

National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
Cooperative Science Center (CSC) Solicitation
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Question: Will the July 21, 2010 NOAA Cooperative Science Center Informational Session presentation be made available to participants and how can we download a copy of the presentation?

Response: The presentations from the July and August, 2010 Informational Sessions are available on the Educational Partnership Program (EPP) web site, www.epp.noaa.gov. To find the presentations, visit the left side bar under EPP Documents and click on the Solicitations hyperlink.

Question: Where can the full announcement for this Federal Funding Opportunity (FFO) be found?

Response: The full announcement can be accessed from www.grants.gov. Look on the right blue panel under “FOR APPLICANTS” and click “Grant Search.” In the Search by CFDA Number field, please enter “11.481.” Click on the Opportunity with a Close Date of 11/15/2010. You may also locate the full announcement on the Educational Partnership Program (EPP) web site: http://www.epp.noaa.gov/epp_documents_page.html#solicitation.

Question: Is the NOAA Cooperative Science Center with Minority Serving Institutions an education or research program?

Response: First and foremost the NOAA Cooperative Science Center with Minority Serving Institutions is an education program that uses collaborative research to educate and have students gain technical expertise in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields that are critical to NOAA’s mission.

Question: What is the purpose of the NOAA Cooperative Science Centers?

Response: The purpose of these NOAA Cooperative Science Centers (CSCs) at Minority Serving Institutions is to: (1) Educate students in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields related to the NOAA CSCs' research areas to increase the number and diversity of NOAA's and the Nation's expert STEM workforce; (2) Conduct research in collaboration with NOAA scientists and engineers to better understand the significance of changes in the Earth's ocean, coasts, Great Lakes, weather and climate; and (3) Build sustainable capacity in education and research related to increasing the numbers of highly trained graduates in NOAA's mission-relevant sciences, at all Center institutions.

Question: How many years is the project award?

Response: The NOAA Cooperative Science Center (CSC) project/award period is up to five (5) years. The CSC's performance determines yearly funding. Each center shall also undergo a third-year cumulative evaluation of its program (education and outreach, research, and administration) during the third year of the five-year award period. The evaluation will be conducted by an evaluation panel with members external to the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration's Educational Partnership Program. The evaluation outcomes determine the CSC's fourth and fifth year funding.

Question: Why was the NOAA Cooperative Science Center program targeted at Minority Serving Institutions developed?

Response: The reason Minority Serving Institutions are targeted is to increase the number of underrepresented students who are trained and graduate in STEM fields, and more specifically, in NOAA mission areas.

Question: What is the definition of a Minority Serving Institution?

Response: NOAA determined, for the purpose of this program, Minority Serving Institutions are: Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, Indian Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities, Alaska Native-Serving Institutions, and Native Hawaiian- Serving Institutions, as identified in the 2007 United States Department of Education, Accredited Postsecondary Minority Institution list (visit, <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/edlite-minorityinst.html> and

<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/edlite-minorityinst-list-tab.html>).

Question: We were just designated as a Minority Serving Institution (MSI), a few weeks ago, and have received our notification from the U.S. Department of Education. Can we apply using our MSI designation?

Response: NOAA determined that the U.S. Department of Education 2007 list is the reference for MSI designation in the FY 2010 Cooperative Science Center solicitation.

Question: Is there a preference for support of minority faculty at a Minority Serving Institution (MSI), or should we solicit participation from non-minority faculty?

Response: The NOAA Office of Education (OEd), Educational Partnership Program (EPP) does not give preference based on race or ethnicity. Eligible applicants determine faculty participation in their proposal. The applicant's eligibility is based on the Federal Register Notice (FRN) and Federal Funding Opportunity (FFO) requirements that are found under the eligibility information heading.

Question: What does underrepresented minority mean?

Response: Underrepresented minority means any gender, racial or ethnic group – African American, Alaskan Native, American Indian, Asian-American, Hispanic American, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, or any other group – whose representation among professionals in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields is disproportionately less than their proportion in the general population as indicated in standard statistical references, or as documented on a case-by-case basis by national survey data published by the Federal government.

Question: Is the NOAA Cooperative Science Center support reserved for minority students?

Response: The NOAA Cooperative Science Center support is for undergraduate and graduate students who are U.S. citizens and are pursuing an academic field in NOAA mission-relevant Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields. NOAA does not discriminate.

