

Addressing Economic and Market Needs of the U.S. Aquaculture Industry

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## NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Federal Agency Name(s): Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce

Funding Opportunity Title: Addressing Economic and Market Needs of the U.S. Aquaculture Industry

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: NOAA-OAR-SG-2020-2006331

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 11.417, Sea Grant Support

Dates: A Notice to Submit to this competition (requirements described below) must be received via electronic mail by both the appropriate Sea Grant Program(s) and the National Sea Grant Office ([oar.hq.sg.aquaculture@noaa.gov](mailto:oar.hq.sg.aquaculture@noaa.gov)) by 5:00 pm (local time of lead Sea Grant Program) on February 26, 2020. Contact information for each Program can be found at <https://seagrant.noaa.gov/About>. If you need further assistance in identifying a Program to partner with please contact the National Sea Grant Office at the e-mail address above.

Eligible applicants must submit a Full Proposal Application (requirements described below) by 11:59 pm Eastern Time on April 22, 2020 to [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). Projects should plan to start September 1, 2020, and can run for up to three years.

The following entities are eligible to submit to this opportunity: Sea Grant College Programs, Sea Grant Institutional Programs, and Sea Grant Coherent Area Programs. A Sea Grant Program may submit or participate in more than one proposal.

Other interested entities must submit proposals in partnership with and through a relevant Sea Grant Program.

Funding Opportunity Description: The National Sea Grant College Program (Sea Grant) was enacted by U.S. Congress in 1966 (amended in 2008, Public Law 110-394) to support leveraged Federal and state partnerships that harness the intellectual capacity of the nation's universities and research institutions to solve problems and generate opportunities in coastal communities.

Subject to the availability of funding, Sea Grant anticipates approximately \$5,000,000 will be available for research projects and programs that will significantly advance the understanding of the economics of aquaculture businesses in the U.S. and address gaps regarding important

market information. The overall goal is to advance business management towards development of a sustainable marine and Great Lakes aquaculture industry in the U.S. Successful proposals will address geographic and/or topical needs and will fully integrate research, extension, and education. Proposals that will support broad, non-proprietary research to address critical gaps with respect to aquaculture economics and market needs; make that information available to U.S. aquaculture businesses and management agencies; and build the capacity of Sea Grant and its partners, including Sea Grant aquaculture extension personnel and industry stakeholders, are preferred. These investments are consistent with Sea Grant's focus area of Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture (SFA) and the Sea Grant Network's 10-year Aquaculture Vision, both which support NOAA and Department of Commerce aquaculture goals.

All proposals to this competition must be submitted by a Sea Grant program. Other interested entities must submit proposals in partnership with and through a relevant Sea Grant Program. A complete list of Sea Grant programs with email contacts can be found at <https://seagrants.noaa.gov/>

Proposals must also include funding (Federal or match) for Sea Grant extension personnel as collaborators. Industry stakeholder participation/involvement in projects is strongly encouraged.

This document sets out requirements for submitting to NOAA-OAR-SG-2020-2006331. Additional guidance and tips on how best to prepare an application are provided in the Sea Grant General Application Guide available at (<https://seagrants.noaa.gov/Portals/1/Guidance/SeaGrantGeneralApplicationGuide.pdf>). Potential applicants are encouraged to check Sea Grant's national website at - <https://seagrants.noaa.gov/Funding> - for information about a webinar and FAQs related to this announcement.

## FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

## I. Funding Opportunity Description

## A. Program Objective

NOAA provides funding to Sea Grant institutions to increase the understanding, assessment, development, management, utilization, and conservation of the nation's ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes resources. NOAA provides assistance to promote a strong educational base, responsive research and training activities, broad and prompt dissemination of knowledge and techniques, and multidisciplinary approaches to environmental problems in accordance with 33 USC 1121(b).

The U.S. has an opportunity to sustainably increase aquaculture production in marine systems (ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes) while increasing the economic resilience of communities across the country. Farming of finfish, shellfish, sea vegetables/algae, and other aquaculture provides great potential in the U.S. for increasing the supply of ocean and Great Lakes-sourced products while supporting and growing rural and coastal communities and economies.

This competition focuses on addressing geographic (e.g., region of the country, state vs. Federal waters, tropical, Great Lakes, cold-water) and/or topical (e.g., shellfish, sea vegetables/algae, finfish, open-ocean, recirculating systems) research needs with respect to aquaculture economics and markets. The overall goal is to use an integrated approach to advance business management towards development of a sustainable marine and Great Lakes aquaculture industry in the U.S. Successful proposals will fully integrate research, extension, and education to support broad, non-proprietary research for building and/or enhancing U.S. aquaculture.

