

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: FY2006 Coastal Services Center Leadership Training for Coastal Managers and Scientists

Announcement Type: Initial Announcement for the NOAA Coastal Services Center (CSC) (will now be referred to as the CSC throughout this document)

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 11.473, Coastal Services Center

Dates: For applications submitted through Grants.Gov APPLY, a date and time receipt indication is included and will be the basis of determining timeliness. Hard copy proposals will be date and time stamped when they are received in the program office. Proposals must be time stamped by Grants.gov or received by the Center no later than 5 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, October 3, 2005.

Funding Opportunity Description: Coastal Learning Services (CLS) program seeks proposals on developing a training program for coastal managers and scientists. The Center's goal is to build leadership skills and capabilities to meet the changing needs within the coastal community. The Center seeks proposals for a two-year cooperative agreement under which the Center will work in coordination with the cooperator to develop and deliver the leadership training.

FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

I. Funding Opportunity Description for the CLS Program

The Center's CLS program seeks proposals for a two-year cooperative agreement on developing and implementing a leadership training program for coastal managers and scientists. The Center's goal is to aid coastal resource managers and scientists in developing their leadership skills and capabilities. Under the cooperative agreement, the Center will work in coordination with the cooperator to integrate the results of a leadership needs assessment that was recently conducted for the Center and develop a training program that addresses the needs and concerns of the coastal community. The leadership training should be targeted to mid-level managers that will soon be stepping into leadership roles within their agency or organization. The training should be clear in the distinction between management and leadership by emphasizing the following leadership principles; building trust, articulating a vision, developing public relations skills, and collaborating to build effective communities. The training should focus on skill building using interactive, multi-media and other communication processes. All

methods must be grounded in credible leadership theories.

NOAA is committed to continual improvement of the grants process and to accelerating the award of financial assistance to qualified recipients. In order to fulfill these responsibilities, this solicitation announces that up to \$150,000 may be available in FY2006, although the actual award amount will be determined by the proposals and available funds. Applicants are hereby given notice that funds have not yet been appropriated for this program. One award is anticipated from this announcement.

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.

Statutory authority for this program is provided under 16 U.S.C. 1456c (Technical Assistance).

II. Award Information

Total anticipated funding for cooperative agreements is up to \$150,000 and is subject to the availability of FY 2006 appropriations. One award is anticipated from this announcement. The nature of the cooperative agreement is such that the Center will provide substantial involvement in the project. General areas of responsibilities that the Center has had in past projects include: meeting planning and facilitation, instructional design, familiarity of coastal issues and access to potential customers of the training.

III. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are state, local, Indian tribal governments, private or nonprofit organizations, and institutions of higher education. Applicants must be familiar with the coastal community and the issues faced by coastal managers and scientists. Federal agencies or institutions are not eligible to receive Federal assistance under this announcement, but may also be project partners. Note: Federal agencies or institutions who are project partners must demonstrate that they have legal authority to receive funds in excess of their appropriation.

2. Cost Sharing

There is no requirement for cost sharing in response to this announcement.

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. Address to Request Application Package

Applications should be submitted through Grants.gov APPLY. If an applicant does not have Internet access, hard copies should be sent to Lisa Holmes at 2234 South Hobson Avenue, Charleston, South Carolina 29405-2413 or phone her at 843-740-1256 or email her at < Lisa.Holmes@noaa.gov >.

2. Content and Form of Application Submission

This announcement is a call for proposals for work under the Center's Coastal Learning Services (CLS) Program. The Center conducts a variety of projects that directly

apply to the state and local coastal resource management community. The goal of the CLS program serves the nation's coastal resource managers through training workshops, professional conferences, and meeting support services. The program also provides a wide range of related consulting services on topics including instructional design, information design and usability, assessments, and facilitation. Through partnerships with public and private organizations, CLS strives to deliver high-quality training useful for coastal resource managers and scientists. More information on the program can be found at < <http://www.csc.noaa.gov/cms/cls> >.

Proposed training must relate to the coastal management community. All project proposals received that meet the topic criteria will be reviewed for technical merit and management relevance. Applicants are expected to understand the management needs.

Roles and Responsibilities

By working in a cooperative partnership, the unique skills, capabilities, and experiences of the Center and the cooperator will be combined to offer an opportunity for each organization to further its goals. In their proposals, potential cooperators shall explicitly propose the respective roles and responsibilities of the Center and the cooperator. Part of the Center's role will be to determine the training that represents the best value to the government. General areas of responsibility that the Center can offer includes meeting planning and facilitation, instructional design, familiarity of coastal issues and access to potential customers of the training. The Center can commit up to 0.25 full-time equivalents (FTE) per year for its responsibilities, if needed. Any questions about appropriate roles for the Center can be directed to Ginger Hinchcliff at Ginger.Hinchcliff@noaa.gov.

