**U.S. Department of the Interior**

**National Park Service**

**Financial Assistance**

**Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)**



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| NOFO Title | Canaveral National Seashore Post-Hurricane Resource Assessment |
| NOFO Number: | P24AS00287 |
| Announcement Type:  | Initial  |
| CFDA Number:  | 15.945 |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Issue Date: | 2/14/2024 |
| Application Due Date: | 4/15/2024 | Time: | 5:00 PM EST |

*Note:* *Per 2 CFR 1402.204 (f) Bureaus and offices must consider the timeliness of the application submission. Applications that are submitted beyond the announced deadline date must be removed from the review process.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
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##

## Section A: Program Description

**Legislative Authority:**

54 USC §101702(a): Cooperative Agreements, Transfer of Services Appropriated Funds

54 USC §101702(b): Cooperative Agreements, Cooperative Research and Training Programs

54 U.S.C. § 101702(d)(1) – Cooperative Agreements for National Park Natural Resource

Protection

54 USC §100703: Cooperative Study Units

**Assistance Listing (formerly CFDA) Number:** 15.945, Cooperative Research and Training Programs

**Federal Regulations:** 2 C.F.R. § 200, 2 C.F.R. § 1402

**Program Background, Objectives and Goals:**

Canaveral National Seashore (CANA) includes approximately 57,000 acres of coastal, estuarine and upland habitats along the east coast of central Florida. Major plant communities include pine flatwoods, hammock, beach dune, freshwater wetlands, beach dune, coastal strand, salt marsh and mangrove shrublands. Development within the boundary is largely restricted to public beach access facilities on the northern and southern ends of the park. The majority of Mosquito Lagoon and associated islands as well as the adjacent open waters of the Atlantic Ocean are included within the CANA boundary. Coastal uplands and wetlands within CANA support a wide variety of listed species. Beaches represent nationally important nesting habitat for marine turtles with more than 16,000 nests within CANA in 2023. Beach dune and coastal strand habitats also support populations of terrestrial species including southeastern beach mouse, gopher tortoise and eastern indigo snake. Salt marsh and mangrove habitats are utilized by organisms including Atlantic salt marsh snake, wading birds, eastern black rail and diamondback terrapin. CANA also protects a wide range of cultural resources that reflect human history in the area from 2000 BC to the early 20th century.

In September 2022, Hurricane Ian impacted CANA, resulting in tidal flooding, substantial coastal erosion, widespread vegetation damage and structural modifications to coastal habitats. Subsequently, Hurricane Nicole also made landfall within CANA, compounding the effects of the Hurricane Ian. In addition to direct effects of the storms on natural resources, elevation loss within beach dune communities facilitated regular tidal flooding for several months. While impacts to resources have been generally characterized, detailed information on the majority of species and habitats within the Seashore has not been collected. The trajectory of the natural system, including plant communities and associated species, following these storms is not clearly understood.

NPS natural resource managers are seeking proposals for studies and/or surveys of natural and cultural resources that lead to a better understanding of short and long term effects of the 2022 hurricane season on those resources. Successful proposals will seek to improve the understanding of natural resources that became and/or remain vulnerable to post storm conditions that are coupled with the development of implementable management recommendations/actions.

The following topics are suggested focal areas. Proposals covering topics outside of these areas are also encouraged, provided the work will evaluate the effects of hurricanes on natural and/or cultural resources within Canaveral National Seashore. Proposals for all focal areas should demonstrate an expected link to implementable management actions.

1. Studies of direct and indirect storm effects on the life history of species of management concern
2. Studies of physical and structural changes to coastal plant communities and adjacent coastal wetlands
3. Studies of non-native species status and trends in storm impacted areas

Specific elements of each of these topic areas are described below. These descriptions are provided as a guide to help identify issues and questions that can be addressed in submitted proposals. The geographic area of the proposed studies is the legislative boundary of Canaveral National Seashore.

**1. Assessment of direct and indirect storm effects on the life history of species of management concern**

Storm surge, tidal flooding and wind impacts resulted in short and long term, direct and indirect impacts on a variety of coastal plant and animal species within CANA. Impacts may have resulted in an increase or decrease in occupiable habitats, changes in predation rates, foraging and reproductive habitats and other impacts to one or more life history periods for a variety of organisms. CANA seeks to understand the short- and long-term effects of these storms on species of management concern in order to direct management actions where they are most appropriate and most effective. Additionally, CANA seeks to support work that is expected to result in actionable management recommendations that can be implemented following these and future storms that will mitigate or improve post-storm conditions for species of management concern.

