

2017 NOAA California Bay Watershed Education and Training (B-WET) Program

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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: 2017 NOAA California Bay Watershed Education and Training (B-WET) Program

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: NOAA-NOS-ONMS-2017-2005059

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 11.429, Marine Sanctuary Program

Dates: The deadline for applications is 5:00 PM Eastern Time on November 18, 2016 when submitting through www.grants.gov (Grants.gov). PLEASE NOTE: for applicants that submit through Grants.gov, it may take Grants.gov up to two business days to validate or reject the application. Please keep this in mind in developing your submission timeline. If use of Grants.gov is impractical for technical or other reasons, paper copy applications will be accepted only as described in Section IV.C. Applications received after the deadline will be rejected without further consideration. No email and/or facsimile applications will be accepted.

Funding Opportunity Description: The California B-WET Program is a competitive grant program that supports existing, high quality environmental education programs, fosters the growth of new, innovative programs, and encourages capacity building and partnership development for environmental education programs throughout the entire the San Francisco Bay, Monterey Bay, and Santa Barbara Channel watersheds. Successful projects provide Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs) for students and related professional development for teachers. These Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs) integrate field experiences with classroom activities and instruction in NOAA-related science content.

FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Program Objective

The NOAA Bay Watershed Education and Training (B-WET) Program is an environmental education program that promotes locally relevant, experiential learning in the K-12 environment. B-WET was established in 2002 in the Chesapeake Bay watershed and currently exists in seven regions: California, Chesapeake Bay, Hawaii, Gulf of Mexico, New England, Pacific Northwest, and Great Lakes. For more information, visit our National B-WET Program website at: <http://www.oesd.noaa.gov/grants/bwet.html>.

NOAA recognizes that knowledge and commitment built from firsthand experience, especially in the context of one's community and culture, is essential for achieving environmental stewardship. Carefully selected experiences driven by rigorous academic learning standards and nurturing a sense of community, will further connect students with their watershed, help reinforce an ethic of responsible citizenship, and promote academic achievement. Experiential learning techniques, such as those supported by the NOAA B-WET Program, have been shown to increase interest in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM), thus contributing to NOAA's obligations under the America COMPETES Act (33 USC 893a(a)).

The California B-WET Program is a competitive grant program that supports existing, high quality environmental education programs, fosters the growth of new, innovative programs, and encourages capacity building and partnership development for environmental education programs throughout the entire the San Francisco Bay, Monterey Bay, and Santa Barbara Channel watersheds.

The terms used throughout each Section are defined as follows: a. Monterey Bay watershed- the counties of San Mateo, Santa Cruz, Santa Clara, Monterey, San Benito, and San Luis Obispo; b. San Francisco Bay watershed- the counties of Marin, San Francisco, Alameda, Contra Costa, Sonoma, Mendocino, Humboldt, Del Norte, Trinity, and Santa Rosa; c. Santa Barbara Channel watershed- the counties of Santa Barbara and Ventura; d. Teachers- formal (school-based) and non-formal (not school-based) educators for kindergarten through high school; e. Students- kindergarten through high school.

B. Program Priorities

Proposals must address one the following areas of interest: (1) Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEE) for Students in the Monterey Bay, San Francisco or Santa Barbara Channel watersheds; (2) Teacher Professional Development for Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs) in the Monterey Bay, San Francisco or Santa

Barbara Channel watersheds; (3) Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences for Students or Professional Development for Teachers focused on Climate Change Education in the Monterey Bay, San Francisco or Santa Barbara Channel watersheds; (4) New Programs and Applicants. Proposals must address either Priority Areas (1), (2) or (3); and may be eligible to include Priority Area (4). If proposals do not address one of the areas of interest, they will be returned without further review.

1. PRIORITY 1- Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEE) for Students in the Monterey Bay, San Francisco or Santa Barbara Channel watersheds

MWEEs for students should be learner centered and focused on questions, problems, and issues to be investigated through collecting, analyzing and sharing data; learning protocols; exploring models; and examining natural phenomena. These activities, grounded in best practices and the context of the local community and culture, help increase student interest, motivation, and attitudes toward learning, and achieve environmental stewardship. As a result of the MWEE activities, students should have an understanding of basic watershed concepts, as well as the interaction between natural systems (e.g. wildlife, plants, and water cycle) and social systems (e.g. communities, transportation systems, and schools), highlighting the connection between human activity and environmental conditions. MWEEs consist of multiple components as defined below.

For reference and more detail on each of the following elements, please review the following document www.noaa.gov/office-education/bwet-mwee.pdf

1.1 Issue definition and background research:

Students focus on an environmental question, problem, or issue requiring background research and investigation. They learn more about the issue through classroom instruction, the collection of data, conducting experiments, talking to experts and reviewing credible publications. This process should be age appropriate with practices growing in complexity and sophistication across the grades, starting with educator guided investigation and progressing to student-led inquiry.

1.2 Outdoor field activities:

Students participate in multiple outdoor field activities (a minimum of at least three outdoor experiences) sufficient to collect the data or make observations required for answering the research questions and informing student actions, or as part of the issue definition and background research. Students should be actively involved in planning the investigation, taking measurements, or constructing the project within appropriate safety guidelines, with teachers providing instruction on methods and procedures, data collection protocols, and proper use of equipment as needed. These activities can take place off-site and/or on the school grounds.

1.3 Stewardship action projects:

Students participate in multiple outdoor field activities (a minimum of at least three outdoor experiences) sufficient to collect the data or make observations required for answering the research questions and informing student actions, or as part of the issue definition and background research. Students should be actively involved in planning the investigation, taking measurements, or constructing the project within appropriate safety guidelines, with teachers providing instruction on methods and procedures, data collection protocols, and proper use of equipment as needed. These activities can take place off-site and/or on the school grounds.

1.4 Synthesis and conclusions:

Students analyze and evaluate the results of projects and investigations. Students synthesize and communicate results and conclusions to an external audience such as other classrooms, schools, parents, or the community.