Question: Can an applicant contact a NOAA Line Office that they want to align with for their proposed Center?

Response: An applicant can contact a NOAA Line Office prior to establishment of the Center - that is in the preparation of the application.

Question: How is the National Weather Service (NWS) related to the NOAA?

Response: The NWS is a NOAA Line Organization also called Office.

Question: Should NOAA Cooperative Science Center (CSC) support be directed to NOAA collaborators, or does the participation come from their own support?

Response: No. NOAA scientists and labs collaborating on research with a NOAA Cooperative Science Center cannot be supported with the funds from this grant award.

Question: Are there any form/style elements required (i.e. page #, font, margins, etc.)?

Response: The form/style elements information is provided in the Federal Funding Opportunity under the Application and Submission information section. We recommend that applicants follow the guidance provided.

Question: Can you describe the relative roles of the different investigators – Center Director, Deputy Director, Distinguished Scientist, and Program Coordinator?

Response: The information about the relative roles (Center Director, Deputy Director, Distinguished Scientist, and Program Coordinator) is provided in the Federal Funding Opportunity under NOAA Cooperative Science Center Management Key Positions. We recommend that you follow the guidance provided.

Question: This funding, is it for new centers or existing National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration NOAA Cooperative Science Centers?

Response: This is an open competitive process. Existing NOAA Cooperative Science Centers and new eligible applicants are invited to apply under this solicitation.

Question: May an applicant align with more than one NOAA Line Office?

Response: The applicant aligns primarily with one NOAA Line Office, and is required to follow the guidance in the FFO for the science themes.

Question: Is it permissible to establish more than one NOAA Cooperative Science Center?

Response: A Minority Serving Institution can be the lead in only one NOAA Cooperative Science Center. However, the Minority Serving Institution may be a partner in another NOAA Cooperative Science Center.

Question: What are the specific expectations for student beneficiaries supported under NOAA Cooperative Science Center Awards?

Response: Students supported must be a United States citizen and maintain their eligibility through: (1) continuing full-time enrollment; (2) maintaining good academic standing and satisfactory degree progress; and (3) meet all requirements established for student training. See the Federal Funding Opportunity for details.

Question: Why is there interest in increasing the number of underrepresented students trained and graduated in STEM fields?

Response: National education data (<http://nces.ed.gov/> and <http://www.nsf.gov/statistics>) show that there is a gap in degrees earned in STEM fields by students from underrepresented groups. The published national data for degrees earned and postdoctoral training indicate that MSIs are where higher numbers of students from underrepresented groups are trained and graduate with degrees in STEM fields. The program's goal is to increase the number of students from underrepresented communities who are educated and graduate with degrees in sciences that directly support NOAA's mission.

Question: Why was the NOAA Cooperative Science Center program targeted at Minority Serving Institutions developed?

Response: The students traditionally underrepresented in STEM attend Minority Serving Institutions in large numbers. The reason this program is targeted at minority serving Institutions is to increase the number of underrepresented students who are trained and graduate in STEM fields, and more specifically, in NOAA mission areas.

Question: How are the NOAA Cooperative Science Center applications evaluated?

Response: There is a two-part review process. The Educational Partnership Program team conducts an initial **administrative review** of submitted applications to determine compliance with requirements and complete content of applications. Only complete applications that meet all eligibility requirements, project requirements, and supporting documents described in the Federal Funding Opportunity will be considered for a merit review. Applications identified as incomplete or that do not meet the eligibility or complete application package requirements will be deemed ineligible.

All complete applications from eligible institutions undergo a **merit review** by a panel of scientific experts in the areas of study related to the NOAA Cooperative Science Center in the Federal Funding Opportunity. NOAA Cooperative Science Center applications will be evaluated using a peer review process to find win-win matches between the proposed work, capabilities of applicant organization(s), and the NOAA Cooperative Science Center program purpose, and goals. Panel members rate applications based on the evaluation criteria described in the Federal Funding Opportunity.

Question: Why is thirty percent (30%) of the award to be used for direct student support?

Response: The funding opportunity is for a competitive education program designed to strengthen and enhance the education and training capabilities supported by research to develop STEM programs directly related to NOAA's mission at MSIs.

Question: Can a NOAA employee provide assistance in preparation of the NOAA Cooperative Science Center application?

