

## ANNOUNCEMENT OF FEDERAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

Funding Opportunity Title: FY2013 Marine Debris Prevention, Education and Outreach Partnership Grants

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: NOAA-NOS-ORR-2013-2003595

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 11.463, Habitat Conservation

Dates: The deadline for receipt of full applications at the Marine Debris office is 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on February 28, 2013. Applications received after the closing date and time will not be accepted. Please note: Validation or rejection of your application by Grants.gov may take up to 2 business days after submission. Please consider this process in developing your submission. No fax or e-mail applications will be accepted.

Funding Opportunity Description: The NOAA Marine Debris Program (MDP), authorized in the Marine Debris Research, Prevention, and Reduction Act (Marine Debris Act, 33 U.S.C. 1951 et seq., as amended by Title VI of Public Law 112-213.), has a lead role in addressing marine debris affecting the marine environment and navigation safety in the United States. The MDP defines marine debris as any persistent solid material that is manufactured or processed and directly or indirectly, intentionally or unintentionally, disposed of or abandoned into the marine environment or the Great Lakes (15 CFR Part 909). The MDP conducts reduction, prevention, and research activities, as well as supports grants, partnerships, cooperative agreements, and contracts to address marine debris. It has held regional, national, and international workshops and established an interactive website ([www.marinedebris.noaa.gov](http://www.marinedebris.noaa.gov)).

The MDP invites applicants requesting funding to establish national and regional projects focusing on marine debris prevention, education, and outreach activities. These outreach projects will use existing networks, expand on existing resources, and/or disseminate or develop tools to support these activities. Projects are expected to catalyze the public or a target audience to address marine debris in a way that will benefit living marine resources and/or navigation safety. NOAA envisions working jointly on such projects through its Marine Debris Program to identify, evaluate, fund, and administer projects that address marine debris to restore NOAA trust resource species and ecosystems. This document describes the types of marine debris projects that NOAA envisions establishing, portrays the qualities that NOAA has found to be ideal in

previous projects, and describes criteria under which applications will be evaluated for funding consideration. Applications selected through this announcement will be implemented through cooperative agreements, and will involve joint selection of any multiple marine debris projects funded as sub-awards made through the recipient organization.

Funding requested to establish projects in FY2013 is expected to be greater than funds available for this purpose and the selection process is anticipated to be highly competitive. Funding of up to \$500,000 is expected to be available to establish marine debris projects in 2013. Typical awards will range from \$20,000 to \$150,000. This announcement is a focused effort to fund projects addressing marine debris prevention and outreach.

Funding is contingent upon the availability of Fiscal Year 2013 appropriations.

## FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

### I. Funding Opportunity Description

#### A. Program Objective

The principal objective of these NOAA Marine Debris Prevention, Education and Outreach grants is to provide Federal financial and technical assistance to organizations that have the capacity and expertise to identify, evaluate, fund and administer marine debris prevention through education and outreach projects and campaigns across a range of scales that meet NOAA's mission to restore marine and coastal ecosystems, and support formal and informal education at all levels.

#### B. Program Priorities

NOAA is interested in funding recipients who will aim to engage new, non-traditional audiences for example, high school students, inner city communities, commercial and non-commercial entities, entrepreneurs, etc. in educating the greater public about marine debris - through innovative and on-the-ground means.

Through this funding and request for applications announcement the NOAA Marine Debris Program (MDP) will address three of its Program Goals:

- 1) Prevent and reduce the occurrence and impacts of marine debris to natural resources, the economy and navigation safety;
- 2) Develop, use, and disseminate tools and products to improve efforts to address marine debris; and,
- 3) Encourage changes in behavior to address marine debris.

It should be noted that funding opportunities in this section will be limited to activities that support or stimulate marine debris education and outreach efforts. Through prevention, education and outreach activities, NOAA and recipients aim to engage audiences in measurable behavior changing activities and limit the increase of marine debris in the world's oceans. Prevention, education and outreach activities are needed at all levels, from children and adults living in non-coastal areas, to beachfront home owners and those who depend on the oceans for their livelihoods. Outreach and education are vital to the success of the MDP mission, to impart key messages and information to audiences through effective and strategically targeted campaigns.

The program priorities for this opportunity support NOAA's Mission to protect, restore and manage the use of coastal and ocean resources through ecosystem-based management. Through this funding opportunity, the program strives to demonstrate meaningful, measurable, and sustainable ecological benefits to coastal and marine resources by reducing the amount of marine debris in the marine environment through prevention, behavior changing initiatives and campaigns, and education/outreach. The program aims to fund different types of recipients: ones that have a regional focus and also ones that have national marine debris outreach/education focus. (Example: cleaning up the Chesapeake Bay vs. creating national curriculum for teachers).

This opportunity also supports the NOAA mandate to conduct, develop, support, promote, and coordinate formal and informal education on all levels to increase public awareness about ocean, coastal, Great Lakes and atmospheric science and stewardship.

#### National and Regional Prevention, Education and Outreach Goals

NOAA is interested in funding projects that will lead to the reduction of marine debris in the marine and coastal environments through the implementation of prevention and outreach activities. The primary goals of NOAA in establishing these projects is to use existing networks to further the work of the MDP in preventing and educating the public about marine debris through dedicated prevention activities including, but not limited to:

- " Creating educational programs or initiatives that encourage the general public, students and other constituents, employees, or members of varying industries to be environmental stewards and engage their peers in action on marine debris;

- " Engage and educate a new, non-traditional audience about marine debris through creative, non-digital means, which will result in measurable behavioral changes that will reduce/prevent marine debris, and;

- " The development and dissemination of tools and innovative products to reduce or prevent marine debris.