1.5 Support for Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs) with students-

In addition to the components identified above, NOAA recommends that the following elements are in place to fully support successful MWEE implementation with students:

a. Teacher participation for the duration of the MWEE- While external partners are entirely appropriate to support MWEEs, teachers should support the experience in the classroom and in the field. Teachers are in the best position to help students make connections and draw on past lessons, serve as environmental role models, and enhance students overall outdoor education experience and should be involved in all components of the experiences detailed above. To support them in this role, teachers should have appropriate knowledge of environmental issues and watershed concepts, skill in connecting these issues to their curriculum, and competency in environmental education pedagogy, including the ability and confidence to teach outdoor lessons and to lead students in critical thinking about environmental issues.

b. Integration with classroom curriculum- Experiences should be integrated into what is occurring in the classroom, and can provide authentic, age appropriate, engaging multi-disciplinary content to address academic standards. Specifically, elements of science and social studies standards related to questioning and investigation, evidence-based analysis and interpretation, model and theory building, knowledge of environmental processes and systems, skill for understanding and addressing environmental issues, and personal and civic responsibility align well with MWEEs. Non-school activities may enrich traditional classroom curriculum when needed, though this need should be documented and supported

by local education agencies.

c. Use of the local context for learning- The local community and environment should be viewed as a primary resource for student MWEEs. Place-based education promotes learning that is rooted in the unique history, environment, culture, economy, literature, and art of a students' schoolyard, neighborhood, town or community, and thus offering students and teachers the opportunity to explore how individual and collective decisions impact their immediate surroundings. Once a firm connection to their local environment is made, students are better positioned to expand their thinking to recognize the far-reaching implications of the decisions they make to the larger national and global environment.

d. Experiences are a set of activities over time- The MWEE includes the full duration leading up to and following the outdoor field experiences. Each component should involve a significant investment of instructional time, incorporate time for reflection, and include all students. Experiences such as tours, simulations, demonstrations, or nature walks may be instructionally useful, but alone do not constitute an entire meaningful watershed educational experience as defined here.

e. Includes NOAA assets, including personnel and resources- NOAA has a wealth of applicable products and services as well as a cadre of scientific and professional experts that can heighten the impact of environmental instruction both in the classroom and in the field. Additionally, environmental professionals can serve as important role models for career choices and stewardship. For more on NOAA assets for education please see:

http://www.oesd.noaa.gov/grants/NOAA_assets.html, <http://www.noaa.gov/education>,
<http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/education>, <http://www.legislative.noaa.gov/NIYS/NIYSCA.pdf>

1.6 Experiences are for all students:

The California B-WET Program is strongly committed to expanding the knowledge and participation of a low income and underserved student population in marine and environmental education. At least 60% of the target audience served by this project will be from a low income or underserved student population. Please include the ethnic, social and gender demographics of the classroom participants, for example (46% Latinos, 80% free lunch, 15% females) and the webpage(s) that was used to gather the demographic information.

1.7 Projects make a connection to the sanctuary and the ocean environment:

Projects must include information about the sanctuary system and the ocean environment throughout the duration of the project- before, during and after the MWEE. Information provided may highlight one or more of the sanctuaries located on the West Coast and must

demonstrate a connection to the ocean environment through the watershed system. The idea is that students understand how their actions can affect the coastal/ocean environment through the watershed system. They need to also understand what a sanctuary is, why it is important, the resources found within the sanctuary, and where it is located. Examples of curriculum and lesson plans that can be used to highlight this information can be found at: <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/education/teachers/welcome.html>

2. PRIORITY 2- Teacher Professional Development for Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs) in the Monterey Bay, San Francisco or Santa Barbara Channel watersheds

Teachers should be skilled in using environmental education and MWEEs to address multiple subjects' curriculum standards and local education agency initiatives. In order to gain and maintain environmental education competencies, teachers need access to sustained, high quality professional development that includes ongoing support and feedback. Teachers should gain confidence in the value of MWEEs and strategies for conducting them so that they will conduct MWEEs after the B-WET supported program has ended. Specifically, the following elements are recommended for professional development to support teachers implementing MWEEs:

2.1 Increases teachers' knowledge and awareness of environmental issues:

Teachers must have an adequate level of content knowledge for their MWEE topic area specific to their grade level and discipline, including an understanding of basic watershed concepts and the human connection to the watershed. Recognizing that environmental issues often include different perspectives and opinions, teachers must also have a deep understanding of the facts related to environmental issues along with an understanding of the various stakeholder values. In addition, teachers who demonstrate environmentally responsible attitudes and behaviors may be role models for their students and increase their ability to guide students in actions to address complex environmental issues.

2.2 Models environmental education pedagogy:

Facilitators/trainers should utilize the same techniques and experiences in trainings that teachers are expected to use with their students, such as hands-on, place-based, outdoor field experiences and environmental issue investigation and action.

2.3 Allows for adequate instructional time:

Professional Development trainings should be multi-day, occurring consecutively or over the course of several months. Trainings should include ample opportunity for teachers to reflect on their own teaching practices and planning for how to use knowledge and skills gained from professional development in the classroom.

2.4 Provides ongoing teacher support and appropriate incentives:

Even in cases where teachers participate in robust multi-day trainings, such as a summer or weekend courses, it is still essential that professional development providers have a structure in place for on-going teacher support and enrichment. This can take the form of follow up meetings, creating web-based forums for communication and feedback, establishing mentor teachers who can serve as points of contact, or including teams of teachers from one particular school. Continuing education credits and stipends can be used to encourage participation in on-going professional development opportunities. Outreach and training opportunities for school administrators may help increase high level support for both environmental education and continuing teacher professional development for teachers.

2.5 Meets jurisdictional guidelines for effective teacher professional development:

Each jurisdiction has established guidance and recommendations germane to all forms of teacher professional development. When possible, professional development opportunities in environmental education should adhere to these general guidelines set forth by local education agencies.

2.6 Experiences are for all teachers:

The California B-WET Program is strongly committed to expanding the knowledge and participation of teachers who serve a low income and underserved student population. At least 60% of the target audience served by this project will be from a low income or underserved student population. Please include the ethnic, social and gender demographics of the classroom participants, for example (46% Latinos, 80% free lunch, 15% females) and the webpage(s) that was used to gather the demographic information.

2.7 Projects make a connection to the sanctuary and the ocean environment:

Projects must include information about the sanctuary system and the ocean environment throughout the duration of the project- before, during and after the MWEE. Information provided may highlight one or more of the sanctuaries located on the West Coast and must demonstrate a connection to the ocean environment through the watershed system. The idea is that teachers and then ultimately students understand how their actions can affect the coastal/ocean environment through the watershed system. They need to also understand what a sanctuary is, why it is important, the resources found within the sanctuary, and where it is located. Examples of curriculum and lesson plans that can be used to highlight this information can be found at: <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/education/teachers/welcome.html>

3. PRIORITY 3- Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences for Students or Professional Development for Teachers focused on Climate Change Education in the

Monterey Bay, San Francisco or Santa Barbara Channel watersheds

Earth's climate is changing. When humans burn fossil fuels such as coal, oil and gas for energy, we put rampant amounts of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. This carbon dioxide acts like a heat trapping blanket and warms the planet. The carbon dioxide also enters the ocean, causing the pH to drop and leading to ocean acidification, which makes it difficult for animals to build and maintain their shells and skeletons and has enormous health implications for life in the ocean. The overwhelming majority of climate scientists agree that humans have had a profound influence on our changing climate. Climate change will bring economic and environmental challenges as well as opportunities, and citizens who have an understanding of climate science will be better prepared to respond to both. Our quality of life and, ultimately, our survival are dependent on our "climate literacy"- our ability to understand, predict, and adapt to the reality of a warming planet.