Strong applications will holistically integrate multiple sources of knowledge toward developing solutions to overcome aquaculture economic and market barriers. Projects should consider building upon existing economic and market research and tools already prepared for or used in aquaculture, fisheries (e.g., IMPLAN input-output model), and/or agriculture, with strong justification and evidence of their applicability to advancing management of aquaculture businesses in the U.S.

Principal Investigators of proposals selected for funding will be required to participate in an annual National Sea Grant Aquaculture Symposium to share results of work conducted, discuss challenges, and to plan next steps.

## B. Program Priorities

This competition will fund proposals that: 1) cultivate additional expertise in aquaculture economics and markets; 2) address geographic and/or topical research needs with respect to aquaculture economics and markets; and 3) advance management of aquaculture businesses towards the development of a sustainable marine and Great Lakes aquaculture industry in the U.S. Applicants can either focus on individual research projects at one level of funding or propose multi-partner efforts at an increased level of funding (defined in section II. A. below). Multi-partner projects should involve diverse partnerships and stakeholders, including across industry sectors and/or among Sea Grant Programs.

Successful applications will:

- Demonstrate a clear understanding of economic and market issues affecting U.S. aquaculture industry stakeholders.
- Increase the knowledge base of various aspects of aquaculture economics and markets with the goal of advancing management of existing and potential aquaculture businesses.
- Include funding (Federal or Match) for Sea Grant extension personnel and relevant activities (e.g., education, outreach, transfer of technology and results) to build on past research and inform stakeholders.
- Involve industry stakeholder participation.

Areas of investigation may include, but are not limited to:

- Development of comprehensive economic or business planning models for different species and culture systems, including per-unit costs of production and projected revenue, to provide information to potential and existing aquaculture growers, investors, and resource managers.
- Determining the economic impact/contribution of key U.S. aquaculture species, including economic multipliers (e.g., via the use of budgets in an Analysis-by-Parts approach to IMPLAN modeling).
- Development of methods to better collect and estimate annual production data for U.S. aquaculture species to complement USDA and NOAA data collection efforts.

- Evaluating the economic impact of diseases, storms, and other disruptive events.
- Development of economic risk reduction tools (e.g., innovative lending, crop insurance programs, etc.).
- Conducting economic analyses to inform lending entities and other types of investors.
- Conducting economic analyses to inform resource managers and regulators.
- Evaluating and assessing the economic and marketing viability of various types of business structures (e.g. grower cooperatives, LLCs, corporate structures).
- Determination of market ceiling and capacity for various products (e.g., farmed oysters).
- Evaluating the potential for market development and expansion (e.g., inland markets, non-traditional markets) of U.S. aquaculture products in concert with wild fishery based products (i.e., rebuilding local and regional markets for U.S. seafood products).
- Investigating the potential of utilizing existing coastal and Great Lakes infrastructure (e.g. processing houses, storage facilities, etc.) and/or seafood distribution channels as a means to enhance economic and market opportunities for aquaculture products.
- Evaluation of market expansion through value-added products.
- Development of readily accessible market information related to seafood prices and consumer preferences in various geographic markets and for various types of buyers (i.e., distributors/wholesalers, restaurants, supermarkets).

### C. Program Authority

Statutory authority for this program is provided under the National Sea Grant College Program Act of 1966, as amended (33 USC 1121 et seq.).

## II. Award Information

### A. Funding Availability

Subject to the availability of funding, this announcement describes how eligible

applicants should apply for this funding opportunity entitled “Addressing Economic and Market Needs of the U.S. Aquaculture Industry - 2020.” Sea Grant anticipates having approximately \$5,000,000 to fund approximately 8-14 projects for up to three years in the following categories:

--Up to \$250,000 in Federal funds can be requested for individual research projects that address one or more topics relevant to program priorities.

--Up to \$1,000,000 in Federal funds can be requested for projects proposing geographic and/or topical multi-partner efforts addressing the program priorities.

There is no guarantee that funds will be available to make awards, or that any application will be selected for funding. If an applicant incurs any costs prior to receiving an award agreement signed by an authorized NOAA official, it does so at its own risk of not being selected or of these costs not being included in a subsequent award. NOAA and DOC will not be responsible for any incurred project costs if this program fails to receive full funding.

#### B. Project/Award Period

The anticipated start date is September 1, 2020, with projects to be completed no later than August 31, 2023.