Animal species of interest to CANA include southeastern beach mouse (*Peromyscus polionotus niveiventris*), eastern black rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis jamaicensis*) eastern indigo snake (*Drymarchon corais couperi*), Atlantic salt marsh snake (*Nerodia clarkia taeniata*), eastern spotted skunk (*Spilogale putorius*), Wilson’s plover (*Charadrius wilsonia*) and marine turtles (*Caretta caretta*, *Chelonia mydas*, *Dermochelys coriacea* and *Lepidochelys kempii*), Florida intertidal firefly (*Micronaspis floridana*) and beach tiger beetle (*Cicindela dorsalis media*). Plant species of interest include Caribbean applecactus (*Harrisia fragrans*), beachstar (*Cyperus pendunculatus*) and Curtis’s hoarypea (*Tephrosia angustissima* var. *curtissii*). Specific topics of interest include the following:

a. Comparison of pre- and post-hurricane distribution of one or more species of management concern that utilize hurricane impacted areas.

b. Assessment of effects of hurricanes on life history stages of one or more species of management concern.

c. Development of baseline distribution and population estimates of poorly known species in areas affected by hurricanes.

**2. Studies of physical and structural changes to coastal upland plant communities and adjacent coastal wetlands**

Storm surge and associated sand movement resulted in changes in elevation across portions of the barrier island that separates Mosquito Lagoon from the Atlantic Ocean. Observed storm effects to the physical environment include dune erosion and loss, creation of dune escarpments, elevation loss from erosion and elevation gains from sand accretion. These effects will result in short and long term changes to local and regional hydrology, soil chemistry and ultimately plant community composition on small and large scales within CANA. Characterization of these changes and understanding how these changes will evolve in conjunction with other ongoing natural processes is of interest to CANA managers. Specific topics of interest include the following:

a. Creation of detailed elevation profiles of areas affected by storm surge and other hurricane effects.

b. Development of updated plant community maps and conducting comparison of pre- and post-storm plant community distribution in affected areas.

c. Development of modelling or other predictive tools using remote sensing (LiDAR, satellite imagery, aerial imagery), including techniques that can be readily used by park managers to conduct comparable studies in the future.

d. Developing data-based approaches to understanding the relationship of observed hurricane effects with recent and predicted sea level rise projections in the region.

**3. Studies of non-native species status and trends in storm impacted areas**

Wind and storm surge effects appear to have resulted in mixed impacts to existing populations of invasive plant and animal species in CANA. For example, storm effects appear to have resulted in a significant reduction in cover of Brazilian peppertree in areas immediately adjacent to the shoreline, at least in the short term. Openings created by damage and mortality of native plant species and sand deposition have also created potential for invasion or expansion of existing and/or new invasive plant and insect species. Expansion of infestations of opportunistic invasive species such as crowfoot grass have been observed within CANA following the storms but it is unclear if these increases will be short or long lived and if the changes will have a meaningful or measurable effect on plant community recovery and native fauna utilization of the areas. Storm effects are also likely to have impacted existing populations of priority invasive animal species including feral swine and coyote, but it is unclear to what degree these species were affected. Little is understood about the effects of storms on invasive plant and animal species on islands within Mosquito Lagoon. Specific topics of interest include the following:

a. Short and long term effects of storms to high priority invasive species that occur in affected areas.

b. Species or plant community specific, effective and feasible rapid response recommendations to invasive organisms following current and future, similar storm events.

c. Improving understanding of interactive effects of invasive species on native plant and animal populations in the affected areas.

The primary objective of this funding program is to supplement the capacity of CANA to assess resource impacts resulting from Hurricanes Ian and Nicole and to develop and implement actionable plans for resource protection from hurricanes.

## Section B: Federal Award Information

**Estimated Total Funding:** (minimum $0- maximum $300,000.00)

The amount of funding available per award for this NOFO will be determined once final fiscal year (FY) 2024 appropriations have been made. This NOFO will be cancelled if FY 2024 appropriations are insufficient to support new awards.

**Expected Award Amount:**

An estimated range of $20,000 To $150,000 of funding is anticipated for each award.

The amount of funding available per award for this NOFO will be determined as part of the application review process based on applications received and funding made available through appropriations.

**Anticipated Award Date:**

The anticipated award date for selected projects is May 24, 2024

**Anticipated Term of the Agreement:** May 24, 2024 – May 24, 2027

Agreement terms for funded projects can range between one and three years, depending on the negotiated project statement of work. Agreements are not effective until fully executed with signature from the NPS Financial Assistance Awarding Officer. Continuation of agreements through their expected duration, after the initially funded period (typically one year), will be dependent upon the availability of future funds and agreements can be terminated earlier in accordance with 2 CFR, Part 200, Sections 200.338 and 200.339.

**Estimated Number of Agreements to be Awarded:** 1-3

Each activity or project under this agreement will be treated individually, with more detail through project statements, project plans and budgets developed cooperatively between the NPS and the non-Federal entity.