These goals will be achieved through increased involvement of organizations, commercial and non-commercial industry, and/or communities in preventing marine debris; development and maintenance of long-term, on-going working relationships of mutual benefit by partnering on activities where the priorities and goals of recipients overlap; combining resources with national and regional recipients to increase the geographic scope

and rate at which marine debris prevention activities can be conducted; and collaborating on project identification and development. Priority will be given to those recipients that are able to coordinate and manage most or all aspects of these activities. While we are open to the methods of outreach that utilize digital means, NOAA seeks unique, innovative technologies that would engage new audiences.

Successful applicants will be those whose proposals demonstrate the potential for significant benefits to living marine resources and/or according to a publicly vetted, prioritized regional plan or similar document to accomplish coordinated, strategic implementation of individual projects. Applicants will need to demonstrate that marine debris activities will be consistent with MDP priorities and goals outlined in this notice. Applicants should also note that the following activities will not be considered under the awards: (1) Activities that constitute legally required mitigation for the adverse effects of an activity regulated or otherwise governed by local, state or Federal law; (2) activities that constitute restoration for natural resource damages under Federal, state or local law; and (3) activities that are required by a separate consent decree, court order, statute or regulation.

Proposals for both national and regional projects are encouraged. Applications for regional awards should include goals and objectives that accomplish an increase in marine debris prevention and/or outreach, and whose activities are expected to take place across a defined geographic region, such as the Chesapeake Bay watershed or the states that border the Gulf of Maine or the Gulf of Mexico and/or will work within a prioritized framework to implement projects of greatest benefit in a comprehensive, effective strategic fashion.

Applications for national projects should include goals and objectives that accomplish an increase in marine debris prevention and/or outreach, and whose activities are expected to take place on a national level, throughout the United States, such as a national marine debris prevention campaign, and or will work within a prioritized framework to implement projects of greatest benefit in a comprehensive, effective fashion.

### C. Program Authority

The Administrator is authorized under the under the Marine Debris Research, Prevention, and Reduction Act (MDRPR Act), 33 U.S.C. 1952, to provide cooperative agreements to address marine debris.

## II. Award Information

### A. Funding Availability

Total anticipated funding for all awards is approximately \$500,000 and is subject to the availability of FY 2013 Congressional appropriations. Multiple awards are anticipated from this announcement. The anticipated Federal funding per award (min-max) is approximately \$20,000 to \$150,000 per year. NOAA will not accept proposals with a single year budget less than \$15,000 or more than \$175,000 under this solicitation. The number of awards to be made as a result of this solicitation will depend on the number of eligible applications received, the amount of funds requested for initiating projects by the applicants, the merit and ranking of the proposals, and the amount of funds made available to the MDP by Congress. NOAA anticipates that between 1 and 10 awards will be made as a result of this solicitation.

There is no guarantee that sufficient funds will be available to initiate awards where funding has been recommended, and the number of national and regional awards established will be up to the discretion of the Director. The exact amount of funds that may be awarded for a marine debris outreach project will be determined in pre-award negotiations between the applicant and NOAA representatives. Publication of this document does not obligate NOAA to establish any specific project proposed or to obligate all or any parts of the available funds for project activities.

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. In no event will NOAA or the Department of Commerce be responsible for any proposal preparation costs. In addition, NOAA and DOC will not be responsible for proposal or project costs if this program fails to receive funding. Recipients and sub-recipients are subject to all Federal laws and agency policies, regulations, and procedures applicable to Federal financial assistance awards. Applicants must be in good standing with all existing NOAA grants and/or cooperative funding agreements in order to receive funds.

### B. Project/Award Period

Applications for national and regional projects should cover a performance period between one and three years. Multiple year awards will receive all funding in the first year,

but the performance period can be longer than one year. The earliest anticipated start date for awards will be August 1, 2013. Applicants should consider this date when developing plans for initiating proposed project activities.

### C. Type of Funding Instrument

Proposals selected for funding will be funded through cooperative agreements. For applications funded through cooperative agreements, substantial involvement of the Federal government may include, but is not limited to, activities such as assisting national and regional recipients to promote locally driven marine debris activities; cooperating with recipients in project identification, evaluation and selection; conducting site visits, as appropriate, and evaluating the performance of individual projects sub-awarded through recipients; supporting project recipients to enhance their effectiveness in meeting stated marine debris-related goals for improving living marine resources, including assistance with the development of appropriate monitoring to ensure a basic level of assessment of project success; collaborating on the improvement of existing, and/or development of new performance measures to gauge project outcomes; and involvement in public events to highlight project activities.

## III. Eligibility Information

### A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are institutions of higher education, hospitals, other non-profits, commercial (for-profit) organizations, Regional Fishery Management Councils and Commissions, organizations under the jurisdiction of foreign governments, international organizations, state, local and Indian tribal governments. Applications from Federal agencies or employees of Federal agencies will not be considered.

Federal agencies and employees are not allowed to receive funds under this announcement.

The Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, is strongly committed to broadening the participation of veterans, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic Serving Institutions, and Tribal Colleges and Universities in its educational and research programs.