Proposals focused on this priority area must meet the criteria as set forth in PRIORITIES 1 OR 2 by delivering MWEEs for students or teachers and should be aligned with the Climate Literacy Principles: http://oceanservice.noaa.gov/education/literacy/climate_literacy.pdf

3.1 Proposals addressing this priority area should focus on one or more of the following areas of climate change:

- a. Ocean Acidification
- b. Energy Reduction
- c. Consumer Choices
- d. Ecosystem Resiliency

3.2 And should integrate the following key themes and messages:

- a. Changes in climate will impact national marine sanctuaries and the overall health of the ocean that is vital to our quality of life and, ultimately, our survival.
- b. One or more of the following key messages:
 - 1) Human activities are changing the Earth's climate;
 - 2) Climate change affects national marine sanctuaries and the underwater treasures they protect;
 - 3) The choices you make today do make a difference.
 - 4) Collectively we need to adapt our carbon footprint and lower our carbon emissions;
 - 5) Collective actions are needed to preserve as much biodiversity in the ocean as possible.

4. PRIORITY 4- New Programs and Applicants

Due to decreased funding for the CA B-WET Program, the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries will be actively promoting applications from new applicants. Up to 80% of B-WET funding will be set aside for new programs or applicants. Therefore, the total funding

amount for applicants or projects that have successfully received B-WET funding in the past will be limited. An applicant or project that has received B-WET funding for three consecutive years may apply, but funding will be limited to about 20% of the amount available in each of the three regions. All projects focusing on this priority area must still deliver MWEEs as defined in this announcement outlined in PRIORITY 1, 2 OR 3.

C. Program Authority

Under 33 USC 893 a(a), the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is authorized to conduct, develop, support, promote, and coordinate formal and informal educational activities at all levels to enhance public awareness and understanding of ocean, coastal, Great Lakes, and atmospheric science and stewardship by the general public and other coastal stakeholders, including underrepresented groups in ocean and atmospheric science and policy careers. In conducting those activities, the Administrator shall build upon the educational programs and activities of the agency.

II. Award Information

A. Funding Availability

This solicitation announces that approximately \$800,000 may be available in FY 2017 in award amounts to be determined by the proposals and available funds. About \$350,000 will be made available to the San Francisco Bay area, about \$300,000 will be made available to the Monterey Bay area, and about \$150,000 will be made available to the Santa Barbara area. The NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries anticipates that approximately 15-20 grants will be awarded with these funds. The NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries anticipates that typical project awards for the identified priority areas will range from \$30,000 to \$60,000.

There is no guarantee that sufficient funds will be available to make awards for all qualified projects. The exact amount of funds that may be awarded will be determined in pre-award negotiations between the applicant and NOAA representatives. Publication of this notice does not oblige NOAA to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds. If applicants incur any costs prior to an award being made, they do so at their own risk of not being reimbursed by the government. Notwithstanding verbal or written assurance that may have been received, there is no obligation on the part of NOAA to cover pre-award costs unless approved by the Grants Officer as part of the terms when the award is made. Applicants are hereby given notice that funds have not yet been appropriated for this program. Future opportunities for submitting proposals to the CA B-WET competitive process are anticipated, but will depend on funding levels and resources available to support new projects.

B. Project/Award Period

The project start date should not begin before August 1, 2017. CA B-WET program recipients may apply for one year requests up to three consecutive years. If you are applying for up to three years of funding, proposal projects do not need to change significantly in scope but should demonstrate growth and show projects are being evaluated and changing as a result of the assessment. These proposals are considered continuation projects. If a recipient would like to apply for additional years of funding, beyond three years, they will be determined to be renewal proposals and will be subject to the criteria as set forth in Priority Area. Funds for both renewal and continuation proposals will be made available for only a 12-month award period and any continuance of the award period will depend on submission of a successful proposal subject to panel reviews, adequate progress on previous award(s), and available funding to continue the award. No assurance for a funding continuation or renewal exists; funding will be at the complete discretion of NOAA.

C. Type of Funding Instrument

Whether the funding instrument is a grant or a cooperative agreement will be determined by the amount of the NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries' involvement in the project. A cooperative agreement will be used if the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries shares responsibility for management, control, direction, or performance of the project with the recipient. Specific terms regarding substantial involvement will be contained in special award conditions.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are K-through-12 public and independent schools and school 14 systems, institutions of higher education, community-based and nonprofit organizations, state or local government agencies, interstate agencies, and Indian tribal governments. For profit organizations, foreign organizations, and foreign public entities are not eligible to apply; however, for-profit and foreign organizations and foreign public entities may participate with an eligible applicant as a project partner. Likewise, Federal agencies are not eligible to receive Federal assistance under this announcement, but may be project partners. Applicants must be located within the U.S. and can be physically located in any state but must work within the geographic boundaries of the Monterey Bay, San Francisco Bay or Santa Barbara Channel watersheds. Projects whose sole audience is outside the watersheds outlined above are not eligible.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

No cost sharing is required under this program, however, NOAA encourages applicants to demonstrate cost share, in-kind matches and program leveraging to support their projects. Funds from other Federal sources may not be considered matching funds and may not be used under this award unless expressly authorized by statute. All cost sharing or matching must be consistent with the requirements of 2 CFR §200.306.

C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility

None.

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Address to Request Application Package

1. Electronic submission

Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit applications electronically through <http://www.grants.gov>. You may access the electronic grant application for the California Bay Watershed Education and Training Program at <http://www.grants.gov>. Please note that applicants must locate the downloadable application package for this program by the FFO number (found on the first page of the FFO) or CFDA number (11.429). 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 website. When you enter the Grants.gov site, you will find information about submitting an application electronically through the site as well as the hours of operation. We strongly recommend that you do not wait until the application deadline date to begin the application process through Grants.gov.

After electronic submission of the application, applicants will receive an automatic acknowledgment from Grants.gov that contains a Grants.gov tracking number. NOAA may request that you provide original signatures on forms at a later date.

2. Hard copy submission

If an applicant does not have Internet access or if Grants.gov has technical issues that makesubmission impractical, hard copy applications will be accepted. A signed original may be submitted to Attn: Seaberry Nachbar, B-WET Program Manager, Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Office, 99 Pacific Street, Building 455A, Monterey, CA 93940. The closing deadline for applying through Grants.gov is the same as for the paper submission noted in this announcement.