**Funding Instrument Type:**

Cooperative Agreement

**Substantial Involvement for Cooperative Agreement:**

Substantial involvement may include:

* NPS is involved with the non-Federal entity in describing the goals, jointly developing the scope and the activities to be accomplished. This must be combined with other substantial involvement, such as providing technical assistance or any of the statements listed below, that goes beyond Federal stewardship responsibilities.
* NPS staff will assist the non-Federal entity in selecting projects, providing orientation to park resources, overseeing assignments, teaching new skills, distributing tools and equipment and providing technical assistance and safety training.
* NPS will provide environmental programs to the team members including park tours, educational programs, talks on the history of the park, and other similar programs in a variety of media to orient the team to the site and management practices affecting park resources.
* NPS staff will work together with the non-Federal entity to jointly organize and deliver seminars, workshops, for the purpose of promoting scientific knowledge and or understanding of this project to non-Government entities, States, Tribes, and local governments and the general public.
* NPS will provide the services of a Program Coordinator to serve as liaison to (the non-Federal entity) for the work under this agreement. This includes consulting and working specifically with the non-Federal entity’s program coordinator.

**Other Information:** Applications for renewal or supplementation of existing projects are not eligible to compete with applications for new Federal awards.

## Section C: Eligibility Information

### 1. Eligible Applicants

This funding opportunity is limited to non-federal partners of any of 3 regional, Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Units (CESU): Gulf Coast, Piedmont-South Atlantic Coast and South Florida-Caribbean. All applicants must be a partner in one of these CESU units prior to being considered for an award under this announcement. Information on how to join the CESU

network can be found at: www.cesu.org.

Grants.gov Checkbox Selections:

00 – State governments

01 – County governments

02 – City or township governments

04 – Special district governments

06 – Public and State controlled institutions of higher education

12 – Nonprofits having a 501 (c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education

20 – Private institutions of higher education

**Additional Information on Eligibility**

This funding opportunity is limited to non-federal partners of any of the 3 regional Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Units (CESU): Gulf Coast, Piedmont-South Atlantic Coast and South Florida-Caribbean.

### 2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Non-Federal cost sharing or matching is not required to be eligible for an award under this NOFO.

### 3. Other (if applicable)

**Excluded Parties:**
NPSconducts a review of the SAM.gov Exclusions database for all applicant entities and their key project personnel prior to award. The NPS cannot award funds to entities or their key project personnel identified in the SAM.gov Exclusions database as ineligible, prohibited/restricted or otherwise excluded from receiving Federal contracts, certain subcontracts, and certain Federal assistance and benefits, as their ineligibility condition applies to this Federal program.

**Foreign Entities or Projects:**

This program may provide funding to foreign entities or for projects conducted outside the United States.

## Section D: Application and Submission Information

### 1. Address to Request Application Package

A complete application package is described in this Section and has been included within this NOFO for your convenience, in Appendix A. The application package contains both mandatory standard forms (SF) and various optional templates that may be used to satisfy other stated application requirements. The application package can also be accessed and downloaded from the Related Documents tab on the Synopsis page of this announcement in Grants.gov. [Applicants may also request paper copies of application materials by contacting the Awarding Agency using the information provided in Section G of this NOFO.]

### 2. Contents and Form of Application Submission

You must complete the mandatory standard forms and any applicable optional forms, in accordance with the instructions below, as required by this NOFO. Do not include any proprietary or personally identifiable information. A complete application should include:

Mandatory Requirements:

* Standard Form 424 (SF 424) - Application for Federal Assistance. Complete this form as much as possible with all applicable information.
* Standard Form 424A or C (SF 424A/C) - Budget Information. Applicants must provide an estimated cumulative budget for the total project in the proposal. The estimated budget must align with the projected scope of work presented in the application.
* Project Abstract Summary – The project abstract form must be completed to meet Federal award reporting requirements. Ensure the project abstract succinctly describes the project in plain language that the public can understand and use without the full proposal. If the application is funded, this information will be made available for public access including on USAspending.gov.
* Detailed Budget – The project budget shall include detailed information on all cost categories and must clearly identify all project costs. Unit costs shall be provided for all budget items including the cost of work to be provided by contractors or sub-recipients. In addition, applicants shall include a narrative description of the items included in the project budget, including the value of in-kind contributions of goods and services provided to complete the project when cost share is identified to be included (reference section C of this announcement). Cost categories can include, but are not limited to, those costs items included on the SF424A and SF424C.
* Standard Form 424B or D (SF 424B/D) – Assurances
This form must be signed and submitted with your application.
* Project Narrative - Proposal Submission Format
The proposal is a narrative description that should specifically address each of the review criteria (see Section E). The proposal text must be no longer than 12 pages, no smaller than font size 11, and have 1-inch margins. The 12-page limit includes all text, figures, references, and resumes (Forms SF-424, SF-424A, SF-424B, SF-LLL, and the statement of indirect charges are not counted as part of the page limit). Additionally, only information that is pertinent to the proposal should be included.
* Indirect Costs
If your proposed budget includes indirect costs, the rate as proposed must meet the requirements of 2 CFR Part 200, Section 200.414 and 2 CFR Part 200, Appendix III through Appendix VII, as applicable. If fully negotiated indirect cost rates are applied, the associated rate agreement must be provided with your proposal. Proposals that fail to document their indirect costs may have those costs disallowed.

