongly recommended to submit a letter of intent before submitting an application. These letters should be received by the Office for Coastal Management no later than 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on October 10, 2018. Full proposals must be received by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on December 3, 2018. These proposals must be either received and validated by Grants.gov or postmarked and provided to a delivery service on or before the due date.

Are letters of intent required before an application will be accepted?

No. However, the letters of intent process is a critical step to determine if proposed programs are well suited for this specific competition. Submission of a letter of intent is strongly recommended for applicants to this funding announcement.

Who is eligible to apply for this program?

Eligible funding applicants are non-federal institutions of higher education; other nonprofits; state, local, and Indian tribal governments; and commercial organizations.

Can an organization submit more than one proposal?

No. Each organization may submit no more than one application for consideration under this competition.

Are federal agencies and federal employees allowed to receive funds under this announcement?

No. Federal agencies and employees are not allowed to receive funds under this announcement, but they may serve as collaborative project partners. If federal agencies are collaborators, applicants are expected to provide detail on the planned level of federal engagement in the application. Examples might include, but are not limited to partnership services, serving in a review capacity, or participating in priority task teams, working groups, or leadership teams.

Under what authority is NOAA providing these funds?

Statutory authority for this program is provided under Section 310 of the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, as amended, 16 U.S.C. 1456c. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA Number: 11.419, Coastal Zone Management Administration Awards).

Will funding be awarded as a grant or a cooperative agreement?

The funding instrument for these awards will be a cooperative agreement, which means that NOAA will have substantial involvement in the project.

What is NOAA's role in the context of the cooperative agreement?

NOAA may, for example, provide consultation on program focus, priority setting, and evaluation; help with communications with partners to obtain input on program priorities; provide expertise in meeting planning, facilitation, and communications; assist in information analyses; assist with program

management; and leverage other resources to further the program goals. The specific roles will be formalized through negotiations with NOAA as part of the cooperative agreement for the successful proposal.

When are successful applicants expected to begin their project?

The anticipated start date will be October 1, 2019.

Program Objectives

Is this funding opportunity intended to directly support individual research projects or short-term activities focused on specific local coastal and estuarine issues?

No. This funding opportunity is not intended to support individual, short-term projects. It is intended to provide support for the successful recipient to develop and administer a national program that will fund extramural collaborative science projects to address the system-wide research and management needs of the National Estuarine Research Reserve System.

Should the application address the entire five years of the anticipated award period in the proposal?

Yes. The proposal should describe the specific project goals for the five-year collaborative science program and the objectives to be achieved over that period.

Should the application also describe what will be accomplished in each year of the project?

Yes. The application should include a work plan that describes what will be accomplished in each year of the project.

What are the requirements for data management?

The application must clearly address data management requirements for any data generated by the program, and the steps that will be taken to provide access to the data and to archive the data. Funding recipients are expected to submit data and data management plans to the National Estuarine Research Reserve System's Centralized Data Management Office (CDMO; <https://cdmo.baruch.sc.edu/>). After an award has been made, CDMO staff members will work with the successful applicant over the five-year award period to provide public access and permanent archiving of data generated by the program.

Who do I contact if I have questions about addressing the data management requirements in my application?

Questions regarding this guidance can be directed to the responsible NOAA official: Marie Bundy, federal program officer, NOAA Office for Coastal Management, Marie.Bundy@noaa.gov, (240) 533-0820.

Selection Process

How will the successful applicant be selected for funding?

The selection process is expected to be highly competitive. Letters of intent are reviewed by federal and non-federal staff members in the context of the evaluation criteria published in the federal funding opportunity. Feedback on these letters will be provided by October 22, 2018, approximately. Full

applications will be subject to rigorous reviews conducted by subject matter experts around the country and by a peer panel review, using the evaluation criteria published in the federal funding opportunity. NOAA expects to make a single award for this competition.

When will NOAA notify applicants of the competition results?

NOAA aims to award the successful application by August 30, 2019. Within 10 business days of the successful application being awarded, NOAA will notify unsuccessful applicants by email that their applications were not recommended for funding.