B. Content and Form of Application

Proposals must adhere to the following provisions and requirements:

1. Federal Forms

The required forms are as follows:

SF-424: Application for Federal Assistance

SF-424A: Budget Information, Non-construction Programs

SF-424B: Assurances, Non-Construction Programs

CD-511: Certification Regarding Lobbying

NEPA questionnaire, <http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/questionnaire.pdf>

2. Proposals

Applicants should not assume prior knowledge on the part of the NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries as to the relative merits of the project described in the application. For an example proposal and budget narrative, please go to the National Marine Sanctuaries CA B-WET website at: <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/news/bwet/welcome.html>).

a. Proposal Requirements- Required elements for all submissions:

(1) Components of the proposal outlined in Section IV. B. 2b. (1-9) should be submitted as a single PDF document and uploaded into the Grants.gov system as a single PDF document. The order of the documents should reflect the order outlined below (Project summary, Project description (items 2- 7), Budget narrative, Budget table, Letters of support, CVs, Logic model, and all other Supporting documents).

(2) Proposal format must be in at least a 12-point font and single-spaced. The entire proposal narrative should not exceed 15 pages. The budget narrative, budget table, Federal forms, data management plan, indirect cost rate, and the project summary are not included in this 15 page limit.

(3) Appendices and supporting documentation may be included but may not exceed a total of 10-pages. Appendices may include information such as curriculum, resumes, and/or letters of endorsement. Additional informational material will be disregarded.

(4) Brevity will assist reviewers and program staff in dealing effectively with proposals. Therefore the entire application package (proposal and appendices) should not exceed 25-pages (this total does not include the budget narrative, budget table, Federal forms, data management plan, indirect cost rate, and the project summary).

b. Proposal Format-

Proposals should include the following information and it is recommended that they follow the format outlined below:

(1) Project summary (1-page):

- Organization title.

- Principal Investigator(s) (PI).

- Address, telephone number, and email address of applicant and PI.
- Partner(s).
- Priority Area.
- Project title.
- Project duration.
- Summary of work to be performed (include number of teachers and/or students that will be involved in your project and total project cost per student/teacher.
- Total Federal funds requested.
- Cost-sharing to be provided from non-Federal sources, if any. Specify whether contributions are project-related cash or in-kind.
- Total project cost.

(2) Project description (15-pages): Need, target audience, objectives, what, where.

- Need: Provide a statement that describes the need for this type of project. Why are you proposing this project? Cite studies or sources, where appropriate, that validate the need for your project.
- Target audience: Identify the target audience and demonstrate an understanding of the needs of that audience. Identify specifically how many students and/or teachers are involved in your project and their demographics.
- Participant recruitment: Provide a plan of action that outlines how you will recruit your target audience and identify incentives to be used such as teacher stipends or continuing education credits.
- Objectives: Explain your objectives and how you are going to accomplish these objectives. Objectives do not include the number of people served or the activities you and your audience(s) engage in. Objectives should be simple and understandable; as specific and quantitative as possible (please reference the CA B-WET website, when developing your objectives). Clearly explain how you will achieve your expected outputs and outcomes.
- What: Provide a statement of your project that includes a clear statement of the work to be undertaken. Demonstrate how your project meets the criteria defined in the Program Priorities.
- Where: Give a precise location of the project and the area(s) that will be served.

(3) Who: Organization leads and partners.

- Organization leads: Explain who from your organization will conduct the project. Include key individuals who will work on the project and a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution. A C.V for each individual that is participating significantly in the project is required. These can be embedded within the Project description or as a part of the Supporting documents. Please demonstrate to the reviewers that the staff employed is representative of the target audience needs (for example if you are working with a Latino audience, you have/will be employing a bi-lingual staff member). For those staff members that are participating in the project but do not play a major role, a bio is sufficient.

- Partners/collaborators: List each partner organization, cooperator, or other key individuals who will work on the project. A letter of support from each partner must be included in the Supporting documents.

(4) Project timeline: Provide a project timeline in a table format that outlines the project from beginning to end.

(5) Project evaluation: Evaluation here is defined as the systematic collection and documentation of information about your project's outcomes in order to improve the project's effectiveness, guide judgments about its impact, and/or inform decisions about future programming or funding. Up to 10% of the budget can be spent on the evaluation component of your proposal.

For this section, please include a logic model: Provide a graphic to display the outputs and outcomes developed through the project. An example of a basic logic model can be found on our website at <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/education/evaluation/welcome.html>.

In your evaluation plan, please describe how you will measure and document the outcomes and impacts of your project on your audience(s). How will your audience(s) be different after their involvement in your project and how will you measure those differences? The outcomes you measure should correlate to your goals and objectives and the California B-WET Program's definition of Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences. Indicators of outcomes may be audience satisfaction with the project experience and changes in their knowledge, skills, attitudes and/or behaviors. Indicators of outcomes do not include the number of people served or the activities you and your audience(s) engage in. Please include in your supporting documents any evaluation tools that you will be using as a part of your evaluation.

Also explain how you will document your evaluation results. For detailed information on how to create an evaluation plan or an evaluation report, please use the CA B-WET website at <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/news/bwet/welcome.html>.

Participation in B-WET National Evaluation-

In addition to project evaluation, grantees will be asked to participate in data collection for the national B-WET evaluation. The B-WET national evaluation consists of two parts; part 1 is for all recipients of B-WET grants while part 2 is only for programs that work with teachers. The B-WET national evaluation is intended to monitor program implementation and outcomes on an ongoing basis. Results of this evaluation will be used to improve the B-WET program, document its value, and better tailor it to program audiences. Grantees with teacher participants will be able to view a summary of responses from their participating teachers. Success of this effort depends on grantee participation, so applicants are strongly encouraged to review the information about the national evaluation system (available here:

http://www.oesd.noaa.gov/grants/bwet_eval.php) and consider how they can support it as part of their projects.

Part 1 (for all B-WET grantees): As part of this evaluation system, one individual from each recipient organization will be asked to voluntarily complete an online questionnaire once per year of the award. The questionnaire should be able to be completed within 30-60 minutes (depending on the nature of the program) and may require some internal data compilation.

Part 2 (for programs with teacher professional development): For projects that work with teachers, the teacher-participants will be asked to complete one questionnaire at the close of their professional development and one after implementing Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences with their students (at the end of the following school year). Each teacher questionnaire should be able to be completed within 30 minutes. Along with completing the recipient questionnaire, grantees will be asked to provide the email addresses of participating teachers (after notifying teachers that their email will be shared) and to encourage teachers to participate in the national evaluation.

B-WET grantees and teachers who respond to the questionnaires will remain anonymous to B-WET and NOAA. NOAA will only view the resulting data in aggregate at the national or regional level, however grantees will receive a password-protected report link to allow them to view data from teacher participants of their project in aggregate.