Optional Requirements:

* **Conflict of Interest** **Disclosure**

Per the Financial Assistance Interior Regulation (FAIR), [2 CFR §1402.112](https://ecfr.federalregister.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-B/chapter-XIV/part-1402/subpart-B), applicants must state in their application if any actual or potential conflict of interest exists at the time of submission.

*Applicability*.

* + This section intends to ensure that non-Federal entities and their employees take appropriate steps to avoid conflicts of interest in their responsibilities under or with respect to Federal financial assistance agreements.
	+ In the procurement of supplies, equipment, construction, and services by recipients and by sub recipients, the conflict of interest provisions in [2 CFR §200.318](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?node=sp2.1.200.d&rgn=div6#se2.1.200_1318) apply.

*Notification*.

* + Non-Federal entities, including applicants for financial assistance awards, must disclose in writing any conflict of interest to the DOI awarding agency or pass-through entity in accordance with [2 CFR §200.112](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?node=pt2.1.200&rgn=div5#se2.1.200_1112).
	+ Recipients must establish internal controls that include, at a minimum, procedures to identify, disclose, and mitigate or eliminate identified conflicts of interest. The recipient is responsible for notifying the Financial Assistance Officer in writing of any conflicts of interest that may arise during the life of the award, including those that have been reported by sub recipients.

*Restrictions on lobbying*. Non-Federal entities are strictly prohibited from using funds under a grant or cooperative agreement for lobbying activities and must provide the required certifications and disclosures pursuant to [43 CFR §18](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?node=pt43.1.18&rgn=div5) and [31 USC §1352](https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?path=/prelim@title31/subtitle2/chapter13&edition=prelim).

*Review procedures*. The Financial Assistance Officer will examine each conflict-of-interest disclosure on the basis of its particular facts and the nature of the proposed grant or cooperative agreement and will determine whether a significant potential conflict exists and, if it does, develop an appropriate means for resolving it.

Enforcement. Failure to resolve conflicts of interest in a manner that satisfies the government may be cause for termination of the award. Failure to make required disclosures may result in any of the remedies described in [2 CFR §200.339](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?node=sp2.1.200.d&rgn=div6#se2.1.200_1339), Remedies for noncompliance, including suspension or debarment (see also [2 CFR §180](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr180_main_02.tpl)).

* **Uniform Audit Reporting Statement**

U.S. states, local governments, federally recognized Indian tribes, institutions of higher education, and non- profit organizations expending $750,000 USD or more in Federal award funds in the applicant’s fiscal year must submit a Single Audit report for that year through the [Federal Audit Clearinghouse’s Internet Data Entry System](https://harvester.census.gov/facides/Account/Login.aspx), in accordance with 2 CFR 200 subpart F. U.S. state, local government, federally recognized Indian tribes, institutions of higher education, and non-profit applicants must state if your organization was or was not required to submit a Single Audit report for the most recently closed fiscal year. If your organization was required to submit a Single Audit report for the most recently closed fiscal year, provide the EIN associated with that report and state if it is available through the [Federal Audit Clearinghouse](https://harvester.census.gov/facdissem/Main.aspx) website.

* **Certification Regarding Lobbying**

Applicants requesting more than $100,000 in Federal funding must certify to the statements in [43 CFR Part 18, Appendix A-Certification Regarding Lobbying](http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=683823273fc0da6a1060883eda593fb8&mc=true&node=pt43.1.18&rgn=div5). If this application requests more than $100,000 in Federal funds, the Authorized Official’s signature on the appropriate SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance form also represents the entity’s certification of the statements in 43 CFR Part 18, Appendix A.

* **Disclosure of Lobbying**

Applicants and recipients must not use any federally appropriated funds (annually appropriated or continuing appropriations) or matching funds under a Federal award to pay any person for lobbying in connection with the award. Lobbying is influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any U.S. agency, a Member of the U.S. Congress, an officer or employee of the U.S. Congress, or an employee of a Member of the U.S. Congress connection with the award. Applicants and recipients must complete and submit the [SF-LLL, “Disclosure of Lobbying Activities”](https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/post-award-reporting-forms.html) form if the Federal share of the proposal or award is more than $100,000 and the applicant or recipient has made or has agreed to make any payment using non-appropriated funds for lobbying in connection with the application or award. The SF-LLL form is available with this Funding Opportunity on Grants.gov. See 43 CFR, Subpart 18.100 and 31 USC 1352 for more information on when additional submission of this form is required.