#### C. Type of Funding Instrument

The funding instrument is a cooperative agreement to an eligible institution. A cooperative agreement is used when substantial involvement of the Federal government during the performance of the proposed work is anticipated. The nature of the substantial involvement includes strategic engagement with the National Sea Grant Aquaculture Team, support from National Sea Grant Communication efforts, and participation in National Sea Grant Aquaculture Symposia.

### III. Eligibility Information

#### A. Eligible Applicants

The following entities are eligible to submit to this opportunity: Sea Grant College Programs, Sea Grant Institutional Programs, and Sea Grant Coherent Area Programs. For the remainder of this document, these entities are collectively referred to as “Sea Grant Programs.” A Sea Grant Program may submit or participate in more than one proposal.

Other interested entities must submit proposals in partnership with and through a relevant

Sea Grant Program. Contact information for Sea Grant Programs can be found at: <https://seagrant.noaa.gov/About>. If you need further assistance in identifying a Program to partner with please contact the National Sea Grant Office ([oar.hq.sg.aquaculture@noaa.gov](mailto:oar.hq.sg.aquaculture@noaa.gov)).

Federal agencies and their personnel are not permitted to receive federal funding under this competition; however, federal scientists and other employees can serve as uncompensated partners or co-Principal Investigators on applications. Federal labs and offices can also make available specialized expertise, facilities, or equipment to applicants but cannot be compensated under this competition for their use, nor can the value of such assets be used as match. See FAQs found at, <https://seagrant.noaa.gov/Funding>.

Sea Grant champions diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) by recruiting, retaining, and preparing a diverse workforce, and proactively engaging and serving the diverse populations of coastal communities. Sea Grant is committed to building inclusive research, extension, communication, and education programs that serve people with unique backgrounds, circumstances, needs, perspectives, and ways of thinking. We encourage applicants of all ages, races, ethnicities, national origins, gender identities, sexual orientations, disabilities, cultures, religions, citizenship types, marital statuses, education levels, job classifications, veteran status types, and income, and socioeconomic status types to work with one or more Sea Grant Programs for this opportunity.

#### B. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

Non-Federal matching funds equal to at least 50 percent of the federal funding request must be provided unless a waiver justified by statute is granted, such as the waiver for insular areas granted by the Department of Commerce pursuant to 48 U.S.C. 1469a. The cumulative match at the end of each year of the grant must not fall below 50 percent of the cumulative Federal request up to that point. In-kind contributions directly supporting this application may count towards this matching requirement. See the Sea Grant General Application Guide (<https://seagrant.noaa.gov/Portals/1/Guidance/SeaGrantGeneralApplicationGuide.pdf>) for more information.

#### C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility

None.

### IV. Application and Submission Information

#### A. Address to Request Application Package

Application packages are available online and can be downloaded from [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) under opportunity NOAA-OAR-SG-2020-2006331. If an eligible applicant does not have access to the internet, please contact the Agency Contacts listed in Section VII for submission instructions.

#### B. Content and Form of Application

This section provides an overview of these required proposal elements (and where to locate them). Applications must adhere to the provisions under "Required Elements" below. Failure to include these elements will result in rejection of the application without review.

Additional guidance on Sea Grant-specific form completion can be found here: Sea Grant General Application Guide (<https://seagrant.noaa.gov/Portals/1/Guidance/SeaGrantGeneralApplicationGuide.pdf>).

The submitting Sea Grant program must redact all Personally Identifiable Information (PII) in the application materials prior to final submission to Grants.gov. PII that must be redacted from the application includes but is not limited to social security number, date of birth, student identification number (from transcripts) or other information which if lost, compromised, or disclosed without authorization, could result in harm, embarrassment, inconvenience, or unfairness to an individual.

#### Required Elements (Notice to Submit):

A Notice to Submit to this competition must be received via electronic mail by both the appropriate Sea Grant Program(s) and the National Sea Grant Office ([oar.hq.sg.aquaculture@noaa.gov](mailto:oar.hq.sg.aquaculture@noaa.gov)) by 5:00 pm (local time of lead Sea Grant Program) on February 26, 2020. Contact information for each Program can be found at <https://seagrant.noaa.gov/About>. If you need further assistance in identifying a Program to partner with please contact the National Sea Grant Office at the e-mail address above.

The Notice to Submit must include the following:

- Tentative Project Title
- Tentative Objectives
- Type of project (individual research project or multi-partner effort)
- Proposed Sea Grant Program(s) involved
- Other existing or potential project partners
- Project point of contact

Required Elements (Full Proposal Application):

1) Project Narrative

The Application must include the following documents in the following format:

a. Project Proposal Narrative

The proposal project narrative should clearly lay out the geographic and/or topical nature of the proposal, how it responds to the priorities of the competition, and how it will lay the foundation for future work. The proposal should also identify appropriate end user groups and demonstrate their involvement throughout the project. Applicants should budget travel to attend and participate in an annual National Sea Grant Aquaculture Symposium. Dates and location for the Symposium will be announced annually by the National Sea Grant Office.

