



# Special Projects Competition

## Disaster Preparedness for Coastal Communities

### SPECIAL PROJECTS "H" ANNOUNCEMENT

#### **Competition:**

FY 2023 Disaster Preparedness for Coastal Communities

#### **Closing Dates and Deadlines:**

Monday, March 13, 2023 at 11:59 PM Eastern Time

#### **Eligible Sea Grant Programs:**

This competition is open to all Sea Grant programs. All projects must take place within the United States or territories or their respective waterways.

#### **Award Time Frame:**

The proposed start date should be no earlier than September 1, 2023, and no later than December 1, 2023, with projects to be completed no later than 2 years after the project start date.

#### **Funding Availability:**

The National Sea Grant Office (NSGO) anticipates that up to **\$480,000** in FY 2023 federal funds will be available to individual Sea Grant programs in order to support innovative all-hazard preparedness, response, and recovery initiatives for coastal communities.

Each award will be no greater than \$160,000. No matching funds are statutorily required for this competition.

#### **Project Description (program priorities):**

##### **Program Overview**

The Disaster Preparedness Program (DPP), a program within the NOS Office of Response and Restoration, was formed to ensure NOS, partners, and coastal communities are able to effectively prepare for, respond to, and recover from all hazards, including coastal disasters. The DPP accomplishes this through focusing on a few key focus areas:

- Capacity building – this includes the use of exercises, training, and workshops to increase NOS and partner readiness for all hazard response and recovery operations,
- Coordination and communication – this involves intra-agency, regional and partner coordination as well as outreach,
- Continuous improvement – this includes a formal review of post-incident lessons learned, documentation and tracking in after-action reports, and resource/tool development,

- Preparedness, response and recovery support – this involves coordination and collaboration on the planning to improve preparedness, response to and recovery from disasters.

### **Funding Opportunity**

The objective of this funding opportunity is to support innovative all-hazard preparedness, response, and recovery initiatives for coastal communities. The nature of these projects could be legal/policy analysis, research and development, training or education, or tool/resource development. The goal is to improve the ability of communities to manage impacts from natural and anthropogenic disasters including (but not limited to) hurricanes, flooding, harmful algal blooms, oil spills, and marine debris. Another desirable outcome is to improve disaster preparedness and communication in underrepresented coastal communities. This is an opportunity to provide resources to communities that do not typically have access to them.

A successful project will address a preparedness gap or need of the community to enable them to reduce disaster impacts and reach recovery more quickly. Projects should directly benefit the coastal communities and natural/cultural resources they are meant to support. Development and evaluation of a success metric shall also be integrated into the project to allow post-project assessment of the outcome.

### **Disaster Preparedness Program Coordination**

Applicants are encouraged to consult with the DPP in the development of the project proposal in advance of submission. The DPP coordinator may be able to provide information on training and exercises, connections to other potential partners and regional resources, and help to align the proposal with the DPP strategic plan. If awarded, the recipient will be required to work with the DPP coordinator throughout the award period, including regularly scheduled update meetings.

### **Application Requirements:**

Consult the NOFO [NOAA-OAR-SG-2023-2007550](#), available at [Grants.gov](#), for eligible applicants, required elements of the application, how to submit, general programmatic priorities and selection factors, and other necessary information. Submit your application to **SPECIAL PROJECTS "H"** under this opportunity in grants.gov.

**Discrepancies between this special project announcement and the NOFO may exist. Specific application details and instructions outlined in this special project announcement take precedence over guidelines in the NOFO.**

Applications must include the following elements. Failure to adhere to these provisions may result in a delay in award processing or rejection of the application, based on the extent of the noncompliance.

#### **1. Project Narrative.** *The Project Narrative must include the following documents:*

- a. Project Description. The total number of pages in the project description can be up to eighteen (18). Applicants do not need to use the entire 18-page maximum. Depending on the complexity of the proposed activities, a shorter description may suffice. Excess pages will not be included in the review. The cover page, project abstract, works cited, CVs, letters of support, and current and pending support sections do not contribute to the page limit.
  - i. Cover page (1 page maximum; not included in the page count)