## B. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

A major goal of the NOAA MDP is to provide funding to recipients that leverage funds and other contributions from a broad public and private sector to implement locally, regionally or nationally important activities to benefit living marine resources and navigation safety. To this end, the MDRPR Act requires applicants to demonstrate a minimum 1:1 non-Federal match for MDP funds requested for the proposed award. Although not required, a cash match is preferred. In addition to formal match, NOAA strongly encourages applicants to leverage as much investment as possible.

Match can come from a variety of public and private sources and can include in-kind goods and services such as private boat use and volunteer labor. Applicants are permitted to combine contributions from non-Federal project collaborators, as long as such contributions are not being used to match any other funds and are available within the project period stated in the application. Federal sources cannot be considered for matching funds, but can be described in the budget narrative to demonstrate additional leverage. Applicants are permitted to combine contributions from multiple non-Federal project collaborators in order to meet the 1:1 match recommendation, as long as such contributions are not being used to match any other funds. Applicants are also permitted to apply federally negotiated indirect costs in excess of Federal share limits as described in Section IV.E.2. "Indirect Costs."

Applicants should also note that the following activities, in general, will not be considered as match under project awards: (1) Activities that constitute legally required mitigation for the adverse effects of an activity regulated or otherwise governed by local, state or Federal law; (2) activities that constitute restoration for natural resource damages under Federal, state or local law; and (3) activities that are required by a separate consent decree, court order, statute or regulation. However, the MDRPR Act allows the Administrator to authorize, as appropriate, the non-Federal share of the cost of a project to include money paid pursuant to, or the value of any in-kind service performed under, an administrative order on consent or judicial consent decree that will remove or prevent marine debris. Applicants whose proposals are selected for funding will be bound by the percentage of cost sharing reflected in the award document signed by the NOAA Grants Officer. Successful applicants should be prepared to carefully document matching contributions, including the names of participating volunteers and the overall number of volunteer or community participation hours devoted to individual marine debris projects. Letters of commitment for any secured resources expected to be used as match for an award should be submitted as an attachment to the application.

However, the MDRPR Act allows the Administrator to waive all or part of the matching requirement if the applicant can demonstrate that:

" no reasonable means are available through which applicants can meet the matching requirement and

" the probable benefit of such project outweighs the public interest in such matching requirement.

In addition, the MDP may waive any requirement for matching funds by an Insular Area (Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, and the Government of the Northern Mariana Islands). Under 48 USC 1469a(d.ii.i), any department or agency may waive any requirement for matching funds otherwise required by law to be provided by the Insular Area involved. Insular Area applicants wishing to waive the match requirement must include a letter specifically requesting the match waiver.

Any applicant wishing to request a match waiver must provide a match waiver request letter as a part of the application package being submitted. The request must contain a detailed justification explaining the need for the waiver, descriptions of attempts to obtain sources of matching funds, how the benefit of the project outweighs the public interest in providing match, and any other extenuating circumstances preventing the incorporation or local availability of matching contributions.

All applicants should note that cost sharing is an element considered in Evaluation Criterion #4. "Project Costs."

#### C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility

Each application must substantially comply with the elements listed under Required Elements, or it will be returned to sender without further consideration. The Marine Debris program adheres to the principals of scientific integrity. This policy can be found; <http://nrc.noaa.gov/scientificintegrity.html>.

### IV. Application and Submission Information

#### A. Address to Request Application Package

Complete application packages, including required Federal forms and instructions, and Supplemental Guidance for Prospective Applicants can be found on [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). If a prospective applicant is having difficulty downloading the application forms from Grants.gov, contact Grants.gov Customer Support at 1-800-518-4726 or [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov).

Hard copy application packages can be requested from Nancy Wallace at 1305 East West Highway, 10th Floor, Room 10201, Silver Spring, MD 20910. ATTN: Marine Debris Research Grants; or contact her at 301-713-4248, x125 or via e-mail at <[Nancy.Wallace@noaa.gov](mailto:Nancy.Wallace@noaa.gov)>.

## B. Content and Form of Application

Applicants are strongly encouraged to apply through the [grants.gov](http://grants.gov) website, [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov), the clearinghouse for Federal financial assistance. A complete standard NOAA grants application package shall be submitted in accordance with the guidelines in this document.

Each application should include:

1) Required Federal application forms, including:

a) Application for Federal Assistance: SF-424 (9/03 version or newer)

b) Budget Information, Non-construction Programs: SF-424A (one for each annual budget period)

c) Assurances, Non-construction Programs: SF-424B

d) Certifications Regarding Debarment, Suspension, and other Responsibility Matters: Drug Free Workplace Environment: CD-511

e) CD-512 (remains with applicant -do not submit as part of the application package)

f) Disclosure of Lobbying Activities: SF-LLL (if applicable)

g) Applicant for Federal Assistance: CD-346, must be downloaded from the DOC Forms Library at <http://www.ago.noaa.gov/ago/grants/forms.cfm> (required for the following: individuals, Non-profit Organizations, Sole Proprietorship, Partnerships, Corporations and Joint Venture).

2) A project summary (maximum of 2 pages).

a) Applicant Organization

b) Project Title

c) Geographic Scope - state whether the project is national or regional, and what states and/or watersheds it will cover

d) Planning Framework - briefly describe any planning or prioritization framework the project may use to determine funding priorities

e) NOAA Trust Resources likely to benefit - briefly describe the project resource focus, any restrictions expected such as only certain habitat types, debris types, specific applicant/user groups, specific resource/habitat targets, etc.

f) Outputs/Outcomes - briefly describe the anticipated outputs and outcomes the project may be expected to produce

g) Federal Funds Requested & Non-Federal Match Anticipated (including other Federal contributions that may help support the project) Letter of commitment for any secured resources expected to be used as match for an award should be submitted as an attachment to the application.