The project proposal narrative must be not more than 15 pages, inclusive of footnotes, tables, figures, and appendices, but excluding references/literature citations, short CVs, and letters of support.

The Project Proposal Narrative must include the following elements:

- 1) Project Summary (no more than 250 words summarizing elements 2, 3, 5, and 6 below)
- 2) Introduction/background/justification
- 3) Project objectives
- 4) General work plan and milestones
- 5) How the project will advance business management towards development of a sustainable marine and Great Lakes aquaculture industry in the U.S.
- 6) Anticipated outcomes
- 7) Coordination with Sea Grant program elements (research, extension, and education)
- 8) References and literature citations (does not count against the page limit)
- 9) Short CVs (no longer than two pages) for each principal and co-principal investigator

(does not count against the page limit)

10) Letters of support confirming partnerships as listed in the proposal (does not count against the page limit)

11) Other letters of support (as relevant; if included, they do not count against the page limit)

b. Abbreviated Environmental Compliance Questionnaire (OMB Control No. 0648-0538)

A separate Abbreviated Environmental Compliance questionnaire must be filled out and submitted for each project. The Questionnaire can be found here:

<https://seagrant.noaa.gov/insideseagrant/Implementation>.

Guidance on how to complete the questionnaire is located in the Sea Grant General Application Guidance Document

(<https://seagrant.noaa.gov/Portals/1/Guidance/SeaGrantGeneralApplicationGuide.pdf>).

**APPLICANTS MUST ENSURE THAT THE QUESTIONNAIRE IS COMPLETED IN FULL AND INCLUDES DETAILED INFORMATION REGARDING PROJECT LOCATION AND METHODOLOGY, AS WELL AS COPIES OF ALL PERMITS REQUIRED FOR PROJECT ACTIVITIES.**

c. Data Management Plan

See Section VI. B. (8)

All applications should include a Data Management Plan. If a proposal responding to this competition will not generate environmental data, the data management plan should say, “This project will not generate environmental data, therefore a data management plan is not required.”

For reference and NOAA’s definition of ‘environmental data’ please refer to the Data Sharing Directive:

[https://nosc.noaa.gov/EDMC/documents/Data\\_Sharing\\_Directive\\_v3.0.pdf](https://nosc.noaa.gov/EDMC/documents/Data_Sharing_Directive_v3.0.pdf)

2. Budget Narrative

Applicants should budget travel to attend and participate in an annual National Sea Grant

Aquaculture Symposia. Dates and location for Symposia will be announced annually by the National Sea Grant Office.

Each individual project included within the application must also include the following budget documents (Sea Grant 90-4 Forms and Budget Justification Narratives) in the format below:

a. Sea Grant 90-4 Form (OMB Control No. 0648-0362)

A required form used to provide budget breakdowns and budget justifications by year and object class for the overall proposal and each project in this application. The template can be found here - <https://seagrants.noaa.gov/insideseagrants/Implementation> - and guidance on filling out the form is located in the Sea Grant General Application Guidance Document.

The following are required:

--Completed Sea Grant 90-4 Forms describing the yearly and total budgets of the proposal overall (i.e., Year 1, Year 2, Year 3, and Years 1-3).

--A completed Sea Grant 90-4 Form covering the full duration of each project in the application.

--A completed Sea Grant 90-4 Form covering each year of the project in the application.

--Completed Sea Grant 90-4 Forms for the yearly and total budget of any sub-awards associated with each project in the application (i.e., Year 1, Year 2, Year 3, and Years 1-3).

b. Budget Justification

A budget justification narrative for each year of each project in the application that explains budget items in sufficient detail to enable review of the appropriateness of the funding requested. This document should be attached as a PDF to each Sea Grant 90-4 Form, as appropriate.

Guidance on completing the justifications is located in the Sea Grant General Application Guidance Document (<https://seagrants.noaa.gov/Portals/1/Guidance/SeaGrantGeneralApplicationGuide.pdf>).