All applicants should provide information about how they plan to support this national evaluation system, incorporate it into the project timeline, and ensure responses from participating teachers as part of their application. Applicants may incorporate staff time required to complete the B-WET national evaluation in their budget proposal. More information, including all of the survey instruments, is available on the NOAA B-WET national website here: http://www.oesd.noaa.gov/grants/bwet_eval.php Grantees should review the information available and take this into consideration in the planning for their project evaluations. For example:

- Grantees may not need to include questions that will be answered through the teacher instrument in their own evaluations.
- Wherever possible grantees should try to incorporate participation in the evaluation system into existing requirements for professional development program completion. For example, on completion of the teacher professional development survey, teachers will receive some program incentive.

Note that this evaluation system is not intended to replace project level evaluation. While grantees will have access to their teacher's results from the evaluation system, the national evaluation may not provide the level of detail needed to fully understand, describe, and

improve specific grant projects. Grantees are therefore encouraged to balance these needs within the 10% of their budget that is recommended for evaluation.

Additional information about this project, including background, FAQs, survey instruments, and suggested text for communicating with your teacher participants about this project, is available here:

http://www.oesd.noaa.gov/grants/bwet_eval.php

This data collection will be conducted in a manner consistent with OMB guidelines (OMB Control No 0648-0658).

(6) Benefits or results expected: Identify and document the results or benefits to be derived from the proposed activities. Please include in this section your accomplishments to date:

- If you have not previously received a B-WET grant please describe your organization's background and accomplishments to date. Include any evaluation data and results that your organization may have conducted.

- If you have received a B-WET grant please include as much detail as possible on your accomplishments to date and lessons learned. List your objectives from previous years and provide accomplishments to date for each of the objectives. Provide as much detail as possible to demonstrate to reviewers that the project goals and objectives of your grant have been/are being met. Please include your evaluation results from your evaluation report, including the tools and methods that you used. Specifically include your evaluation summary.

(7) Outreach and Education: Explain how your project will work with the target audience to educate and inform others of the results of your project, and any products, outcomes, or benefits of your project. A data management plan of up to two pages, which does not count toward the page limits of the project narrative or attachments, should be included with the application. Refer to Section VI.B.5. of this Announcement for details.

(8) Budget narrative: The budget narrative should be composed of two parts, a budget table and a budget description. The budget narrative should include the total project costs that are required to accomplish what is proposed in the Project Description and includes contributions and donations. The budget narrative should provide the information needed to determine how the numbers outlined in the budget table and budget information form (SF-424A) were derived. The narrative should explain the specific budget categories that are outlined in the SF-424A form, such as personnel/salaries, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, contract costs, and indirect costs. The budget narrative submitted with the application should match the dollar amounts on all required Federal forms (SF-424, SF-424A). Additional cost detail may be required prior to a final analysis of overall cost allowability, allocability, and reasonableness. See 2 CFR part 200, Subpart E "Cost

Principles” for additional information. Please Note the following:

- Need for government financial assistance: Demonstrate the need for assistance. Explain why other funding sources cannot fund all the proposed work.

- Sustainability- The California B-WET Program should not be considered a long-term source of funding; therefore it is crucial that you explain how you will ensure that ongoing programs, once initiated, will be sustained. If you have received multiple years of funding you must include how your project will be sustainable beyond B-WET funding and how you plan to continue meeting your goals and objectives.

- Funds for salaries and fringe benefits may be requested only for those personnel who are directly involved in implementing the proposed project and whose salaries and fringe benefits are directly related to specific products or outcomes of the proposed project. NOAA strongly encourages applicants to request reasonable amounts of funding for salaries and fringe benefits to ensure that your proposal is competitive.

- For any equipment, defined in 2 CFR §200.33 as “tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost which equals or exceeds the lesser of the capitalization level established by the non-Federal entity for financial statement purposes, or \$5,000,” a description of the item and associated costs is required, including a description of how it will be used in the project. For more information on equipment, see 2 CFR §200.313 and §§ 200.317-.326.

- Non-profit and university applicants should identify, if this information is known when submitting the grant application, who they plan to request that NOAA transfer equipment or property ownership titles to after the project ends. The decision on grant ownership requests will be made by the Grants Officer during the grant closeout process. Property disposition must be consistent with the requirements under 2 CFR §200.313(e).

- Applicants must include the budgets and budget justifications of subawards and contracts. Information must include, to the extent known, the name of the entity receiving funds, the location of the entity receiving the funds (e.g., city, state, and Congressional district), the location of the primary place of performance under the contract/subaward. All subawards and contracts must be made consistent with the requirements of 2 CFR §§200.330-200.332 for subawards, and 200.317-200.326 for procurements.

- Grant recipients will be encouraged to attend a state or regional B-WET meeting once during the duration of their grant. This will be an opportunity for former and current B-WET grant recipients to present their B-WET projects and learn from each other. This meeting may be part of an existing state conference or environmental education conference to minimize travel expenses. Budgets should include, in the travel category, estimated funds this meeting (such as meals, lodging, and transportation including rental car, shuttle, or taxi). No more than \$1000 should be budgeted for this expense.

(9) Supporting documentation: Provide any required documents, which include:

- Letters of support from partners: If the applicant organization has partners, such as schools, state agencies, or other organizations, letters of commitment should be included from partners explaining their role in and/or funding of the proposed project. If no letters are included, it will be assumed the applicant has no partners;

- Letters of recommendation;
- Resumes;
- Evaluation tools;

The amount of information given in this section will depend on the type of project, but should be no more than 10 pages (this does not include the budget narrative, budget table, Federal forms, data management plan, indirect cost rate, and the project summary)

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

To enable the use of a universal identifier and to build the quality of information available to the public as required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act, 16 U.S.C. 6101 note, to the extent applicable, any applicant awarded in response to this announcement will be required to use the System for Award Management (SAM), which may be accessed online at <https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/>. Each applicant (unless the applicant is an individual or Federal awarding agency that is excepted from those requirements under 2 CFR §25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception approved by the Federal awarding agency under 2 CFR §25.110(d)) is required to: (i) Be registered in SAM before submitting its application; (ii) provide a valid unique entity identifier in its application; and (iii) continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency. The Federal awarding agency may not make a Federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time the Federal awarding agency is ready to make a Federal award, the Federal awarding agency may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another applicant. Applicants are also required to use the Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System and will be subject to reporting requirements, as identified in OMB guidance published at 2 CFR Part 25 and 2 CFR Part 170. See Section IV.F.3. of this Announcement below for more information.