Potential general areas of responsibility anticipated for applicants include: synthesizing the needs assessment data and developing appropriate training materials as identified in the assessment; expertise in instructional design of leadership training programs. All project proposals must include the sections on the following topics:

- a. Goals and Objectives. Identify the goal(s) and objective(s) of the training and describe specifically what the leadership training will accomplish for those attending.
- b. Background/Introduction. Provide sufficient background and context on this training need and some perspective on the existing understanding of this issue. Summarize the status of any ongoing efforts by the cooperator and partners to address the objectives.
- c. Audience. Describe who will be the primary and potential secondary users of the results of this project.
- d. Project Description/Methodology. Describe the specifics of the project. This must include information regarding the methodologies, theories and purpose for choosing these particular methods of training for leadership. It should detail the proposed design, development, implementation and evaluation process.
- e. Project Management, Partners and Support. Describe how the lead cooperator will manage the project and coordinate with the Center. Identify how the project will progress and how the work plan will be implemented by the cooperator(s). Identify who will be involved in planning, development, and review of the effort, and identify how coordination among these groups will be achieved. When formal partnerships already exist, include letters from partners that acknowledge their role in the project and their

commitment and willingness to participate in the project. When formal partnerships do not already exist, describe plans for developing them. Describe the resources the cooperators and partners have for conducting the project, including personnel qualifications (education, experience, and time available to work on the project), facilities, equipment, and, to the extent practicable, the information and tools already available. Describe how widely the project is supported within the resource management community and offer evidence of that support.

f. Milestones and Outcomes. List target milestones, time lines, and desired outcomes in terms of products and/or services.

g. Project Budget. Proposal should provide a detailed budget breakdown that follows the categories and formats in the NOAA grant package and a brief narrative that justifies each item.

3. Submission Dates and Times

Applications must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time on October 3, 2005. For applications submitted through Grants.gov APPLY, a date and time receipt indication is included and will be the basis of determining timeliness. Hard copy proposals will be date and time stamped when they are received in the program office. Applications received after that time will not be reviewed.

4. Intergovernmental Review

Application under the Center's CLS program is subject to Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs. It is the organization's responsibility 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 is listed in the Office of Management and Budget's home page at < <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/spoc.html> >.

5. Funding Restrictions

There are no funding restrictions under this CLS program. This CLS program is seeking applications for non-construction projects.

6. Other Submission Requirements

Applications should be submitted through Grants.gov APPLY. For applicants without internet access, send applications to Lisa Holmes, 2234 South Hobson Avenue, Charleston, South Carolina 29405-2413.

If the Grants.gov Web site is not used, the applicant must submit one set of originals (signed) and two copies of the proposal(s) and related forms to the Coastal Services Center. No e-mail or fax copies will be accepted. All project proposals must total no more than 10 pages (double spaced, 12- point font, minimum one-inch margins, and exclusive of appendices). Appendices should be limited to materials that directly support the main body of the proposal, (e.g., support letters, resumes, lists of data sources, maps, data costs). Letters of support may be mailed separately, but must be received by October 3, 2005 deadline. All appendix material must be unbound. Although applicants are not required to submit more than two copies of the proposal, the normal review process utilizes seven copies. If applicants wish all reviewers to receive color, unusually sized (other than 8.5" x 11"), or otherwise unusual materials submitted as part of the proposal, they should submit sufficient proposal copies for the full review process. NOAA reserves the right to waive informalities.

V. Application Review Information

1. Evaluation Criteria (With Weights)

a. Importance/relevance and applicability of proposal to the program goals (25 points). This criterion ascertains whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and/or relevance to NOAA, federal, regional, state, or local activities. For this competition, this refers to the likelihood that the resulting products will be an effective and powerful program on leadership training. The management audience and end users should be clearly defined.

b. Technical/scientific merit (35 points). This criterion assesses whether there are clear project goals and objectives, the approach is technically sound and/or innovative, and whether the methods are appropriate. For this competition, this refers to whether the requirements for developing and implementing leadership training are sound and logical to meet the coastal communities needs. The proposed work should have focused objectives and a complete and efficient strategy for developing and delivering a leadership training program. This criterion also includes such factors as the technical merit of the process that the applicant has outlined and proposed role for the Center in its development. How well does the proposed project produce useful (and easily used) products, services, or an understanding for the target audience and users? How likely is the project time line and project design to be flexible and responsive to public and user input? Is an evaluation process built into the project? How appropriate is it? This criterion measures both the scope of the proposed project and the integration of its various components.