3) A project narrative (maximum of 10 pages).

The narrative should include:

a) A narrative description should be no more than 10 pages long (in 12-point font with 1" margins; double-spaced type is preferred, but not required) that clearly demonstrates the broad-based benefits expected to living marine resources and/or navigation safety, and how these benefits will be achieved through the proposed project activities;

b) Specific problems the project will address, and the geographic area over which the project will operate;

c) The targeted audience;

d) A description of short- and long-term objectives and goals, the expected success of projects implemented, and the relevance and significance of the proposed project to address marine debris to benefit living marine resources and/or navigations safety. If specific

projects are identified in the application, the narrative should describe the history of these projects.

e) Proposed output and outcome measures that will be used to track the success of the project.

f) The anticipated project duration (between 12 and 36 months), the amount and timing of funds requested, potential sources of national/regional and local match, including cash match available at the national/regional level for supporting project sub-awards, and any restrictions the recipient may impose on the further use of Federal funds. For example, if the recipient anticipates designating funding for specific project phases, cost categories or to specific recipients, restricting habitat types, debris types, organization types or geographic locations from consideration, these limitations or restrictions should be clearly detailed in the narrative. It is NOAA's intention to maintain maximum competition and flexibility in the use of Federal marine debris prevention and outreach funds. NOAA will review and approve any sub-awards.

g) Should the project include field activities, a description of how recipients will ensure that all necessary environmental permits and consultations are secured prior to the use of Federal funds for implementing individual projects that may require permits and consultations, and how the necessary information will be provided to NOAA staff to enable them to make a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) determination for all projects (see Section VI. B. "Administrative and National Policy Requirements" for further guidance.)

h) Information on how the selection of any sub-awards under the award will promote understanding of the issue of marine debris and keys to prevention, and describe how the project will be advanced or promoted.

i) A description of the organizational structure of the applicant, detail their qualifications and identify proposed staff. Anticipated project participants other than the applicant should be identified, and supporting documentation indicating their intent to participate and identifying their potential contributions should be included. This is particularly important for those applying to establish regional projects.

j) Inclusion of supplementary materials such as planning documents, photographs, etc. is strongly encouraged and do not count toward the narrative page limit. All supplementary materials should be combined and submitted as one single file separate from the narrative. Applicants should not assume prior knowledge on the part of NOAA as to the relative merits of the project described in the application.

k) Project Identification - briefly describe the type of marine debris to be addressed (i.e. derelict fishing gear, land based litter, derelict and abandoned vessels), the targeted audience

(e.g. K-12, fishing industry, teachers) and the prevention and/or outreach method(s) to be implemented. If sub-awards are part of the proposal, briefly describe the process that will be used to identify high quality projects, including a proposed timeline for solicitation, and implementation.

4) A detailed, narrative budget justification (described below) (2 pages/annual budget periods).

Budgets must include a detailed breakdown by category of cost (object class) separated into Federal and non-Federal shares as they relate to specific aspects of the project, with appropriate justification for both the Federal and non-Federal shares. A separate SF-424A budget form should be used to break down multi-year budget requests into annual funding increments, and the budget justification should mirror the organization of the forms. Applicants are encouraged to include a budget table to further clarify the cost breakdown. Budget justifications should indicate if funding requests to support project activities have been submitted elsewhere, whether the funds requested are Federal or non-Federal, and what amount has been requested or secured from other sources to support project activities described in the application submitted to NOAA. The NOAA Grants Management Division will review budget information for recommended applications to determine if costs are allowable, allocable, reasonable, and realistic.

Applicants must itemize and describe the intended use of equipment costing \$5,000 or greater that will be purchased under the award. Applicants must complete a lease versus purchase analysis for any equipment \$5,000 or greater. The applicant, to the extent possible, is requested to state who will be requested to retain ownership of any equipment purchased through grant funds after the project ends.

Funding for salaries must also be used to support staff directly involved in accomplishing the work and should contain a detailed breakdown of personnel hours and costs by task. Requests for salaries are expected to support staff with the proper qualifications and relevant skill sets to support the technical aspects of prevention and outreach such that NOAA staff augment and assist with project implementation rather than serve as the primary. The narrative budget justification should be sufficiently detailed to enable a clear understanding of the cost breakdown and calculations used to come up with the line item totals in each object class of the 424A budget form.

5) The curriculum vitae or resume of primary project personnel.

6) Waiver request letter, if applicable.

7) Other relevant attachments the applicant deems important to the overall understanding and evaluation of the proposed project, such as regional restoration planning documents or a site location map to indicate the geographic scope of the project activity.

Applications submitted through the grants.gov website should include only three files in addition to the Federal Application forms: 1) the project summary and narrative, 2) the budget justification, and 3) all other attachments combined, including resumes, national or regional plans, and maps not to exceed 30 pages. PDF files are the preferred format; information about converting documents to PDF files is available on the grants.gov website.

PLEASE NOTE: Applications that exceed the page limits stated above will not be sent forward for review. Applicants that do not comply with the page limit guidance do so at their own risk.