* **Overlap or Duplication of Effort Statement**

If the project proposed in this application is funded through another Federal financial assistance award, in part or in whole, the applicant must provide a statement detailing the potential funding overlap in regard to activities, costs, or time commitment of key personnel. Provide a copy of any overlapping or duplicative proposal submitted to any other potential funding entity and identify when that proposal was submitted or copy of Federal financial assistance award covering activities covered under this proposal. The statement and the description of overlap or duplication, when applicable, may be provided within the proposal or as a separate attachment to the application. Any overlap or duplication of funding between the proposed project and other active or anticipated projects may impact selection and/or funding amount. If no such overlap or duplication exists, state, “There are no overlaps or duplication between this application and any of our other Federal applications or funded projects”.

If selected for award, NPS reserves the right to request additional or clarifying information for any reason deemed necessary, including, but not limited to:

(a) Other budget information

(b) Financial capability

(c) Evaluation of risk

(d) Name and phone number of the Designated Responsible Employee for complying with national policies prohibiting discrimination (See 43 C.F.R. § 17)

### 3. Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM.gov) Registration

This requirement does not apply to individuals applying for funds as an individual (i.e., unrelated to any business or nonprofit organization you may own, operate, or work within), or any entity with an exception to bypass SAM.gov registration with prior approval from the funding bureau or office in accordance with bureau or office policy. All other applicants are required to register in SAM.gov prior to submitting a Federal award application and obtain a [Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)](https://www.gsa.gov/about-us/organization/federal-acquisition-service/office-of-systems-management/integrated-award-environment-iae/iae-systems-information-kit/unique-entity-identifier-update) which replaces the Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number from Dun & Bradstreet in April 2022.  A Federal award may not be made to an applicant that has not completed the SAM.gov registration. If an applicant selected for funding has not completed their SAM.gov registration by the time the program is ready to make an award, the program may determine the applicant is not qualified to receive an award. Federal award recipients must also continue to maintain an active SAM.gov registration with current information through the life of their Federal award(s).

* **Register with the System for Award Management (SAM**
Applicants can register on the [SAM.gov](http://www.sam.gov/) website. The “Help” tab on the website contains User Guides and other information to assist you with registration. The Grants.gov “[Register with SAM](https://www.grants.gov/help/html/help/Register/RegisterWithSAM.htm)” page also provides detailed instructions. Applicants can contact the supporting Federal Service Desk for help registering in SAM. Once registered in SAM, entities will be assigned a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI). Entities must renew and revalidate their SAM registration at least once every 12 months from the date previously registered. Entities are strongly encouraged to revalidate their registration as often as needed to ensure their information is up to date and reflects changes that may have been made to the entity’s IRS information.  There is no cost to register with SAM.gov. There are third-party vendors who will charge a fee in exchange for registering entities with SAM.gov; please be aware you can register and request help for free.  If applicable, foreign entities who want to receive payment directly to a U.S. bank account must enter and maintain valid, current banking information in SAM.

### 4. Submission Dates and Times

Applicants are held responsible for their proposals being submitted to the National Park Service. Applications must be received by April 15, 2024, 5:00 PM, EST. Applicants are encouraged to submit the application well before the deadline. Note: Per 2 CFR 1402.204 (f) Bureaus and offices must consider the timeliness of the application submission. Applications that are submitted beyond the announced deadline date must be removed from the review process.

Application preparation time may take several weeks, so please start the application process as soon as possible. If it is determined that a proposal was not considered due to lateness, the applicant will be notified during the selection process.

### 5. Intergovernmental Review

This funding opportunity is not subject to Executive Order (EO) 12372 “Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs.” Applicants subject to EO 12372 must contact their State’s Single Point of Contact (SPOC) to find out about and comply with the State’s process. The names and addresses of the SPOC’s are listed in the OMB’s home page at: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc/>

### 6. Funding Restrictions

Costs incurred by the applicant prior to the start date of the period of performance of a signed Federal award are only allowable with written approval by a Financial Assistance Awarding Officer.

### 7. Other Submission Requirements

Applications must be submitted by email to the National Park Service by the deadline identified in paragraph 4 above. Applications submitted by other means or not received by the deadline will not be considered.

Applications must be sent to:

Jimi\_Sadle@nps.gov

Kristen\_Kneifl@nps.gov

Tina\_Holland@nps.gov

In the event the applicant experiences technical difficulties with submitting their application, please contact: Tina\_Holland@nps.gov .