### 3. Overall Application

In addition to the forms required above, standard Federal Forms and Assurances are required for the overall application and can be found with the Application package on Grants.gov or on the Sea Grant website (links found below). These include:

a. SF-424 Form (Grants.gov, OMB Control No. 4040-0004)

This form, titled “Application for Federal Assistance,” must identify the entire funding period, as well as the Federal funding amount being requested by the applicant and the non-Federal matching fund amount. The form must be completed with the institution’s accurate EIN and DUNS and Point of Contact, and signed by the institution’s authorized representative or designee.

b. SF-424A Form (Grants.gov, OMB Control No. 4040-0006)

This form, titled “Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs,” must describe the entire funding period in Federal and non-Federal dollars, for the entire application. Fill out Section B of this SF-424A form to show the overall budget breakdown by object class by year. Federal and match years should each have their own column. If there is insufficient space, an additional SF-424A Form, Extra Section B should be used (see below).

c. Additional SF-424A Form, Extra Section B

(<https://seagrant.noaa.gov/insideseagrant/Implementation>, OMB Control No. 4060-0006)

The SF-424A Form described above only includes space to report the applicant’s yearly Federal and non-Federal dollars over two years. If the application covers more than two years of Federal and non-Federal dollars, please complete the Additional SF-424A, Extra Section B to report the yearly non-Federal matching fund budget of the grant. Guidance on filling out the form is located in the Sea Grant General Application Guidance Document (<https://seagrant.noaa.gov/Portals/1/Guidance/SeaGrantGeneralApplicationGuide.pdf>).

d. SF-424B Assurances (Grants.gov, OMB Control No. 4040-0007)

The form, titled “Assurances – Non-Construction Programs,” must be completed and signed by the institution's authorized representative or designee.

e. CD-511 (Grants.gov, US Department of Commerce)

The form, titled “Certification Regarding Lobbying,” must be completed and signed by the institution’s authorized representative or designee. In some instances, the SF-LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities form may also be required. See the instructions on the CD-511 for further information.

f. SF-LLL (Grants.gov, OMB Control No. 0348-0046)

The form, titled "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," must be completed and signed by the institution's authorized representative or designee, if appropriate.

#### C. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)

To enable the use of a universal identifier and to enhance the quality of information available to the public as required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act, 31 U.S.C. 6101 note, to the extent applicable, any proposal awarded in response to this announcement will be required to use the System for Award Management (SAM), which may be accessed online at <https://www.sam.gov/SAM/>. Applicants are also required to use the Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System, as identified in OMB guidance published at 2 CFR Parts 25, which may be accessed at [https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr25\\_main\\_02.tpl](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr25_main_02.tpl).

#### D. Submission Dates and Times

Notices to Submit to this competition must be received via electronic mail by both the appropriate Sea Grant Program(s) and the National Sea Grant Office ([oar.hq.sg.aquaculture@noaa.gov](mailto:oar.hq.sg.aquaculture@noaa.gov)) by 5:00 pm (local time of lead Sea Grant Program) on February 26, 2020. Contact information for each Program can be found at: <https://seagrants.noaa.gov/About>. If you need further assistance in identifying a Program to partner with please contact the National Sea Grant Office at the e-mail address above.

Full Proposal Applications must be submitted to Grants.gov by 11:59 pm Eastern Time on April 22, 2020. (Note that National Sea Grant Office staff will only be available to answer questions until 5:00 p.m. EDT.). Please note: validation or rejection of an application by Grants.gov may take up to two business days after submission.

#### E. Intergovernmental Review

Applications under Sea Grant are not subject to Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs."

#### F. Funding Restrictions

The Sea Grant Act at 33 USC 1124(d)(2) states:

"No payment under any grant or contract under this section may be applied to:

A) the purchase or rental of any land; or

B) the purchase, rental, construction, preservation, or repair of any building, dock, or vessel; except that payment under any such grant or contract may be applied to the short-term rental of buildings or facilities for meetings which are in direct support of any Sea Grant Program or project and may, if approved by the Secretary, be applied to the purchase, rental, construction, preservation, or repair of non-self-propelled habitats, buoys, platforms, and other similar devices or structures, or to the rental of any research vessel which is used in direct support of activities under any Sea Grant Program or project.”

#### G. Other Submission Requirements

None.

Notices to Submit to this competition must be received via electronic mail by the appropriate Sea Grant Program(s) and the National Sea Grant Office ([oar.hq.sg.aquaculture@noaa.gov](mailto:oar.hq.sg.aquaculture@noaa.gov)).

Full Proposal Applications must be submitted through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). If an eligible applicant does not have access to the internet, please contact the Agency Contacts listed in Section VII for submission instructions.

### V. Application Review Information

#### A. Evaluation Criteria

1) Importance/relevance and applicability of proposed projects to the program priorities (30 points). This criterion ascertains whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and/or relevance to NOAA, Federal, regional, state, or local activities.