#### Other Application Submission Information

Applicants are strongly encouraged to apply through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). It takes approximately 3 weeks to register with grants.gov, and registration is required only once. Applicants should consider the time needed to register with grants.gov, and should begin the registration process well in advance of the application due date if they have never registered with grants.gov. If grants.gov cannot reasonably be used, a hard copy application (signed in blue ink) may be submitted to the Marine Debris Program (see sub-section F. "Other Submission Requirements"). Paper applications should be printed on one side only and should not be bound in any manner. Applicants submitting paper applications should also include a full copy of the application on compact disc.

#### C. Submission Dates and Times

The deadline for receipt of full applications at the Marine Debris office is 11:59 p.m.

Eastern Time on February 28, 2013. Note that late-arriving hard copy applications will be accepted for review only if the applicant can document that:

- 1) The application was provided to a delivery service with delivery to the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration Marine Debris Division, N/ORR, 1305 East-West Highway, SSMC4, Mail Station 10201 10th Floor, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-328 Attention: Marine Debris Prevention, Education and Outreach Grant Applications.
- 2) Delivery was guaranteed by 11:59 p.m., Eastern Time on the specified closing date; and,
- 3) The application was received in the Marine Debris office by 11:59 p.m., Eastern Time no later than 2 business days following the closing date.

Applicants are advised to submit well in advance of the deadline. No fax or email applications will be accepted.

Important: All applicants, both electronic and paper, should be aware that adequate time must be factored into applicant schedules for delivery of the application. Electronic applicants are advised that volume on Grants.gov is currently extremely heavy, and if Grants.gov is unable to accept applications electronically in a timely fashion, applicants are encouraged to exercise their option to submit applications in paper format. Paper applicants should allow adequate time to ensure a paper application will be received on time, taking into account that guaranteed overnight carriers are not always able to fulfill their guarantees.

#### D. Intergovernmental Review

Funding applications under NOAA are subject to Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs." It is the state agency's responsibility to contact their state's Single Point of Contact (SPOC) to find out about and comply with the state's process under EO 12372. To assist the applicant, the names and addresses of the SPOCs are listed on the Office of Management and Budget's website [http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants\\_spoc](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc).

#### E. Funding Restrictions

- 1) Allowable Costs

Funds awarded cannot necessarily pay for all the costs that the recipient might incur in the course of carrying out the project. Generally, costs that are allowable include salaries, equipment and supplies, as long as these are "necessary and reasonable" specifically for the purpose of the award. Allowable costs are determined by reference to the OMB Circulars A-122, 14 "Cost Principles for Non-profit Organizations"; A-21, "Cost Principles for Education Institutions"; A-87, "Cost Principles for State, Local and Indian Tribal Governments"; and Federal Acquisition Regulation, codified at 48 Code of Federal Regulations, subpart 31.2 "Contracts with Commercial Organizations." All cost reimbursement sub-awards (subgrants, subcontracts, etc.) are subject to those Federal cost principles applicable to the particular type of organization concerned.

Pre-award costs are generally unallowable. A pre-award cost incurred before a notice of award document is provided by the NOAA Grants Office is at the applicant's own risk. Typically, the earliest date for receipt of awards will be August 1, 2013. Applicants should consider this award timing when developing requested start dates for proposed project activities. See 15 CFR Part 14 Section 14.25 for more information on pre-award costs.

## 2) Indirect Costs

The budget may include an amount for indirect costs if the applicant has an established indirect cost rate with the Federal government. Indirect costs are essentially overhead costs for basic operational functions (e.g., lights, rent, water, insurance) that are incurred for common or joint objectives and therefore cannot be identified specifically within a particular project activity. For this solicitation, the Federal share of the indirect costs must not exceed the lesser of either the indirect costs the applicant would be entitled to if the negotiated Federal indirect cost rate were used or 25 percent of the direct costs proposed. For those situations in which the use of the applicant's indirect cost rate would result in indirect costs greater than 25 percent of the Federal direct costs, the difference may be counted as part of the non-Federal share.

If applicable, a copy of the current, approved negotiated indirect cost agreement with the Federal government should be included with the application. If the applicant does not have a current negotiated rate and plans to seek reimbursement for indirect costs, documentation necessary to establish a rate must be submitted within 90 days of receiving an award.

## F. Other Submission Requirements

NOAA defines marine debris as any persistent solid material that is manufactured or processed and directly or indirectly, intentionally or unintentionally, disposed of or

abandoned into the marine environment or the Great Lakes (as published in the Federal Register on September 3, 2009). Applications addressing other types of pollution not fitting the definition of marine debris will not be considered.

### Project Requirements

Selected recipients are expected to be well-rounded with respect to benefits, sound science, accountability, cost-effectiveness and mission focus. Applications that incorporate a combination of the factors identified below will be given higher priority for funding consideration.

" Projects featuring an established network that protects living marine resources, enhances ocean and Great Lakes stewardship by reducing marine debris through prevention and outreach/education, and supports NOAA's ecosystem mission goal.

" Projects that address under-served or under-represented regions and minority groups and others who might not have access to information about marine debris.

" Projects that propose to use sub-awards should employ a competitive mechanism or similarly rigorous process for the funding of any sub-awards or for the direct funding of highly qualified projects. In selecting a sub-award, the recipient should use the NOAA standard evaluation criteria and will be relatively consistent for NOAA across a wide variety of activities. The five standard NOAA criteria are 1) importance and applicability of proposal; 2) technical and scientific merit; 3) overall qualifications of applicants; 4) project costs; and 5) outreach and education.

" Inclusion of quantitative performance measures for monitoring purposes.