START THIS PROCESS EARLY DON’T DELAY!

## Section E: Application Review Information

### 1. Criteria

NPS will evaluate and consider only those applications that separately address each of the merit review criteria in the project Narrative application requirement. Each applicant is required to provide a detailed project narrative, in accordance with section D.2., of the following criteria elements. It is HIGHLY recommended that the project narrative has sections labeled by criterion.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Criterion 1 |  |
| Title: RELEVANCE AND POTENTIAL IMPACT  |  | Weight 40% |
| The proposed work addresses an important topic | Is the outcome of the project likely to result in an improved understanding of hurricane impacts on CANA resources? Is the work expected to produce actionable management recommendations that can be implemented by CANA staff related to mitigating current or future storm impacts. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Criterion 2 |  |
| Title: QUALIFICATIONS OF THE APPLICANTS  |  | Weight 20% |
| Evidence of experience, training, facilities and resources  | Does the evidence of experience presented in the proposal indicate whether the proposing group is likely to successfully implement the proposed work and deliver proposed products? |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Criterion 3 |  |
| Title: COST |  | Weight 10% |
| Cost | Is the project cost justified, reasonable, and appropriate for the proposed work? |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Criterion 4 |  |
| Title: SCIENTIFIC MERIT |  | Weight 25% |
| Evaluation of potential to advance knowledge relevant to one or more of the specified topic areas  | Are the questions, concepts, approaches and analysis original and innovative? Does the proposed study have clear and sound goals, objectives and rationale? Is the approach technically sound, with appropriate design, methods, and analyses? |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Criterion 5 |  |
| Title: SITE SPECIFIC FEASIBLITY |  | Weight 5% |
| Evaluation of appropriateness of proposed methods  | Are the methods of the study compatible with NPS policies or other agencies’ land management policies, while at the appropriate location and scale to provide meaningful results? |

### 2. Review and Selection Process

NPS personnel, and in some cases independent reviewers, will review all proposals. All proposals for funding will be considered using the criteria outlined above. A summary of the review panel comments may be provided to the applicant if requested.

**a. Initial Review**

Prior to conducting the comprehensive merit review, an initial review will be performed to determine whether: (1) the applicant is eligible for an award; (2) the information required by the NOFO has been submitted; (3) all mandatory requirements of the NOFO are satisfied; and (4) the proposed project is responsive to the program objectives of the NOFO (program determination). If an applicant fails to meet the requirements or objectives of the NOFO, or does not provide sufficient information for review, the applicant will be considered non-responsive and eliminated from further review.

**b. Comprehensive Merit Review**

All applications that satisfactorily pass the initial review will be eligible for the Comprehensive Merit Review. Each criteria element will be scored on a 0-10 point scale:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 10 | Superior | (100 % of weighted average) |
| 8 | Good | (80 % of weighted average) |
| 6 | Satisfactory | (60 % of weighted average) |
| 4 | Marginal | (40 % of weighted average) |
| 2  | Poor | (20 % of weighted average) |
| 0 | Not Acceptable | (No score) |

The following numerical rating values may be assigned: 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, and 0.

The scoring of each criterion must be based on the strengths and weaknesses of the application narrative. To assist in assigning an appropriate score, the following will be used as a guideline:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Rating | Descriptive Statement |
| 10 | Superior: Applicant fully addresses all aspects of the criterion, convincingly demonstrates that it will meet the Government's performance requirements and demonstrates no weaknesses. |
| 8 | Good: Applicant fully addresses all aspects of the criterion, convincingly demonstrates a likelihood of meeting the Government's requirements, and demonstrates only a few minor weaknesses. |
| 6 | Satisfactory: Applicant addresses all aspects of the criterion and demonstrates the ability to meet the Government's performance requirements. The Application contains weaknesses and/or a number of minor weaknesses. |
| 4 | Marginal: Applicant addresses all aspects of the criterion and demonstrates the ability to meet the Government's performance requirements. The Application contains significant weaknesses and/or a significant number of minor weaknesses. |
| 2 | Poor: Applicant addresses some aspects of the criterion and demonstrates some doubt in the likelihood of successfully meeting the Government's requirements. Significant weaknesses are demonstrated and clearly outweigh any strength presented. |
| 0 | Not Acceptable: Applicant does not address all aspects of the criterion and the information presented indicates a strong likelihood of failure to meet the Government's requirements. |

**c. Selection**

The Selection Official may consider the merit review recommendation, program policy factors (list any specific policy factors and/or important criteria to be noted by the applicant while preparing their submission – examples: geographic distribution of project performance and impact, leveraging of Federal funding, project addresses a critical resource, diversity of project partners, leveraging of programmatic resources, etc.), and the amount of funds available to select applications for funding.