D. Submission Dates and Times

Proposals must be received by 5:00 PM Eastern Time on November 18, 2016 when submitting through www.grants.gov (Grants.gov). Proposals being submitted in hard copy must be postmarked or provided to a delivery service on or before November 18, 2016. Electronic proposals received in Grants.gov after this due date and time, will not be considered for funding. Paper copies postmarked after November 18 will not be considered

for funding and will be returned to the applicant. NOAA must receive paper copies within five business days of the deadline.

E. Intergovernmental Review

Funding applications under the Center 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.html> >.

F. Funding Restrictions

Please note the following funding restrictions:

1. The B-WET Program should not be considered a long-term source of funds.
2. Funding may not be used to support endowments; individuals; building campaigns or capital construction; deficit financing; annual giving; or fund-raising.
3. Applicants are strongly encouraged not to wait until the application deadline date to begin the application process through <http://www.grants.gov>. In developing your submission timeline, note that validation or rejection of your application by Grants.gov may take up to 2 business days after submission. In addition, potential funding applicants must register with Grants.gov before any application materials can be submitted, and first-time registration with Grants.gov can take up to three weeks or more. It is therefore strongly recommended that this registration process be completed as soon as possible to allow sufficient time to ensure applications are submitted before the closing date. Also, even if an applicant has registered with Grants.gov previously, the applicant's password may have expired or their registration may need to be renewed prior to submitting to Grants.gov. Grants.gov will not accept submissions if the applicant has not been authorized or if credentials are incorrect. Authorizations and credential corrections can take several days or longer to establish. To use Grants.gov, an applicant must have a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Number 25 System (DUNS) number and be registered in the System for Award Management (SAM), <https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/>, and periodic renewals are required. Allow a minimum of five days to complete the SAM registration. (Note: Your organization's Employer Identification Number (EIN) will be needed on the application form.) Applicants can receive a DUNS number at no cost by calling the dedicated toll-free DUNS Number request line at 1-866-705-5711 or online at <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>. The Grants.gov site contains directions for submitting an application, the application package (forms), and is also where the completed application is submitted. Applicants using Grants.gov must locate the downloadable application package for this solicitation by the Funding Opportunity Number or the CFDA number listed in the Executive Summary of this

Announcement. Applicants will be able to download a copy of the application package, complete it offline, and then upload and submit the application via the Grants.gov site. After electronic submission of the application through Grants.gov, the person submitting the application will receive within the next 24 to 48 hours two email messages from Grants.gov updating them on the progress of their application. The first email 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 before transmission to the grantor agency or has been rejected because of errors. After the application has been validated, this same person will receive another email when the application has been downloaded by the Federal agency. Only validated applications are sent to NOAA for review, and the validation time is deemed the time NOAA received it.

If you experience a Grants.gov “systems issue” (technical problems or glitches with the Grants.gov website) that you believe threatens your ability to complete a submission before an applicable funding cycle deadline, please (i) print any error message received; and (ii) call the Grants.gov Contact Center at 1-800-518-4726 for immediate assistance. Ensure that you obtain a case number regarding your communications with Grants.gov.

Please note: problems with an applicant organization’s computer system or equipment are not considered “systems issues.” Similarly, an applicant’s failure to: (i) complete the required registration, (ii) ensure that a registered Authorized Organizational Representative submits the application, or (iii) receive an email message from Grants.gov validating or rejecting its 26 application are not considered systems issues. A Grants.gov “systems issue” is an issue occurring in connection with the operations of Grants.gov system, such as the temporary loss of service by Grants.gov due to unexpected volume of traffic or failure of information technology systems, both of which are highly unlikely. In the event of a confirmed “systems issue,” or a significant natural disaster affecting submission, NOAA may allow more time for applicant submission due to system problems at Grants.gov at the time of application submission that are beyond the control of the applicant.

G. Other Submission Requirements

None.

The address to submit hard copy proposals, if unable to submit via the Grants.gov website, is:

Office of National Marine Sanctuaries
Attention: Seaberry Nachbar
99 Pacific Street
Bldg 455A
Monterey, CA 93940

V. Application Review Information

A. Evaluation Criteria

1. Importance and/or relevance and applicability of proposal to the program goals (40 points)

This criterion ascertains whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and/or relevance to NOAA, federal, regional, state, or local activities. Specifically for the CA B-WET Program:

-Does the applicant integrate all of the components of a MWEE? If the project is student focused, will the project result in student experiences that meet the full definition of the MWEE (issue identification and background research, at least three outdoor field experiences, stewardship action projects, synthesis and conclusions)? Does the project include a stewardship action that positively affects the marine/estuarine environment and the sanctuary? Does the project include adequate teacher involvement? If the project is teacher professional development, does the proposal clearly document how it will ultimately result in student MWEEs? Is the proposed professional development multi-day and meet the criteria set forth in the MWEE definition of this announcement? If the project is focused on climate change, does the applicant focus on one of the climate change areas and integrate the key messages and themes of climate change? (25 points)

-Does the applicant make a clear connection to the marine/estuarine environment and the sanctuary/sanctuary system? Does the applicant explain the concept of a watershed? (5 points)

-Are NOAA resources an essential element of the proposed project? (5 points)

-Does the applicant target the priority audience outlined in the funding announcement and provide specific demographics? (5 points)

2. Technical merit (30 points)

This criterion assesses whether the approach is technically sound and/or innovative, if the methods are appropriate, and whether there are clear project goals and objectives.

Specifically for the CA B-WET Program:

-Does the applicant follow the technical requirements? (5 points)

-Does the project include partners and include letters from each of the partners? (5 points)

-Does the applicant demonstrate that the objectives are realistic and can be reached within the proposed project period? (5 points)

-Is the project well integrated into the K-12 formal instruction? (5 points)

-Does the logic model show good understanding of desired outputs and outcomes for the project? (5 points)

-Does the applicant provide an effective evaluation strategy to determine if project objectives and outcomes are being met? (5 points)

3. Overall qualifications of applicants (10 points)

This criterion ascertains whether the applicant possesses the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project.

Specifically for the CA B-WET Program:

-Does the applicant demonstrate an understanding of the target community, including in depth understanding of schools and school systems? (5 points)

-Does the applicant demonstrate the capability and experience to successfully complete similar projects? (5 points)

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. Specifically for the CA B-WET Program:

-Is there sufficient detail to verify that the budget request is reasonable for the number of participants and/or target audience to be reached? (10 points)

-Does the proposal adequately address project sustainability after NOAA funding? (3 points)

-Are the requested funds for salaries and fringe benefits only for those personnel who are directly involved in the implementation of the proposed project? (2 points)

5. Outreach and education (5 points)

This criterion assesses whether the project provides a focused and effective education and outreach strategy regarding NOAA's mission to protect the Nation's natural resources, including data management. Specially, for the CA B-WET Program:

-Does the project involve mechanisms for significant external sharing and communication about the project by students, teachers, or project staff? (2 points)

-Does the project propose community events that engage parents, other community members, etc. (1 point)

-Does the project propose peer to peer sharing for teacher and/or student (in-service days, school assemblies, etc.) (1 point)

-Will the project be publicized at Conferences and to the media/social media, etc? (1 point)

B. Review and Selection Process

1. Initial Evaluation of the Application

Once a full application has been received by the NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, an initial administrative review is conducted to determine compliance with requirements and priorities of the application. If applications do not comply, they will be returned without further review. NOAA, in its sole discretion, may continue the review process for applications with non-substantive issues that may be easily rectified or cured.