- Project title and names, titles, affiliations, and contact information (email and phone) of co-PIs.
  - Budget overview - Total cost and annual breakdown of requested funding by partner.
- ii. Project Abstract (1 page maximum; not included in page count)
- iii. Project background
  - Explain the specific problem(s) this project seeks to address and justify its importance.
- iv. Project objectives
  - Provide a list of clearly defined objectives. For each objective, provide a concise statement explaining how it is aligned with the goals and priorities of this funding opportunity.
- v. Project details
  - Provide an explanation of the methods you will use to address your project objectives. Explicitly explain how this project leverages the expertise of both researchers and stakeholders.
- vi. Anticipated outcomes and deliverables
  - What are the expected outcomes and results related to the preparedness of coastal communities?
  - What are the expected outcomes and results related to the creation of data products, tools, technologies, and improvements to management or other practices?
- vii. Project timeline
  - Provide a timeline for accomplishing the proposed work covering the entire duration of the project. Include approximate dates for key milestones related to the proposed work, including the accomplishment of anticipated outcomes and release of results.
  - Applicants submitting proposals that involve the use of human test subjects should state so clearly in their application. These proposed research activities require approval of the applicant's Institutional Review Board (IRB) before such research can proceed. Applicants are responsible for obtaining IRB approval from their institution and providing that documentation to NOAA once the approval is obtained and prior to any NOAA-funded human subject testing. Proposals intending to use human test subjects should specify clearly in the timeline approximately when IRB approval will be obtained and when the testing is expected to occur.
- viii. Outreach and engagement plan
  - Provide a cohesive strategy to ensure that end users across the project's geographic region, beyond those who actively participate in the proposed work, will learn about the project's outcomes.
- ix. Diversity statement
  - In this section, describe how well the proposed activity broadens the participation of underrepresented groups (e.g., race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, geography, etc.) and how these groups are given a voice in the community of practice. Examples could include (but are not limited to) the full participation of women, persons with

disabilities, and underrepresented minorities in conducting this work or benefitting from its outcomes.

- Applicants are encouraged to review the resources and best practices compiled by NSGO related to diversity, equity and inclusion:  
<https://seagrant.noaa.gov/insideseagrant/Implementation/Network-Visiting/DiversityInclusion>
  - x. Works cited (does not count towards page limit)
    - All in-text citations should be listed here.
  - xi. Curriculum vitae (CV) for each PI (does not count towards page limit)
    - Each person's CV should not be longer than 2 pages. Excess pages will not be included in the review.
  - xii. Letters of support (does not count towards page limit)
    - Letters are required in the instance that a Sea Grant program is applying on behalf of a partnership of multiple Sea Grant programs.
    - Otherwise, letters are optional but recommended as appropriate to demonstrate collaboration of listed partners and/or buy-in of targeted end users.
  - xiii. Current and pending support (does not count towards page limit)
    - Describe any current or pending sources of support if applicable.
- b. Abbreviated Environmental Compliance Questionnaire (OMB Control No. 0648-0538)
- i. Applicants **must** ensure that the questionnaire is completed in full and includes detailed information regarding project location, methodology, and permits. Copies of all permits required for project activities should be included with application materials. If a permit is pending or planned, please provide this information.
  - ii. The questionnaire can be found [here](#).
  - iii. Guidance on how to complete the questionnaire can be found [here](#). Examples of questionnaires can be found [here](#).\* *(Please note: These documents will be updated to fully match the current, recently revised Questionnaire at a later date.)*
- c. Data Management Plan
- i. All applications **must** include a Data Management Plan that is compliant with NOAA's [Public Access to Research Results](#) Plan or the statement in ii. below. The Data Management Plan should not exceed 2 pages. The Data Management Plan should include descriptions of the types of metadata and data expected to be created during the course of the project, plans for disseminating the metadata and data to the broader community, and plans for long-term archiving of the metadata and data.
  - ii. If proposed activities will not generate any environmental data, such as the scoping activities and research competition, please include the following statement at the end of your proposal: "Because this project will not generate environmental data, a Data Management Plan is not required."

- 2. Budget Narrative and Justification.** *The Budget Narrative must include the following documents (Sea Grant 90-4 Forms and Budget Justification) in that order and format. Additional budget narrative guidance can be found [here](#).*
- a. Sea Grant 90-4 Form (OMB Control No. 0648-0362) - Sea Grant 90-4 Forms are required to provide budget breakdowns and budget justifications by year and object class for the proposal. A completed Sea Grant 90-4 Form should be completed for each project year as well as a total budget for the entire project duration (i.e., Year 1, Year 2, Year 3, and Years 1-3). Guidance on filling out these forms is located in the [Sea Grant General Application Guide](#).
  - b. Budget Justification - For each year of the project, a Budget Justification is required. Each Budget Justification should explain the budget items in sufficient detail to enable review of the appropriateness of the funding requested. Each Budget Justification should be attached as a PDF to each Sea Grant 90-4 Form, as appropriate. Guidance on completing the Budget Justification is located in the [Sea Grant General Application Guide](#).
- 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)
    - i. 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)
    - i. This form, titled “Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs,” should 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. Each federal and match year should have its own column.
  - c. d. SF-424B Assurances ([Grants.gov](#), OMB Control No. 4040-0007)
    - i. The form, titled “Assurances – Non-Construction Programs,” should be completed and signed by the institution's authorized representative or designee.
  - d. CD-511 ([Grants.gov](#), US Department of Commerce)
    - i. The form, titled “Certification Regarding Lobbying,” should 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.
  - e. SF-LLL ([Grants.gov](#), OMB Control No. 0348-0046) if applicable
    - i. The form, titled “Disclosure of Lobbying Activities,” should be completed and signed by the institution’s authorized representative or designee, if appropriate.