**d. Discussions and Award**

The Government may enter into discussions with a selected applicant for any reason deemed necessary, including, but not limited to: (1) only a portion of the application is selected for award; (2) the Government needs additional information to determine that the applicant is capable of complying with the requirements of DOI Financial Assistance Regulations, and/or (3) additional specific terms and conditions are required. Failure to satisfactorily resolve the issues identified by the Government may preclude award to the applicant.

## 3. CFR – Regulatory Information

See the National Park Service’s Award Terms and Conditions for the general administrative and national policy requirements applicable to Service awards. The Service will communicate any other program- or project-specific special terms and conditions to recipients in their notices of award.

### Evaluation of Applicant Risk

In accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.205, applications selected for funding will be subject to a
pre-award risk assessment which may include a review of information contained within the applicant’s proposal, past audits, Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS), and/or past performance on previous Federal financial assistance awards. Negative information that leads to an applicant being designated as “Medium Risk” or “High Risk” may result in specific conditions, as identified in 2 C.F.R. § 200.207, being incorporated into the final award.

Prior to making a Federal award, any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance (currently FAPIIS) will be reviewed and considered (see 41 U.S.C. § 2313). Applicants may review and comment about any information about itself in FAPIIS. The Federal awarding agency will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in 2 C.F.R. §200.205

### 4. Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates

Estimated date of Federal Award: May 24, 2024.

Estimated date notifying successful and unsuccessful applicants: May 15, 2024

## Section F: Federal Award Administration Information

### 1. Federal Award Notices

Upon being selected for the award, successful applicants will receive a notification of the selection of their application for funding. NPS estimates it will notify the applicant selected for award by May 15, 2024. A notice of selection is not an authorization to begin performance on an agreement. This notice will detail the next steps in the awarding process. Once all clearances and reviews have been conducted, a cooperative agreement will be sent for signature.

Work cannot begin before the non-Federal entity receives a fully executed copy of the cooperative agreement which contains the signature of the Financial Assistance Awarding Officer. Any pre-award costs incurred prior to the receipt of a signed agreement or written notice signed by a Financial Assistance Awarding Officer authorizing pre-award costs, is at the applicant’s own risk. A signed cooperative agreement signed by a Financial Assistance Awarding Officer is the only authorizing document to begin performance.

Organizations whose applications have not been selected will be advised as promptly as possible.

### 2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Seethe “[DOI Standard Terms and Conditions](https://www.doi.gov/grants/doi-standard-terms-and-conditions)” for the administrative and national policy requirements applicable to DOI awards.

**Data Availability**

Per theFinancial Assistance Interior Regulation (FAIR), [2 CFR §1402.315](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-II/part-200/subpart-D/subject-group-ECFR8feb98c2e3e5ad2/section-200.315):

(a) All data, methodology, factual inputs, models, analyses, technical information, reports, conclusions, valuation products or other scientific assessments in any medium or form, including textual, numerical, graphic, cartographic, narrative, or audiovisual, resulting from a financial assistance agreement is available for use by the Department of the Interior, including being available in a manner that is sufficient for independent verification.

(b) The Federal Government has the right to:

(1) Obtain, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the data, methodology, factual inputs, models, analyses, technical information, reports, conclusions, or other scientific assessments, produced under a Federal award; and

(2) Authorize others to receive, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use such data, methodology, factual inputs, models, analyses, technical information, reports, conclusions, or other scientific assessments, for Federal purposes, including to allow for meaningful third-party evaluation.