2) 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, objectives, and data management considerations.

3) Overall qualifications of applicants (10 points). This criterion ascertains whether the applicant possesses the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project.

4) Project costs (5 points). This criterion evaluates the budget to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time frame.

5) Outreach and Education (25 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.

The above criteria should lead to the selection of proposals that: 1) cultivate additional expertise in aquaculture economics and markets; 2) address geographic and/or topical research needs with respect to aquaculture economics and markets; and 3) advance management of aquaculture businesses towards the development of a sustainable marine and Great Lakes aquaculture industry in the U.S.

#### B. Review and Selection Process

An initial administrative review is conducted to determine compliance with requirements and completeness of the Application. Applications that do not comply with the requirements for this competition, including by exceeding page limits, missing forms, or coming from ineligible applicants, will be rejected without further review.

Applications that pass the administrative review will be reviewed by a technical panel drawn from experts in a range of disciplines that are relevant to the applications. Each proposal will receive at least three written reviews from the panelists assessing its merits with regard to the evaluation criteria.

The proposals, supplemented with information from the Abbreviated Environmental Compliance Questionnaire, will also be reviewed by the Federal Program Officer to assess the environmental compliance of the proposed actions. The Federal Program Officer, NEPA Staff Lead, or Grants Specialist may contact the applicant to discuss questions about the environmental effects, merit, or administrative correctness of the application; and may delay approval of the application, or impose conditions on the award preventing funding or execution of certain activities, until all questions are satisfactorily answered.

#### C. Selection Factors

The Selecting Official shall award in the rank order unless the proposal is justified to be selected out of rank order based on one or more of the following factors:

--Availability of funding.

--Balance/distribution of funds:

----geographically

----by type of institution

----by type of partners

----by research priority

----by project types

--Duplication of other projects funded or considered for funding by NOAA/Federal agencies.

--Program priorities and policy factors.

--Applicant's prior award performance.

--Partnerships with/Participation of targeted groups.

--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

Subject to the availability of funds, awards are expected to start September 1, 2020.

### VI. Award Administration Information

#### A. Award Notices

Successful applicants will receive notification when the Application has been recommended for funding to the NOAA Grants Management Division. This notification is not an authorization to begin performance of the project. Official notification of funding, signed by the NOAA Grants Officer, is the authorizing document that allows the project to begin. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified that their proposal was not selected.

#### B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

1) Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements For Grants And Cooperative Agreements - The Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements contained in the Federal Register notice of December 30, 2014 (79 FR 78390) are applicable to this solicitation and may be accessed online at <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2014-12-30/pdf/2014-30297.pdf>.

2) Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements - Through 2 C.F.R. § 1327.101, the Department of Commerce adopted Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards

at 2 C.F.R. Part 200, which apply to awards in this program. Refer to <http://go.usa.gov/SBYh> and <http://go.usa.gov/SBg4>.

3) Department of Commerce Terms and Conditions - Successful applicants who accept a NOAA award under this solicitation will be bound by Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions. This document will be provided in the award package in NOAA's Grants Online system at <https://grantsonline.rdc.noaa.gov/flows/home/Login/LoginController.jspf> and is also available at [http://www.ago.noaa.gov/grants/external\\_links.html](http://www.ago.noaa.gov/grants/external_links.html), as well as [http://www.osec.doc.gov/oam/grants\\_management/policy/documents/Department%20of%20Commerce%20Standard%20Terms%20&%20Conditions%2031%20March%202017.pdf](http://www.osec.doc.gov/oam/grants_management/policy/documents/Department%20of%20Commerce%20Standard%20Terms%20&%20Conditions%2031%20March%202017.pdf).

4) Limitation of Liability - Funding for programs listed in this notice is contingent upon the availability of appropriations. Applicants are hereby given notice that funds may not have been appropriated yet for the programs listed in this notice. In no event will NOAA or the Department of Commerce be responsible for proposal preparation costs. Publication of this announcement does not oblige NOAA to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds.

5) Unpaid or Delinquent Tax Liability - In accordance with Section 523 of Division B and Sections 744 and 745 of Division E of the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015 (Pub. L. 113-235) or a future public law, an authorized representative of the selected applicant(s) will be required to provide certain pre-award representations regarding Federal felony and Federal criminal tax convictions, unpaid Federal tax assessments, and delinquent Federal tax returns. The form must be completed and submitted with grant applications for: (a) all for-profit and non-profit organization applicants (Part I, and if required, Part II); and (b) all non-Federal entity applicants anticipating receipt of \$5 million or more in the current Federal Fiscal Year appropriated funding (Part II only). The form can be found at <http://www.ago.noaa.gov/grants/forms.html>.