2. Merit Review

Applications meeting the requirements of this solicitation will be evaluated and scored by independent reviewers in three review panels. Reviewers serving on these panels may be Federal or non-Federal experts in areas relevant to the priorities under consideration. Each proposal will be reviewed by a minimum of three reviewers. The B-WET Program Manager will neither vote nor score applications as part of the review panels. Before the panels convene, each reviewer will individually evaluate and score proposals using the evaluation criteria provided in Section V.A. above. Scores and comments will be submitted to the Federal Program Officer and the individual reviewers' rating will be used to establish a preliminary rank order for each panel. New proposals and proposals considered for continuation will be scored using the same criteria as outlined above, but continuation proposals will not be ranked with the new proposals and given priority over new proposals.

The panel will convene to review the ranking and comments and discuss the proposals as a group. Continuation proposals will be considered for continuation based on the comments and feedback from the panel meeting and will independently recommended with either a yes- continue/fund, or a no- do not continue/fund.

During the panel meeting, reviewers can revise their scores and comments. Reviewers must individually submit final ranking to the B-WET Program Manager by the end of the panel meeting. If more than one non-Federal reviewer is used, no consensus advice will be given by the review panel members. The reviewers' final ranking will be used to produce a rank order of the proposals for each of the panels.

The B-WET Program Manager will make the recommendations for funding to the Selecting Official based on rank order of each panel and the selection factors listed in Section V.C. below.

The Selecting Official will recommend selected applications to a NOAA Grants Management Division (GMD) Grants Officer, who is authorized to obligate Federal funding and execute the award. The NOAA Grants Officer GMD will review financial and grants administration aspects of the proposed award, including conducting an assessment of the risk posed by the applicant in accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.205. In addition to reviewing repositories of government-wide eligibility, qualifications or financial integrity information, the risk assessment conducted by NOAA may consider items such as the financial stability of an applicant, quality of the applicant's management systems, an applicant's history of performance, previous audit reports and audit findings concerning the applicant and the applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on non-Federal entities. Applicants should be in compliance with the terms of any existing NOAA grants or cooperative agreements and other eligible to receive Federal

awards, or make arrangements satisfactory to the Grants Officer, to be considered for funding under this competition. All reports due should be received and any concerns raised by the agency should be timely addressed in order to receive a new award. Upon review of these factors, if appropriate, specific award conditions that respond to the degree of risk may be applied by the NOAA Grants Officer pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 200.207. In addition, NOAA reserves the right to reject an application in its entirety where information is uncovered that raises a significant risk with respect to the responsibility or suitability of the applicant. The final approval of selected applications and issuance of awards will be by the NOAA Grants Officer. The award decisions of the Grants Officer are final and there is no right of appeal.

C. Selection Factors

The B-WET Program Manager will review the ranking of the proposals and recommendations of the review panel. The numerical ranking from the review panel will be the primary consideration in deciding which of the proposals will be recommended for funding to the Selecting Official.

The Selecting Official shall award in rank order unless the proposal is justified to be selected out of rank order based upon one or more of the following 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 as set out in Section I.B.1-5 and Section III.B. of the Full Funding Opportunity;
5. Applicant's prior award performance;
6. Partnerships and/or participation of targeted groups;
7. Adequacy of information necessary for NOAA staff to make a NEPA determination and draft necessary documentation before recommendation for funding are made to the Grants Officer.

NOAA may select all, some, or none of the applications, or part of any application, or ask applicants to work together or combine projects, defer applications to the future, or reallocate funds to different funding categories to the extent authorized. Selected applicants may be asked to modify objectives, project plans or budgets, and provide supplemental information required by the agency prior to the award. When a decision has been made (whether an award or declination), verbatim anonymous copies of reviews and summaries of

review panel deliberations, if any, will be made available to the applicant.

D. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

Subject to the availability of funds, review of proposals will occur during the winter of 2016 and early 2017. Funding is expected to begin August 1, 2017. Projects should not be expected to begin prior to August 1, 2017.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

Successful applicants will receive electronic notification that the application has been funded from the NOAA Grants Management Division. This notification will be sent by e-mail from Grants Online to the institution's Authorizing Official. The official notification of funding, signed by a NOAA Grants Officer, is the authorizing document that allows the project to begin.

The official notice of award is the Standard Form CD-450, Financial Assistance Award, issued by the NOAA Grants Officer electronically through NOAA's online grants management system, Grants Online. The CD-450 award cover page is available at <http://go.usa.gov/SNMR>. The Internet Explorer browser should be used with Grants Online. Also, each recipient will need to have a U.S. Treasury Automated Standard Application for Payment (ASAP) account in order to draw funds electronically.

The Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions will apply to awards in this program. A current version of this document is available at <http://go.usa.gov/hKbj>. These terms will be provided in the award package in Grants Online at <http://www.ago.noaa.gov>. In addition, award documents provided by NOAA in the Grants Online award package may contain special award conditions unique to this program and the applicant's project, including conditions that may limit the use of funds for activities due to outstanding environmental compliance requirements and may lead to modification of the project's scope of work. These special award conditions may also include other compliance requirements for the award, such as due diligence documentation, and will be applied on a case-by-case basis. Applicants are strongly encouraged to review award documents carefully before accepting a Federal award to ensure they are fully aware of the relevant terms that have been placed on the award.

Successful applicants may be asked to modify objectives, work plans, or budgets prior to

final approval of an award. The exact amount of funds to be awarded, the final scope of activities, the collaboration duration, and specific NOAA cooperative involvement in the activities of each partnership will be determined in pre-award negotiations among the applicant, the NOAA Grants Office and the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries. Project activities should not be initiated in the expectation of Federal funding until a notice of award document is received from the NOAA Grants Office.

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified that their proposal was not recommended for funding (declined) or was not reviewed because it did not meet the minimum requirements prescribed in IV.B (Content and Form of Applications).

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

1. Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements

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

2. Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards

The Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance) at 2 C.F.R. Part 200, adopted by the Department of Commerce through 2 C.F.R. 1327.101, applies to awards in this program. Refer to <http://go.usa.gov/SBYh> and <http://go.usa.gov/SBg4>.