### 3.  Reporting

1. **Financial Reports:** All recipients must use the [SF-425, Federal Financial Report](https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/post-award-reporting-forms.html) form for financial reporting. At a minimum, all recipients must submit a **final** financial report. Final reports are due no later than 120 calendar days after the award period of performance end date or termination date. For awards with periods of performance longer than 12 months, recipients are required to submit **interim** financial reports on the frequency established in the Notice of Award. The only exception to the interim financial reporting requirement is if the recipient is required to use the SF 270/271 to request payment and requests payment at least once annually through the entire award period of performance. We will describe all financial reporting requirements in the Notice of Award.
2. **Performance Reports:** Performance reports must contain a comparison of actual accomplishments with the established goals and objectives of the award; a description of reasons why established goals were not met, if appropriate; and any other pertinent information relevant to the project results. Final reports are due no later than 120 calendar days after the award period of performance end date or termination date. For awards with periods of performance longer than 12 months, recipients are required to submit **interim** financial reports on the frequency established in the Notice of Award.
3. **Real Property Reports:** Recipients and subrecipients are required to submit status reports on the status of real property acquired under the award in which the Federal government retains an interest. The required frequency of these reports will depend on the anticipated length of the Federal interest period. The Bureau will include recipient-specific real property reporting requirements, including the required data elements, reporting frequency, and report due dates, in the Notice of Award when applicable.
4. **Conflict of Interest Disclosures:** Recipients must notify the program immediately in writing of any conflict of interest that arise during the life of their Federal award, including those reported to them by any subrecipient under the award. Recipients must notify the program in writing if any employees, including subrecipient and contractor personnel, are related to, married to, or have a close personal relationship with any Federal employee in the Federal funding program or who otherwise may have been involved in the review and selection of the award. The term employee means any individual engaged in the performance of work pursuant to the Federal award. Recipients may not have a former Federal employee as a key project official, or in any other substantial role related to their award, whose participation put them out of compliance with the legal authorities addressing post-Government employment restrictions. See the [U.S. Office of](https://oge.gov/) [Government Ethics website](https://oge.gov/) for more information on these restrictions. The Service will examine each conflict-of-interest disclosure based on its particular facts and the nature of the project and will determine if a significant potential conflict exists. If it does, the Service will work with the recipient to determine an appropriate resolution. Failure to disclose and resolve conflicts of interest in a manner that satisfies the Service may result in any of the remedies described in [2 CFR 200.339](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=4772a9e79baa6af1caafa9c4a7782352&mc=true&node=pt2.1.200&rgn=div5#se2.1.200_1339) Remedies for Noncompliance, including termination of the award.
5. **Other Mandatory Disclosures:** The Non-Federal entity or applicant for a Federal award must disclose, in a timely manner, in writing to the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity all violations of Federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting the Federal award. Non-Federal entities that receive a Federal award including the terms and conditions outlined in 2 CFR 200, Appendix XII—Award Term and Condition for Recipient Integrity and Performance Matters are required to report certain civil, criminal, or administrative proceedings to SAM. Failure to make required disclosures can result in any of the remedies described in [2 CFR 200.339](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=4772a9e79baa6af1caafa9c4a7782352&mc=true&node=pt2.1.200&rgn=div5#se2.1.200_1339) Remedies for Noncompliance, including suspension or debarment.

**4. Reporting Matters Related to Recipient Integrity and Performance:**

If the total value of your currently active grants, cooperative agreements, and procurement contracts from all Federal awarding agencies exceeds $10,000,000 for any period of time during the period of performance of this Federal award, then you as the recipient during that period of time must maintain the currency of information reported to the System for Award Management (SAM) that is made available in the designated integrity and performance system (currently the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)) about civil, criminal, or administrative proceedings in accordance with [Appendix XII to 2 C.F.R. 200](http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=9c3f1f088a2ef78a524a9c28e4cd43b0&mc=true&node=ap2.1.200_1521.xii&rgn=div9).

**5. Significant Developments Reports:**

Events may occur between the scheduled performance reporting dates which have significant impact upon the supported activity. In such cases, recipients are required to notify the Bureau in writing as soon as the recipient becomes aware of any problems, delays, or adverse conditions that will materially impair the ability to meet the objective of the Federal award. This disclosure must include a statement of any corrective action(s) taken or contemplated, and any assistance needed to resolve the situation. The recipient should also notify the Service in writing of any favorable developments that enable meeting time schedules and objectives sooner or at less cost than anticipated or producing more or different beneficial results than originally planned.

## Section G: Federal Awarding Agency Contacts

Program Technical Contact**:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name: | Jimi Sadle |
| Address: |  |
| Phone: | 321-408-4266 |
| E-mail: | Jimi\_Sadle@nps.gov |
|  |

Program Administration Contact**:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name: | Tina Holland |
| Address: |  |
| Phone: | 406-589-5586 |
| E-mail: | Tina\_Holland@nps.gov |
|  |

Application System Technical Support:

For Grants.gov technical registration and submission, downloading forms and application packages, contact Grants.gov Customer Support at 1-800-518-4726 or Support@grants.gov.

## Section H: Other Information:

**Payments**

Domestic recipients are required to register in and receive payment through the U.S. Treasury’s Automated Standard Application for Payments (ASAP), unless approved for a waiver by the Service program. Foreign recipients receiving funds to a final destination bank outside the U.S. are required to receive payment through the U.S. Treasury’s International Treasury Services (ITS) System. Foreign recipients receiving funds to a final destination bank in the U.S. are required to enter and maintain current banking details in their SAM.gov entity profile and receive payment through the Automated Clearing House network by electronic funds transfer (EFT). The Bureau will include recipient-specific instructions on how to request payment, including identification of any additional information required and where to submit payment requests, as applicable, in all Notices of Award.

## Appendix A - Application PackageForms SF424, SF424A, SF424B