6) 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 website: <http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/>, including our NOAA Administrative Order 216-6 for NEPA, [http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/NAO216\\_6.pdf](http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/NAO216_6.pdf), and the Council on Environmental Quality implementation regulations, [http://energy.gov/sites/prod/files/NEPA-40CFR1500\\_1508.pdf](http://energy.gov/sites/prod/files/NEPA-40CFR1500_1508.pdf).

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). 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 an environmental assessment, if NOAA determines an assessment is required. Applicants will also be required to cooperate with NOAA in identifying feasible measures to reduce or avoid any identified adverse environmental impacts of their proposal. Failure to do so shall be grounds for 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.

7) Review of Risk - After Applications are proposed for funding by the Selecting Official, the Grants Office will perform administrative reviews, including an assessment of risk posed by the applicant under 2 C.F.R. 200.205. These may include assessments of the financial stability of an applicant and the quality of the applicant's management systems, history of performance, and the applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on non-Federal entities. Special conditions that address any risks determined to exist may be applied. Applicants may submit comments to the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS) about any information included in the system about their organization for consideration by the awarding agency.

8) Data Sharing Plan -

--A. Environmental data and information collected or created under NOAA grants or cooperative agreements must be made discoverable by and accessible to the general public, in a timely fashion (typically within two years), free of charge or at no more than the cost of reproduction, unless an exemption is granted by the NOAA Program. Data should be available in at least one machine-readable format, preferably a widely-used or open-standard format, and should also be accompanied by machine- readable documentation (metadata), preferably based on widely used or international standards.

--B. Proposals submitted in response to this Announcement must include a Data Management Plan of up to two pages describing how these requirements will be satisfied. The Data Management Plan should be aligned with the Data Management Guidance provided by NOAA in the Announcement. The contents of the Data Management Plan (or

absence thereof), and past performance regarding such plans, will be considered as part of proposal review. A typical plan should include descriptions of the types of environmental data and information expected to be created during the course of the project; the tentative date by which data will be shared; the standards to be used for data/metadata format and content; methods for providing data access; approximate total volume of data to be collected; and prior experience in making such data accessible. The costs of data preparation, accessibility, or archiving may be included in the proposal budget unless otherwise stated in the Guidance. Accepted submission of data to the NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI) is one way to satisfy data sharing requirements; however, NCEI is not obligated to accept all submissions and may charge a fee, particularly for large or unusual datasets.

--C. NOAA may, at its own discretion, make publicly visible the Data Management Plan from funded proposals, or use information from the Data Management Plan to produce a formal metadata record and include that metadata in a Catalog to indicate the pending availability of new data.

--D. Proposal submitters are hereby advised that the final pre-publication manuscripts of scholarly articles produced entirely or primarily with NOAA funding will be required to be submitted to NOAA Institutional Repository after acceptance, and no later than upon publication. Such manuscripts shall be made publicly available by NOAA one year after publication by the journal.

9) Indirect Cost Rate - If an applicant has not previously established an indirect cost rate with a Federal agency they may choose to negotiate a rate with the Department of Commerce or use the de minimis indirect cost rate of 10% of Modified Total Direct Cost (MTDC) (as allowable under 2 C.F.R. §200.414). The negotiation and approval of a rate is subject to the procedures required by NOAA and the Department of Commerce Standard Terms and Conditions. Do not include participant support costs when determining the indirect cost base. Additionally, applicants should be aware that most indirect cost rate agreements require that participant support costs be excluded from the Modified Total Direct Cost base when calculating indirect costs. Applicants should reference their official agreements. The NOAA contact for indirect or facilities and administrative costs is: Lamar Revis, Grants Officer, NOAA Grants Management Division, 1325 East West Highway, 9th Floor, Silver Spring, MD 20910, or [lamar.revis@noaa.gov](mailto:lamar.revis@noaa.gov).

10) Minority Serving Institutions - The Department of Commerce National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (DOC NOAA) is strongly committed to increasing the participation of Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs), i.e., Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-serving institutions, Tribal colleges and universities, Alaskan Native and Native Hawaiian institutions, and institutions that work in underserved communities.