Response: No. To insure the integrity of the competitive process NOAA employees cannot provide guidance in the application preparation process.

Question: Does a Ph.D.-granting MSI have to serve as the lead institution for a Center?

Response: Yes. The Ph.D. program in a Center proposal must align with the research thrust of that Center-type. Also, the Ph.D. graduates from a proposed Center-type will need to have attained core competencies in NOAA mission-relevant fields to support the specific Center-type. NOAA has taken into consideration that the specific doctoral degree programs would/could be varied as long as the fields directly support the NOAA mission areas, relevant to the particular Center-type.

Question: If the lead MSI is partnering with an Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSI) that has less than the 50% minority enrollment needed for MSI designation (they are not on MSI listing), will the amount that can be allocated be that of a minority serving or fall under the limitation of the 20% sub-award funding for a majority serving institution despite the fact that the partner is an HSI?

Response: All non-MSI institutions and/or partners will be held to the 20% sub-award limit.

Question: Can there be any technical overlap between the proposed Center for Atmospheric Science (CAP) and existing centers?

Response: If this is a reference to a center in existence funded by another source, then the answer is yes, but the budget and resources must be transparent. All of the requirements of the NOAA center application must be met in the application. Leveraging is good. Also, no two federal agencies will fund the same objectives – distinctions must be made clear.

Question: Is there a limit to the number of proposals from any one Institution?

Response: There is no limit to the number of applications from one institution. However, it is assumed that these applications are from different departments and one would expect to see letters of support from the institution's administration. The likelihood of one institution being the lead in more than one Cooperative Science Center is slim. An institution may be the lead at one center and a partner in another. Again, NOAA will look at allocation of resources in all applications.

Question: Are there limitations as to what may be proposed (i.e. such as equipment, travel and/or other specific items)?

Response: No Cooperative Science Center funds can be used for construction. There is also the 30% direct student support requirement. A reasonable balanced budget is expected. One would expect to see some travel, some salary support, some equipment etc. Again, this is up to the applicant and there is not a formula.

Question: Could an institution with an existing funded STEM center apply under this NOAA Center Solicitation?

Response: Please note that these funds cannot be used to support an existing Center with a previously existing mandate. For example, if a Center on university X has a USDA, NASA or DOE Center, the institution cannot just add the NOAA funding and call it the NOAA Cooperative Science Center. It has to be identified as a NOAA center although it can conduct activities that are congruent with NOAA's mission.

Question: Could an MSI with a Master's program (only Ph.D. program is in education) partner with another institution that does have a Ph.D. program?

Response: Only institutions that meet the eligibility requirements may be the lead institution in any Cooperative Science Center application. Institutions that do not meet the established criteria and capacity may partner with eligible institution(s).

Question: How are Cooperative Science Centers matched with NOAA Line Organizations (Offices)?

Response: There is a primary Line Office to which each Center is matched. Depending on which Center an applicant chooses, they align with a specific Line Office and may work across line offices.

Question: What NOAA Line Organization is aligned with which Center-type?

Response: The **Atmospheric Cooperative Science Center** is aligned with the **National Weather Service**; the **Environmental Cooperative Science Center** is aligned with the **National Ocean Service**; the **Living Marine Resources Cooperative Science Center** is aligned with the **National Marine Fisheries Service**; The **Remote Sensing Technology Cooperative Science Center** is aligned with the **National Environmental Satellite, Data and Information Service**; and the **Scientific Environmental Technology Cooperative Science Center** is aligned with the **Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research**.

Question: What guidance is there about selecting partners?

Response: The Program Objective section of the published Federal Funding Opportunity provides guidance. The lead institution selects its partners to accomplish the proposed objectives.

Question: Where is the link to the 2005 Federal Register Notice to establish Cooperative Science Centers?

Response: The Federal Register Notices can be accessed from the Federal Register Main Page <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/>, by searching for the 2005 FR, Vol. 70 announcement. There were two 2005 Federal Register Notices to establish Cooperative Science Centers. The first Federal Register Notice was August 17, 2005 and the second was December 15, 2005. The August 17, 2005 Request for Applications – Financial Assistance To Establish a New Cooperative Science Center Under NOAA’s Educational Partnership Program (EPP) With Minority Serving Institutions for Scientific Environmental Technology. The second Federal Register Notice was December 15, 2005 Request for Applications - Financial Assistance To Establish New Cooperative Science Centers Under NOAA’s Educational Partnership Program (EPP) With Minority Serving Institutions in Atmospheric, Oceanic and Environmental Sciences, Living Marine Resources Science and Management, and Remote Sensing Technology at Minority Serving Institutions. Please be reminded that applicants submitting proposals in response to the open 2010 Federal Funding Opportunity have the responsibility to:

- Read the published information; and,
- Respond to the requirements described therein.