" Provision of information on individual project accomplishments to allow for robust project tracking, evaluation of performance measures, and identification on the MDP website ([www.marinedebris.noaa.gov](http://www.marinedebris.noaa.gov)).

" Providing cash match at the national/regional level for project implementation and a 1:1 match overall (required, see section III. B.) will enable a greater number of jointly evaluated and recommended marine debris projects to be implemented.

Applicants should submit applications electronically through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). Users of Grants.gov will be able to download a copy of the application package, complete it off line, and then upload and submit the application via the Grants.gov site. If an applicant has problems downloading the application forms from Grants.gov, contact Grants.gov Customer Support at 1-800-518-4726 or [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov).

Do not wait until the application deadline to begin the application process through Grants.gov. To use Grants.gov, applicants must have a DUNS number and register in the Central Contractor Registry (CCR). Applicants should allow a minimum of 5 days to complete the CCR registration; registration is required only once. After electronic submission of the application, applicants will receive an automatic acknowledgment from Grants.gov that contains a Grants.gov tracking number. Applications submitted through Grants.gov will be accompanied by two automated receipts of the date and time of submission (the first confirms receipt; the second confirms that there are no errors with an application submission and that the application has been forwarded to NOAA for further processing). If both notifications are not received, an applicant needs to follow up with both the Grants.gov helpdesk and the NOAA Restoration Center to confirm receipt of submission.

PLEASE NOTE: It may take Grants.gov up to two (2) business days to validate or reject the application. Please keep this in mind in developing your submission timeline. Applicants should allow themselves sufficient time to submit their application to Grants.gov in advance of the deadline to ensure applications have been submitted successfully, as the deadline for submission cannot be extended. NOAA may request that you provide original signatures on forms at a later date.

Although electronic submission is encouraged, if sending a hard copy application, it must be postmarked, or provided to a delivery service and documented, by February 28, 2013, and sent to: NOAA Marine Debris Division, N/ORR, 1305 East West Highway, 10th Floor, Room 10201, Silver Spring, MD 20910. ATTN: Marine Debris Prevention Education and Outreach Grants Applications. Applicants submitting paper applications must also include a full copy of the application as a single PDF file, including Federal forms, on a compact disc (CD).

#### Paperwork Reduction Act Statement

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 3 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other suggestions for reducing this burden to Ms. Cristi Reid, NOAA Office of Program Planning and Integration, SSMC 3, Room 15700, 1315 East West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910. The information collection does not request any proprietary or confidential information. No confidentiality is provided.

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

## V. Application Review Information

### A. Evaluation Criteria

Technical reviewers will assign scores to proposals ranging from 0 to 100 points based on the following five standard NOAA evaluation criteria and respective weights specified below.

#### 1) Importance and Applicability of Proposal (20 points):

This ascertains whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and/or relevance to NOAA, Federal, regional, State, or local activities. Questions related to this criterion include: Does the proposed project activity enhance regional or national collaboration to prevent the introduction of marine debris through education, outreach, development and dissemination of tools, or other prevention activities? Are the correct recipients involved

and does the proposed project utilize existing networks at the national or regional level? Proposals will be evaluated on how well the proposed project will achieve the specific goals of the announcement.

2) Technical and Scientific Merit (20 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 and objectives. Questions relevant to this criterion include: Is the approach appropriate for the stated goals and objectives? Are the project goals and objectives achievable within the proposed time-frame and budget level? Is the project innovative and/or does it provide unique and impactful outreach techniques?

3) Overall qualifications of the funding applicants (15 points):

This criterion ascertains whether the funding applicant possesses the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project. Questions relevant to this criterion include: Does the proposal demonstrate regional and institutional support for the project? Are the applicants qualified and is the organizational framework appropriate to coordinate and facilitate a project of the nature and scope proposed? Are collaborators from other agencies and institutions within the region or nation included as key personnel on the project to capitalize on available expertise and promote a regional or national approach? Does the proposal utilize and/or highlight specific resources and expertise provided by the applicant?

4) Project Costs (15 points):

This criterion evaluates the budget to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time-frame. Questions relevant to this criterion include: Does the proposal demonstrate that the budget is commensurate with project needs? Does the applicant propose cash as its cost share contribution? Is the cost effectiveness of the project optimized through strategic partnerships with collaborating institutions, agencies, or private sector partners?

5) Outreach and Education (30 points):

This criterion assesses whether the project provides a focused and effective education and outreach strategy regarding NOAA's mission to understand and protect the Nation's natural resources. Questions relevant to this criterion include: Does the proposal identify a target audience, and demonstrate that the target audience has been engaged in the development of the desired project outcomes? Does the proposal demonstrate that information generated by the project will reach its target audience and have a positive impact on preventing marine debris? Does the proposal aim to inspire behavior change in the target

audience? Is the relationship between the debris type and target audience soundly established?

## B. Review and Selection Process

Applications will be screened by NOAA staff to determine if they are eligible, complete and in accordance with instructions detailed in the standard NOAA Grants Application Package.

Eligible applications for Marine Debris Prevention, Education and Outreach Grants will be evaluated by at least three individual technical reviewers according to the criteria and weights described in this solicitation. Each reviewer will independently evaluate each project and provide an individual score. No consensus advice will be provided by these reviewers. Applications will likely be subject to a subsequent panel review.