3. Limitation of Liability

Funding for programs listed in this notice is contingent upon the availability of appropriations. In no event will NOAA or the Department of Commerce be responsible for application preparation costs. Publication of this notice does not oblige NOAA to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds. If one incurs any costs prior to receiving an award agreement signed by an authorized NOAA official, one would do so solely at one's own risk of these costs not being included under the award or of not receiving an award.

4. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

If recommended for funding, applicants whose proposed projects may have an environmental impact will be asked to furnish sufficient information to assist NOAA in assessing the potential environmental consequences of supporting the project. NOAA must analyze the potential environmental impacts, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), for each project which seeks NOAA funding. Detailed information on

NEPA can be found at the following NOAA NEPA web site: www.nepa.noaa.gov, including our NOAA Administrative order 216-6 for NEPA, www.nepa.noaa.gov/NAO216_6.pdf, and the Council on Environmental Quality implementation regulations, http://ceq.hhs.doe.gov/nepa/regs/ceq/toc_ceq.htm.

If needed by NOAA for NEPA assessment, applicants will be asked to provide detailed information on the activities to be conducted, locations, sites, species, and habitat to be affected, possible construction activities, and any environmental concerns that may exist (e.g., the use and disposal of hazardous or toxic chemicals, introduction of non-indigenous species, impacts to endangered and threatened species, aquaculture projects, and impacts to coral reef systems). In addition to providing specific information that will serve as the basis for any required impact analyses, applicants may also be requested to assist NOAA in drafting an environmental assessment if NOAA determines an assessment is required.

Applicants will also be required to cooperate with NOAA in identifying feasible measures to reduce or avoid any identified adverse environmental impacts of their proposal. The failure to do so shall be grounds for not selecting an application. In some cases if additional information is required after an application is selected, funds can be withheld by the Grants Officer under a special award condition requiring the recipient to submit additional environmental compliance information sufficient to enable NOAA to make an assessment on any impacts that a project may have on the environment.

5. Data Sharing Plan

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

Proposals submitted in response to this Announcement must include a Data Management Plan of up to two pages describing how these requirements will be satisfied. The Data Management Plan should be aligned with any Data Management Guidance provided by NOAA in the Announcement. The contents of the Data Management Plan (or absence thereof), and past performance regarding such plans, will be considered as part of proposal review. A typical plan should include descriptions of the types of environmental data and information expected to be created during the course of the project; the tentative date by which data will be shared; the standards to be used for data/metadata format and content;

methods for providing data access; approximate total volume of data to be collected; and prior experience in making such data accessible. The costs of data preparation, accessibility, or archiving may be included in the proposal budget unless otherwise stated in the Guidance. Accepted submission of data to the NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI) is one way to satisfy data sharing requirements; however, NCEI is not obligated to accept all submissions and may charge a fee, particularly for large or unusual datasets.

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

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

6. Felony and Tax Certifications

When applicable under appropriations law, NOAA will provide certain applicants a form to be completed by the applicant's authorized representative making a certification regarding Federally-assessed unpaid or delinquent tax liability or recent felony criminal convictions under any Federal law. If a form is provided, an award may not be issued until it is returned and accepted by NOAA.

7. Confidentiality and Access to Information

Department of Commerce regulations implementing the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. Sec. 552, are found at 15 C.F.R. Part 4, Public Information. These regulations set forth rules for the Department regarding making requested materials, information, and records publicly available under the FOIA. Applications submitted in response to this Federal Funding Opportunity may be subject to requests for release under the Act. In the event that an application contains information or data that the applicant deems to be confidential commercial information that is exempt from disclosure under FOIA, that information should be identified, bracketed, and marked as Privileged, Confidential, Commercial or Financial Information. Based on these markings, the confidentiality of the contents of those pages will be protected to the extent permitted by law.

8. Review of Risk – After applications are proposed for funding by the selecting official, the Grants Office will perform administration reviews. These may include assessments of the financial stability of an applicant and the quality of the applicant’s management systems, history of performance, and the applicant’s ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on non-Federal entities. Special conditions that address any risks determined to exist may be applied. Applicants may submit comments to the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS) about any information included in the system about their organization for consideration by the awarding agency.

9. Indirect Cost Rate – If an applicant has not previously established an indirect cost rate with a Federal agency they may choose to negotiate a rate with the Department of Commerce or use the de minimis indirect cost rate of 10% of MTDC (as allowable under 2 C.F.R., section 200.214). The negotiation and approval of a rate is subject to the procedures required by NOAA and the Department of Commerce Standard Terms and Conditions.

The NOAA contact for indirect or facilities and administrative costs is:

Lamar Revis, Grants Officer
NOAA Grants Management Division
1325 East West Highway, 9th Floor
Silver Spring, MD 20910
Lamar.Revis@noaa.gov

C. Reporting

Grant recipients are required to provide semi-annual financial and performance reports consistent with 2 C.F.R. Part 200 and Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions. Grant recipients will be required to submit financial and performance (technical) reports and a comprehensive evaluation report.

1. Financial Reports

All financial reports shall be submitted through the NOAA Grants Online system, <https://grantsonline.rdc.noaa.gov>. Deadlines and financial forms can be found at: <http://www.ago.noaa.gov/grants/finforms.html>.

2. Performance Reports

Performance reports should be submitted to the NOAA Program Officer. Electronic submission of performance reports is required through the NOAA Grants Online system, <https://grantsonline.rdc.noaa.gov>. The semi-annual reports must be submitted no later than 30 days following the end of each 6-month period from the start date of the award. A final comprehensive report is due at the end of the award period. The final comprehensive report shall be submitted through the NOAA Grants Online. It is recommended that recipients follow the progress report format provided in the following link:
<http://www.oesd.noaa.gov/grants/bwet.html#page=resources>

In addition, the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act, 31 U.S.C. § 6101 note, includes a requirement for awardees of applicable Federal grants to report information about first-tier subawards and executive compensation under Federal assistance awards issued in FY 2011 or later. All awardees of applicable grants and cooperative agreements are required to report to the Federal Subaward Reporting System (FSRS) available at www.FSRS.gov on all subawards over \$25,000.

VII. Agency Contacts

Please visit the National Marine Sanctuaries CA B-WET website at: <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/news/bwet/welcome.html>) or contact Seaberry Nachbar, Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary office; 99 Pacific Street, Bldg 455A, Monterey, CA 93940, or by phone at 831-647-4204.

VIII. Other Information

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. Recipients and sub-recipients are subject to all federal laws and agency policies, regulations, and procedures applicable to federal financial assistance awards. Applicants should be in good standing with all existing NOAA grants and/or cooperative funding agreements in order to receive funds.