Question: How many proposals (applications) did NOAA receive in response to the 2005 Federal Register Notice, Request for Applications - Financial Assistance To Establish New Cooperative Science Centers Under NOAA's Educational Partnership Program (EPP) With Minority Serving Institutions?

Response: A total of ten applications were received in response to the 2005 Federal Register Notices.

Question: Are the following documents allowed in the Appendices of the application?

- Description of each project(s) relevance to NOAA;
- A paragraph for each Principal Investigator that provides their capability along with the current and pending support;
- List of partnering companies and organizations;
- Letters from partnering companies and organizations, and,
- Vitas and biographies for each Principal Investigator.

Response: The Required Elements (page 14 of the Federal Funding Opportunity, [FFO](#)) are counted toward the seventy-five (75) page limitation. Yes. The current and pending support for the principal and co-investigators counts in the seventy-five page limitation and should not be contained in the appendices. An applicant has the discretion to determine what information is appended. The reviewers are required to read the information in the 75 pages and the appendices, specifically outlined (Sec. IV., B., 1) in the Federal Funding Opportunity ([FFO](#)).

Question: Is it allowed to provide a paragraph for each Principal Investigator along with the current pending support?

Response: The applicant has the discretion to develop the content and form of the application, within the guidelines provided in Sec. IV, B of the Federal Funding Opportunity ([FFO](#)).

Question: How many pages are allowed for each biography?

Response: There is no page limitation.

Question: Where should an applicant attach the completed Standard Form 424 Budget Form for each sub-recipient in www.grants.gov?

Response: Please attach the completed Standard Form 424 Budget Form that is completed by each sub-recipient with the Budget Narrative.

Question: Is there a page requirement for each section of the application?

Response: No, the only page requirements may be found in section IV, B. Content and Form of Application, 1. Applications, “Applications, electronic or paper should be no more than seventy-five (75) pages (numbered) in length, excluding budget, investigators vitae, and all appendices. Federally mandated forms are not included within the page count.”

Question: “The Distinguished Scientist must allocate one hundred percent (100%) of their time to manage the center research.” Furthermore the CSC Distinguished Scientist is responsible for among other things:

- Writing research proposals and
 - Leveraging resources - submit proposals to other funding organizations;
- These proposals would require time commitments. With 100% devoted to CSC functions, from where will the time to work on proposals to other funding agencies come from? Or is it part of the 100%?

Response: Yes, writing research proposals and leveraging resources are a Distinguished Scientist’s functions. Yes, writing research proposals and leveraging resources are a part of the 100% for a Distinguished Scientist’s time.

Question: Does the Principal Investigator’s time requirement stated below apply only to the lead Principal Investigator of each project or all participants in the project? Cooperative Science Centers will generally have multiple projects organized in thrust areas. Most projects involve several faculty investigators.

“The time allocation of all the Principal Investigators identified in the application should be clearly described. All applications should allocate minimum of twenty-five percent (25%) of the principal investigators time to the Cooperative Science Center.”

Response: The time requirement applies to the Principal Investigators for each of the Center’s partnering institutions. For example, if the Center is comprised of a lead institutions and five partners, then, the Principal Investigator at each of the five

partnering institutions should allocate a minimum of twenty-five percent of their time to the Cooperative Science Center. The twenty-five percent (35%) time requirement for the Principal Investigator does not extend to faculty investigators for research projects.

Question: The Cooperative Science Center Description states seven items from (1) program objectives to (7) administrative structure. May the Cooperative Science Center description narrative be written in any order as long as the listed items are described and addressed?

Response: Yes, the Center Description narrative may be provided in any order as long as the items in the Federal Funding Opportunity ([FFO](#)) are identified and addressed.

Question: Specifically, the solicitation states “The total dollar amount of the direct student support must be greater than or equal to 30%, annually.” Please clarify, is this 30% of the direct cost budget, or 30% of the total budget?