**Application Evaluation Criteria:**

The following criteria will be used to evaluate proposals. Note that the weights of each criteria are different from the Evaluation Criteria laid out in the Special Projects NOFO announcement and that there are evaluation details specific to the Disaster Preparedness for Coastal Communities

opportunity. Proposals submitted to this competition will be evaluated by at least three independent written reviews and potentially, at the sole discretion of the competition manager, a panel based on:

1. Importance/relevance and applicability of proposed projects to the program goals (40%). This criterion ascertains whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and/or relevance to the goals of this project. For the Disaster Preparedness for Coastal Communities program, this includes:
  - improving the ability of communities to manage impacts from natural and anthropogenic disasters including (but not limited to) hurricanes, flooding, harmful algal blooms, oil spills, and marine debris; and
  - improving disaster preparedness and communication in underrepresented coastal communities.
2. Technical/scientific merit (30%). This criterion assesses whether the approach is technically sound and/or innovative, if the methods are appropriate, and whether there are clear project goals and objectives. For the Disaster Preparedness for Coastal Communities program, this includes:
  - Whether the proposal clearly identifies goals and objectives, and whether the timeline for the project is reasonable and in line with the award period guidelines;
  - Whether the project will deliver tangible, specific results that are attainable and measurable within the proposed time frame;
  - Whether the proposed methods and approaches to be used in the project are valid to achieve project goals; and
  - Whether the project is innovative and/or unique in its approach, solutions, or application.
3. Overall qualifications of applicants (10%). This criterion ascertains whether the applicant possesses the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project. For this program, this includes:
  - Subject matter expertise in the proposed field;
  - Established connections to coastal communities; and
  - Capabilities to execute the proposed project.
4. Project costs (10%). This criterion evaluates the budget to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time frame. For this program, this includes:
  - Good cost to value/benefit ratio.
5. Outreach and Education (10%). This criterion assesses whether the project provides a focused and effective education and outreach strategy regarding NOAA's mission to protect the Nation's natural resources. For this program, this includes the quality of the outreach plan and efforts to include underrepresented communities in the project.

Additionally, projects will be recommended for funding only if they have a complete application package and if funds are available.

**Other Information:**

**Demographics Information:**

- NOAA will not provide collected demographics information to reviewers for any

purpose, including evaluation, and will not consider demographics information during selection.

- Programs must submit documentation by either including a statement within the application, or via email to [sg.grants@noaa.gov](mailto:sg.grants@noaa.gov), that they have responded to the new requirement to provide the following information for all named collaborators on the proposal. (2022, OMB approved for PRA under DOC generic clearance information collections, 0690-0030 and 0690-0035).
  - Note: Programs may use their own method of collecting this information. The NSGO has also developed an [online form](#) as an optional method for collection. Submission to this form would count as fulfillment of this requirement.
1. Do you or your organization identify with any of the following groups that the federal government, in Executive Order 13985, has identified as underserved? List all that apply.
    - a) Black
    - b) Latino
    - c) Indigenous and/or Native American
    - d) Asian American
    - e) Pacific Islander
    - f) Other person of color
    - g) Members of religious minorities
    - h) Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) persons
    - i) Persons with disabilities
    - j) Persons who live in rural areas
    - k) Persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality
    - l) No, I do not identify with any of these groups

**Reporting:**

This will be a stand-alone (i.e., non-omnibus) award for which annual progress reporting will be required.

**Form of Award:**

This will be a cooperative agreement with substantial involvement from DPP and NSGO to assist the recipient in ensuring the project results are relevant to disaster preparedness needs.

**Webinar:**

An optional webinar will be held to answer questions pertaining to this funding opportunity on January 12, 2023 at 4:30pm ET. The link to register and join is:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4070698138026283349>

**Agency Contacts:**

Questions about this competition or the Special Projects Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) may be sent to [oar.hq.sg.competitions@noaa.gov](mailto:oar.hq.sg.competitions@noaa.gov). Please specify that your question is related to the Disaster Preparedness for Coastal Communities Special Projects Competition in the subject line.

Applicants may consult with the DPP coordinator during the development of their application by contacting Jessica White, Deputy Director, NOAA Gulf of Mexico Disaster Response Center, at [Jessica.White@noaa.gov](mailto:Jessica.White@noaa.gov).

Fillable versions of required Sea Grant forms can be found here:

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