If a panel review is not convened, the application ranking, technical review comments and scores will be provided to the Selecting Official (SO). If a panel is convened, the Federal Funding Opportunity, application ranking, top ranked applications, and technical review comments and scores will be provided to a panel. The panel may convene in person or by teleconference, video conference or other electronic means to discuss applications and consider technical reviewer comments. Prior to the panel discussion, each member of the panel will independently assign a numerical rating of either 0, 2 or 4 for each application, based on the degree to which each application addresses the evaluation criteria and program priorities, according to the following scale:

- " 0 - Poor to Fair - not recommended for funding
- " 2 - Good - recommended for funding with modification once higher priorities are met
- " 4 - Excellent - recommended for funding and inclusion in top tier for definite consideration with available funds

Panel member scores will be averaged and an interim ranking will result which will be presented to the panel for discussion, with the goal of reaching consensus on the applications to be recommended for funding. After discussing the applications, panelists will again assign a numerical rating of 0, 2 or 4 (as described above) for each application, scores will be

averaged, and a final project ranking developed. The final ranking from the panel will be presented to the SO and should be the primary consideration by the SO in deciding which applications will be recommended to the NOAA Grants Officer.

In accordance with current Federal appropriations law, NOAA will provide the successful corporate applicant(s) a form to be completed by its authorized representative certifying that the corporation has no Federally-assessed unpaid or delinquent tax liability or recent felony criminal convictions under any Federal law.

### C. Selection Factors

The SO anticipates recommending applications for funding in rank order unless an application is justified to be selected out of rank order based upon one or more of the following selection factors:

- 1) Availability of funding;
- 2) Balance/distribution of funds:
  - a) Geographically;
  - b) By type of institutions;
  - c) By type of partners;
  - d) By research areas;
  - e) By project types;
- 3) Whether this project duplicates other projects funded or considered for funding by NOAA or other Federal agencies;
- 4) Program priorities and policy factors set out in section I.A. and I.B.;
- 5) An applicant's prior award performance;
- 6) Activity and/or participation of targeted groups; and
- 7) Adequacy of information necessary for NOAA staff to make a NEPA determination and draft necessary documentation before recommendations for funding are made to the NOAA Grants Officer.

The Selecting Official or designee may negotiate the funding level of the proposal.

#### D. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

Successful applicants generally will be identified by May 30, 2013. The earliest anticipated start date for projects will be August 1, 2013, dependent on the completion of all NOAA/applicant negotiations, NEPA analysis, and documentation supporting cooperative agreement activities. Applicants must consider this timeline when developing requested start dates for proposed activities. The start date on proposals should be August 1, 2013, but no later than September 1, 2013.

Awards may not necessarily be made to the highest scored applications. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified that their application was not among those recommended for funding. Unsuccessful applications submitted in hard copy will be kept on file until the selection process has been validated and approved by the Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Law Division and then destroyed.

### VI. Award Administration Information

#### A. Award Notices

Applications recommended for funding by the Selecting Official will be forwarded to the NOAA Grants Management Division (GMD) by the Program Office. The applicant will be notified by the program office by e-mail that their application was recommended for funding. The applicant must be aware that the notification by the program office is not the official award notice. Official notification happens only when the applicant receives an award notice from the Grants Officer electronically.

Successful applicants may be asked to modify work plans or budgets, and provide supplemental information required by the agency prior to final approval of an award. The exact amount of funds to be awarded, the final scope of activities, the project duration, and specific NOAA cooperative involvement with the activities of each recipient will be determined in pre-award negotiations among the applicant, the NOAA Grants Office, and NOAA staff that will administer these grants. Applicants that initiate project activities in expectation of Federal funding do so at their own risk, and are advised not to begin until a notice of award document is received electronically from the NOAA GMD in Grants Online, NOAA's online grants management system.

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified by e-mail that their application was not recommended for funding status within 10 business days after the final program office recommendations have been approved by the NOAA GMD.

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 of 2006, to the extent applicable, any proposal awarded in response to this announcement will be required to use the System for Award Management (SAM - formally the Central Contractor Registration - CCR) capabilities accessible through the U.S. Department of Treasury's System for Award Management <<https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/>> Central Contractor Registration and Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System and be subject to reporting requirements, as identified in OMB guidance published at 2 CFR Parts 25, 170 (2010),

[http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr25\\_main\\_02.tpl](http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr25_main_02.tpl)

[http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr170\\_main\\_02.tpl](http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr170_main_02.tpl)

## B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

1) The Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements contained in the Federal Register notice of December 17, 2012, (77 FR 74634) are applicable to this solicitation.

### 2) Limitation of Liability:

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

### 3) National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Requirements

Under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), NOAA must analyze the potential environmental impacts of projects or proposals seeking funding from NOAA.

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://ceq.hss.doe.gov/ceq\\_regulations/regulations.html](http://ceq.hss.doe.gov/ceq_regulations/regulations.html).

As part of an applicant's package, applicants are required to complete selected sections of the Environmental Compliance Questionnaire for National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Federal Financial Assistance Applicants (OMB Approval No.: 0648-0538) 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). This questionnaire is located online at <http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/questionnaire.pdf>. The applicant should complete only the required sections of the questionnaire, and include the entire questionnaire as part of their application. This questionnaire will not count toward the page limits described in the announcement. Please submit the entire form in Grants.gov as an "other attachment".

After the application is submitted, NOAA may require additional information to fulfill NEPA requirements. If NOAA determines that an environmental assessment is required, applicants may also be requested to assist in drafting the assessment. Applicants may also be required to cooperate with NOAA in identifying and implementing feasible measures to reduce or avoid any identified adverse environmental impacts of their proposal. The failure to do so shall be grounds for the denial of an application. In some cases if additional information is required after an application is selected, funds can be withheld by the Grants Officer under a special award condition requiring the recipient to submit additional environmental compliance information sufficient to enable NOAA to make an assessment on any impacts that a project may have on the environment.