Response: The total dollar amount of the direct student support must be greater than or equal to thirty percent (30%) of the total budget, annually.

Question: Do the partner institutions including non-Minority Serving Institutions need to follow the same guidelines for the Facility and Administration calculations? Which is the negotiated rate or 25% whichever is the lesser?

Response: The applicant (lead institution) should meet the negotiated rate or 25% whichever is the lesser. The applicant determines the negotiated rate with regards to the partnering institutions.

Question: Are the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) data needed from all the partnering institutions or only the lead institution?

Response: Yes. The STEM data are required from all the partnering institutions and the lead institution.

Question: Does the Distinguished Scientist need to be paid 12 months from the NOAA grant or will a nine month contract suffice for this position?

Response: The applicant determines the source of funding for the full-time position.

Question: When calculating the TDC (Total Direct Cost), should student support be included. Is F&A (Facilities and Administrative) calculated on student support?

Response: No. Student support should not be included when calculating the Total Direct Cost. The applicant cannot charge Facilities and Administrative (indirect cost) on student support.

Question: Are letters of support recommended or should they be letters of commitment? Are there any limitations as to who provides the letters of support?

Response: The applicant determines the supporting documentation that accompanies their submitted proposal. Therefore, the applicant chooses whether to use letters of commitment or letters of support. The applicant also determines the source of such letters.

Question: Is student tuition considered part of the 30% of student support?

Response: Yes. Student tuition is considered a part of the thirty percent (30%) direct student support.

Question: Does the budget justification, reference cited and current and pending support count in the 75 page limitation?

Response: Yes. The current and pending support does count in the seventy-five page limitation as provided in information on page 17 of the Federal Funding Opportunity ([FFO](#)).

The budget justification and cited references do count in the seventy-five (75) page limitation. We recommend that applicants follow the guidance provided in the Federal Funding Opportunity ([FFO](#)), (see page 14) that indicates: “Applications, electronic or paper should be no more than seventy-five (75) pages (numbered) in length, excluding budget, investigators vitae, and all appendices.”

Question: A particular partner will not have students to support and no student support in the budget. The question is, can this partner have a budget that doesn't have student support, since the student support is provided by MSIs sending students to this institution for field work.

Response: No. A partner institution should have a budget that contains student support.

Question: The one-page abstract summary requirements include the following, “The abstract summary should clearly address program priorities (Section I.B. of the FFO). The summary should appear on a separate page, headed with the application title, institution(s), Center Director, Deputy Director, proposed investigator(s), total proposed cost, and budget period.” Is this information part of the one page abstract summary or is the heading a separate page?

Response: Yes. As in the guidance provided on page 15 of the Federal Funding Opportunity ([FFO](#)), the identified information is to be included in the one-page abstract summary.

Question: If all the items are on the same page it may reduce the size of the summary to $\frac{3}{4}$ of a page or less?

Response: Yes. If all the items are on the same page, the applicant adjusts the size of the summary to provide all of the required information including a brief summation of work to be completed in the proposed center.

Question: Does the table of contents, signed summary title page, and one-page abstract count in the seventy-five (75) page limitation?

Response: No. The table of contents, signed summary title page, and one-page abstract do not count in the seventy-five (75) page limitation.

Question: As a lead institution, it states to list the subgrantees (collaborating universities) on the SF424A separately. How should we list them on the SF424A form?

Response: The SF424A Budget Form information is provided in the Federal Funding Opportunity ([FFO](#)) under the Application and Submission information section. We recommend that applicants follow the guidance provided in the Federal Funding Opportunity ([FFO](#)), pages 16-17.

Question: If we are the lead institution, does each subgrantee need their budgets listed on a separate year-by-year SF424A (for a total of five budget pages for each subgrantee)?

Response: The SF424A Budget Form information is provided in the Federal Funding Opportunity under the Application and Submission information section. We recommend that applicants follow the guidance provided in the Federal Funding Opportunity ([FFO](#)), pages 15-17.

Question: Does each subgrantee require their own signed SF424?

Response: Yes. The guidance for submitting the SF424 Application for Federal Assistance information is provided in the Federal Funding Opportunity ([FFO](#)) under the Application and Submission information section. We recommend that applicants follow the guidance provided.