11) Freedom Of Information Act (FOIA) - In the event that an Application contains information or data that you do not want disclosed prior to award for purposes other than the evaluation of the Application, mark each page containing such information or data with the words "Privileged, Confidential, Commercial, or Financial Information - Limited Use" at the top of the page to assist NOAA in making disclosure determinations. DOC regulations implementing the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C 552, are found at 15 C.F.R. Part 4, which sets forth rules for DOC to make requested materials, information, and records publicly available under FOIA. The contents of funded Applications may be subject to requests for release under the FOIA. Based on the information provided by the applicant, the confidentiality of the content of funded Applications will be maintained to the maximum extent permitted by law.

12) NOAA Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Prevention and Response Policy - If NOAA-operated, leased, or owned facilities are involved in any awards funded under this announcement, such awards are subject to the NOAA Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Prevention and Response Policy Applicable to Financial Assistance Awards Involving NOAA-Operated Facilities (May 2018) found at:  
[http://www.ago.noaa.gov/grants/facilities\\_assault\\_policy.html](http://www.ago.noaa.gov/grants/facilities_assault_policy.html).

### C. Reporting

The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (31 U.S.C. 6101 note) includes a requirement for awardees of applicable Federal grants to report information about first-tier subawards and executive compensation under Federal assistance awards. All awardees of applicable grants and cooperative agreements are required to report to the Federal Sub-award Reporting System (FSRS) available at <https://www.fsrs.gov/> on all sub-awards over \$25,000. Refer to 2 CFR Parts 170.

## VII. Agency Contacts

For questions about this competition, please contact Chuck Weirich or Mark Rath, National Sea Grant Office's aquaculture managers ([oar.hq.sg.aquaculture@noaa.gov](mailto:oar.hq.sg.aquaculture@noaa.gov)).

The mailing address is:

NOAA Sea Grant  
1315 East-West Highway SSMC3, R/SG Silver Spring, MD 20910  
(301) 734-1115 or (301) 734-1181

## VIII. Other Information

Potential applicants are encouraged to check Sea Grant's national website at - <https://seagrants.noaa.gov/Funding> - for information about a webinar and FAQs related to this announcement.

Recipients are required to use the National Sea Grant Planning Implementation and Evaluation Reporting (PIER) project database to communicate with the National Sea Grant Office on activities relating to this award. This includes tracking progress and impacts, in addition to performance metrics.

Once the applicants have been selected, Programs will need to provide the information requested in the Sea Grant 90-2. Once the project is approved and funded, that information will be publicly available and searchable on the National Sea Grant College Program public website (<http://seagrants.noaa.gov>).

The grant Application and final report of all funded grants are public documents, except for privileged information or material that is personal, proprietary or otherwise exempt from disclosure under law. Appropriate labeling in the application will aid identification of what may be specifically exempt.

The applicant acknowledges and understands that information and data contained in applications for financial assistance, as well as information and data contained in financial, performance and other reports submitted by applicants, may be used by the Department of Commerce in conducting reviews and evaluations of its financial assistance programs. For this purpose, applicant information and data may be accessed, reviewed and evaluated by Department of Commerce employees, other Federal employees, and also by Federal agents and contractors, and/or by non-Federal personnel, all of whom enter into appropriate conflict of interest and confidentiality agreements covering the use of such information. As may be provided in the terms and conditions of a specific financial assistance award, applicants are expected to support program reviews and evaluations by submitting required financial and performance information and data in an accurate and timely manner, and by cooperating with Department of Commerce and external program evaluators. In accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.303(e), applicants are reminded that they must take reasonable measures to safeguard protected personally identifiable information and other confidential or sensitive personal or business information created or obtained in connection with a Department of Commerce financial assistance award.

In addition, Department of Commerce regulations implementing the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. Sec. 552, are found at 15 C.F.R. Part 4, Public Information. These regulations set forth rules for the Department regarding making requested materials, information, and records publicly available under the FOIA. Applications submitted in response to this Notice of Funding Opportunity may be subject to requests for release under the Act. In the event that an application contains information or data that the applicant deems to be confidential commercial information that should be exempt from disclosure under FOIA, that information should be identified, bracketed, and marked as Privileged, Confidential, Commercial or Financial Information. In accordance with 15 CFR § 4.9, the Department of Commerce will protect from disclosure confidential business information contained in financial assistance applications and other documentation provided by applicants to the extent permitted by law.

There is no guarantee that funds will be available to make awards for this Federal funding opportunity or that any proposal will be selected for funding. If an applicant incurs any costs prior to receiving an award agreement signed by an authorized NOAA official, they do so at their own risk of these costs not being included in a subsequent award. NOAA or the Department of Commerce are not responsible for any direct costs of proposal preparation. Recipients and sub-recipients are subject to all Federal laws and agency policies, regulations, and procedures applicable to Federal financial assistance awards.