Applicants are required to answer the questions indicated in this Announcement of Federal Funding Opportunity. Applicants should answer the NEPA questions to the best of their ability with as much detail as possible. It is important to note that one of the selection criteria is "adequacy of information necessary for NOAA staff to make a NEPA determination..." and NOAA may therefore decide against funding applications that do not answer all of the questions indicated in the Announcement of Federal Funding Opportunity. Some of the questions may overlap with material provided in other parts of the application.

This overlap occurs because the answers to the questionnaire are provided to NOAA staff members who do not review the other parts of the application. If appropriate, the applicant may copy the information from other parts of the application and paste it into the answers to the questionnaire.

The applicant is to complete the following sections of the Environmental Compliance Questionnaire for National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Federal Financial Assistance Applicants:

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

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

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

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

### C. Reporting

"The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 includes a requirement for awardees of applicable Federal grants to report information about first-tier sub-awards and executive compensation under Federal assistance awards issued in FY 2011 or later. All awardees of applicable grants and cooperative agreements are required to report

to the Federal Sub-award Reporting System (FSRS) available at [www.FSRS.gov](http://www.FSRS.gov) on all sub-awards over \$25,000."

Successful applicants will be required to submit progress and financial reports semi-annually that cover 6-month periods as indicated in the award documentation provided by GMD. Progress reports are due to NOAA via the Grants Online System no later than 30 days after each 6-month project period. A final report is due no later than 90 days after the expiration date of an award. Progress reports should detail project activities that have occurred at the national or regional level during the reporting period that correspond with goals and objectives identified in the narrative, as well as provide specific, project-related information. Progress reports will be required to be submitted using a specific format for narrative information. The project progress report template can be found on the Funding Opportunity page of the Marine Debris Program website (<http://marinedebris.noaa.gov/funding/welcome.html>).

Financial reports cover the periods from October 1 - March 31 (due by April 30) and April 1 - September 30 (due by October 30) throughout the award period and are submitted to the NOAA Grants Management Division via the Grants Online system.

Complete details on reporting requirements will be provided to successful applicants in the award documentation provided by the NOAA Grants Management Division in the Grants Online award package.

#### Data Reporting Requirements

Environmental data and information, collected and/or created under NOAA grants/cooperative agreements must be made visible, accessible, and independently understandable to general users, free of charge or at minimal cost, in a timely manner (typically no later than two (2) years after the data are collected or created), except where limited by law, regulation, policy or by security requirements.

Unless otherwise noted in this federal funding announcement, a Data/Information Sharing Plan of no more than two pages shall be required as an appendix. A typical plan may include the types of environmental data and information 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; policies addressing data stewardship and preservation; procedures for providing access, data, and security; and prior experience in publishing such data. The Data/Information Sharing Plan will be reviewed as part of the NOAA Standard Evaluation Criteria, Item 1 -- Importance and/or Relevance and Applicability of Proposed Project to the Mission Goals.

The Data/Information Sharing Plan (and any subsequent revisions or updates) will be made publicly available at time of award and, thereafter, will be posted with the published data.

Failing to share environmental data and information in accordance with the submitted Data/Information Sharing Plan may lead to disallowed costs and be considered by NOAA when making future award decisions.

Additionally, PIs should indicate how and when they have made their data accessible and usable by the community in the past.

## VII. Agency Contacts

For further information contact Nancy Wallace (Nancy.Wallace@noaa.gov, 301-713-2989, x125).

## VIII. Other Information

Prior notice and an opportunity for public comment are not required by the Administrative Procedure Act (5 U.S.C. 553 (a) (2)) or by any other law for this document concerning grants, benefits, and contracts. Because notice and opportunity for comment are not required pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553 or any other law, the analytical requirements of the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) are not applicable. Therefore, a regulatory flexibility analysis has not been prepared.

This action has been determined to be not significant for purposes of Executive Order 12866 (Regulatory Impact Review).

After electronic submission of the application through Grants.gov, the person submitting the application will receive within the next 24 to 48 hours two e-mail messages from Grants.gov updating them on the progress of their application. The first e-mail will confirm receipt of the application by the Grants.gov system, and the second will indicate that the application has either been successfully validated by the system prior to transmission to the grantor agency or has been rejected due to errors. After the application has been validated, this same person will receive another e-mail when the application has been downloaded by the Federal agency.

Official notification of an award notice is provided by the Grants Management Division, not the program office. If one incurs any costs prior to receiving an award agreement from an authorized NOAA grant official, one would do so solely at one's own risk of these costs not being included under the award.

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

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

If equipment was purchased with grant funds or obtained from a Federal agency, applicants may be asked to submit an equipment inventory with 15 CFR 14.34(f)(3), 15 CFR 24.32(b) or 15 CFR 24.32(d)(2) as an appendix to interim and final progress reports. Further, the program office recommends that recipients request disposition instructions for equipment approximately 150 days before the project period ends to allow sufficient time to have equipment disposition requests addressed before a project period ends. Equipment disposition instructions typically require that recipients complete an "other" award action request in Grants Online. NOAA will provide instructions for disposition in accordance with 15 CFR 14.34(g)-(h) and 15 CFR 24.32(g)(2).