Question: Do the references cited (Required Elements, section e. in the Federal Funding Opportunity), milestone chart (Required Elements, section f. in the Federal Funding Opportunity), evaluation of the program (Required Elements, section j. in the Federal Funding Opportunity), and federal, state, and local government activities (Required Elements, section k. in the Federal Funding Opportunity, [FFO](#)) count toward the 75 page limitation?

Response: Yes. All the Required Elements (page 14 of the Federal Funding Opportunity, [FFO](#)) are counted toward the seventy-five (75) page limitation. Therefore, the cited references (Required Elements, section e. of the Federal Funding Opportunity), milestone chart (Required Elements, section f. of the Federal Funding

Opportunity); evaluation of the program (Required Elements, section j. of the Federal Funding Opportunity); and, federal, state, and local government activities (Required Elements, section k. of the Federal Funding Opportunity) do count toward the seventy-five (75) page limitation.

Question: The application package forms including the Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424) and Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A) have expired. Should an applicant use the expired forms in the application package or are there updated forms for an applicant to use?

Response: Yes. The applicant must still use these forms to submit the application package. Grants.gov is currently working with the Office of Management and Budget to obtain clearances on the forms. Please use the Grants.gov forms located at, http://www.grants.gov/agencies/aapproved_standard_forms.jsp#1.

Question: Additionally, should an applicant use the forms for non-construction budgets or the R&R Budget related forms that are dated with an expiration of 06/30/2011?

Response: Yes. An applicant should complete the SF-424A (Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs) as provided in the Federal Funding Opportunity ([FFO](#)).

Question: In www.Grants.gov application package, should the applicant include the cover page, project summary, table of contents, and seventy-five (75) page material (including Required Elements) in the mandatory document, project narrative attachment form?

Response: Yes. The applicant should include the cover page, project, summary, table of contents, and seventy-five (75) page material (including the Required Elements - page fourteen of the Federal Funding Opportunity, [FFO](#)) in the mandatory document, project narrative attachment form.

Question: Is the applicant's partnering institution required to follow the E. Funding Restrictions 1. Indirect Costs listed in the Federal Funding Opportunity, [FFO](#)?

Response: No. The applicant determines the negotiated rate with regards to its partnering institution.

Question: Are there twelve elements that each application must include (Section B. Content and Form of Application 2 Required Elements of the Federal Funding Opportunity, [FFO](#))?

Response: No. There are eleven (11) elements that must be included in each application.

Question: Is curriculum vitae included in the seventy-five (75) pages.

Response: No. Applications, electronic or paper should be not more than seventy-five (75) pages (numbered) in length, excluding budget, investigators vitae, and all appendices.

Question: Is there a page limit for the biographies?

Response: No. There is not a page limitation for biographies. All submission requirements start on page fourteen of the Federal Funding Opportunity ([FFO](#)), section IV. Application and Submission Information. All the eleven (11) Required Elements [page fourteen (14) of the Federal Funding Opportunity, [FFO](#)] are counted toward the seventy-five (75) page limitation.

Question: Is there a specific form and format for biographies, current and pending, and conflict of interest? Can we use NSF Form?

Response: No. There is not a specific form and format for biographies, current and pending, and conflict of interest. All submission requirements start on page fourteen of the Federal Funding Opportunity ([FFO](#)), section IV. Application and Submission Information. Please follow the guidance. At a minimum, information should be provided that allows reviewers to make cogent conclusions.

No. the NSF form cannot be used. However, the applicant may use the NSF format to provide the information. Refer to page sixteen of the Federal Funding Opportunity ([FFO](#)).

Question: How should the applicant complete a budget for a five-year period on the Standard Form 424A BUDGET INFORMATION – Non-Construction Programs?

Response: The applicant must provide the five-year budget on two (2) or more pages of the SF424A. Applicants may make a copy of the SF424A BUDGET INFORMATION form and use as needed for additional pages. Clear labeling is an asset.

Question: On page seventeen (17) of the Federal Funding Opportunity, section k. Federal, state and local government activities. The application should include a list of related Federal, state and local government activities, including other efforts funded through NOAA, that the proposed work would affect and describe the relationship between the proposed project and those plans or activities. Does the requirement apply only to the principal investigators listed on the proposal being submitted, or does the requirement apply to the entire campus?

Response: The requirement, section k. Federal, state and local government activities applies to the principal investigators listed on the application and not to the entire campus.

Question: If there are National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) – funded projects on campus, but they will not be affected by the proposal being submitted, should they be listed?

Response: No. Do not list the NOAA-funded projects that are not affected by the work proposed in the application.

Question: Specifically, the solicitation states “The total dollar amount of the direct student support must be greater than or equal to 30%, annually.” Is the requirement that overall 30% of the funds go to students, or each year 30% of the funds go to students?

Response: Yes. The requirement is an annual requirement. Each year, thirty percent (30%) of the total budget for the year shall go to direct student support.

Question: Does the one-page abstract summary require a header to be placed on the same page that will include the application title, institution(s), Center Director, Deputy Director, proposed investigators (s), total proposed cost, and budget period?

Response: Yes. Please follow the guidance provided on page fifteen (15) of the Federal Funding Opportunity ([FFO](#)), section c. of the Required Elements, One-page abstract summary.

Question: SF 424A BUDGET INFORMATION, Section D: Total for the first year is not accessible to input dollar amount but 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th quarter are accessible. My assumption is that the funding will be awarded yearly and not quarterly. Is this a correct assumption? If not, please clarify what should be provided in #13 of section D.

Response: Yes. The funding will be awarded yearly. Using the SF 424A Form, input the yearly amount in the section identified as First, Second, Third, and Fourth. Use a second SF 424A Form, as page two (2) to input Year Five. The applicant should refer to the budget information guidance provided: for separate budgets for each subcontractor or subgrantee regardless of the dollar value and indicate the basis for the cost estimates. List all subcontractor or subgrantee costs under line item 6.f. contractual on the SF424A. (Federal Funding Opportunity, [FFO](#)), pages 15-17).

Question: Please clarify what is requested in: Center Description IV. Application and Submission Information, B. Content and Form of Application (3) Evaluation Criteria.

Response: The applicant is requested to provide Center Description text that is responsive to the evaluation criteria (Sec. V., A. Evaluation Criteria, Federal Funding Opportunity, ([FFO](#)) page 19) that the reviewers will use to assess the application.

Question: Please clarify what is requested in the section j. of the Required Elements, Evaluation of program.

Response: The applicant is required to provide a plan for evaluation of proposed center accomplishments with specific criteria and performance measures for education, outreach, research and administrative activities.

Question: The funding opportunity announcement says on page 15, a. Federal Forms "At the time of application submission, all applicants anticipating direct funding shall submit the Standard Form, SF-424, "Application for Federal Assistance" to indicate the total amount of funding proposed for the whole project period." The same paragraph then goes on to say "A Multi-institutional application must include signed SF-424 forms from all institutions requesting funding."

We're a subcontractor on a proposal with another university as the lead school. We do not anticipate being directly funded. The above wording from the announcement is confusing. "Multi-institutional application" is not defined within the solicitation. At first it sounds as if SF-424 forms are only required of institutions requesting direct funding, but then the last sentence seems to indicate any institution involvement requires those forms to be filled out regardless of how you expect to be funded.

Response: A multi-institutional application is an application with a lead and partner institutions. The application must include signed Standard Form 424 forms for the lead and partner institutions. Please refer to the guidance provided beginning in the Federal Funding Opportunity ([FFO](#)), on page 15.

Question: Would you please clarify for me what forms, if any, do you want to see from a subcontractor institution, an institution that is not being directly funded for this solicitation?

Response: A subcontractor institution should prepare the Standard Forms, Application for Federal Assistance as outlined in the FFO. Please refer to pages 15 - 17 of the Federal Funding Opportunity ([FFO](#)).

Question: If you do want completed SF-424 forms for subcontractor institutions that are requesting funds, please direct me as to how to get current editable copies of the forms.

Response: Please use the MS Word version of the Standard Form 424 - Application for Federal Assistance that is available on the www.Grants.gov portal by clicking on the following link: http://www.grants.gov/agencies/aapproved_standard_forms.jsp#1 to provide signed forms as required.

The signature blocks are not pre-filled. The forms are still valid even though the date on the form has passed. Grants.gov is working with the Office of Management and Budget to obtain clearances on the forms.

FINAL UPDATE: November 10, 2010

Reference: www.USASpending.gov and the other website www.whitehouse.gov/omb/open

The new Transparency Act-Subaward and Executive Compensation Reporting.