c. Project costs (10 points). This criterion evaluates the budget to determine if its realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time-frame. For this competition, this includes: How well the applicant demonstrates that the budget is commensurate with project needs and that the partnerships employed will improve the overall cost effectiveness of the project and value of the products by contributing funds, expertise, and other resources.

d. 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. For this competition, this refers to the capability of the investigator and collaborators to complete their component of the proposed work as evidenced by past accomplishments, previous cooperative work, timely communication, and the sharing of findings, data and other products.

e. Outreach and education (20 percent). This criterion assesses whether the project provides a focused and effective education and outreach strategy regarding NOAA's mission to protect the Nation's natural resources. For this competition, this refers to how well the applicant demonstrates the transferability of the training to others who share similar issues.

2. Selection Process

An initial administrative review is conducted to determine compliance with requirements and completeness of the application. A review panel will be established to evaluate proposals on the basis of the evaluation criteria provided above. The panelists will provide individual evaluations on the proposals, thus there will be no consensus recommendation. All proposals reviewed will be ranked according to the average score and the selecting official (the Center's Deputy Director) will award in rank order unless a

proposal is justified to be awarded out of rank order based upon one or more of the selection factors listed in the section below. Thus proposals with the highest scores may not necessarily be selected for an award. The Selecting Official may negotiate the funding level of the proposal. The Selecting Official makes final recommendations for award to the Grants Officer who is authorized to obligate the funds.

3. Selection Factors

The merit review ratings shall provide a rank order to the Selecting Official for final funding recommendations. The Selecting Official shall award in the 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) Duplication of other projects funded or considered for funding by NOAA/federal agencies
- (4) Program priorities and policy factors
- (5) Applicant's prior award performance
- (6) Partnerships with/Participation of targeted groups
- (7) Adequacy of information necessary for NOAA staff to make a NEPA determination and draft necessary documentation before recommendations for funding are made to the Grants Officer.

Program priorities include: developing and delivering leadership training to coastal managers and scientists.

4. Start Dates

March 1, 2006 or later should be used as the proposed start date on proposals, unless otherwise directed by the CLS Program Manager.

VI. Award Administration Information

1. Award Notice

Applications recommended for funding by the selecting official will be forwarded to the GMD by the Program Office. The applicant will be notified by the program office, either by email or letter that their application was forwarded to GMD. The applicant must be aware that the notification by the program office is NOT the official award notice. Official notification happens only when the applicant receives an award notice from the Grants Officer either by postal mail or electronically.

Unsuccessful applications for all Center programs will be destroyed and not returned to the applicant.

2. The Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements. The Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification of Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements contained in the Federal Register notice of December 30, 2004 (69 FR 78389) is applicable to this

solicitation.

Geospatial data. The recipients must comply with EO 12906 regarding any and all geospatial data collected or produced under grants or cooperative agreements. This includes documenting all geospatial data in accordance with the Federal Geographic Data Committee Content Standard for digital geospatial data.

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

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). **National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA):** NOAA must analyze the potential environmental impacts, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), for applicant projects or proposals which are seeking NOAA federal funding opportunities. Detailed information on NOAA compliance with NEPA can be found at the following NOAA NEPA website: <http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/>, including our NOAA Administrative Order 216-6 for NEPA, <http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/NAO216--6--TOC.pdf>, and the Council on Environmental Quality implementation regulations, http://ceq.eh.doe.gov/nepa/regs/ceq/toc_ceq.htm. Consequently, as part of an applicant's package, and under their description of their program activities, applicants are required 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 of 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.

3. Reporting

Upon official notification of an award, the applicant will be required to submit the following reports:

Financial Status Reports (SF-269 and SF-272) are required semi-annually. These reports should be mailed directly to Grants Management Division, 1325 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, Maryland, 20190.

Performance or progress reports are required semi-annually. These reports are submitted directly to the program office, no later than 30 days following the end of each 6-month period from the start date of an award. The final report is due 90 days after the

award expiration. These reports can be emailed to the program officer or they can be mailed to the attention of the program officer at 2234 South Hobson Avenue, Charleston, South Carolina, 29405-2413.

VII. Agency Contact(s)

For administrative issues contact Violet Legette at 843-740-1222 (phone) or 843-740-1232 (fax) or email her at < Violet.Legette@noaa.gov >.

For technical questions for the CLS program, contact Ginger Hinchcliff at 843-740-1184 (phone) or 843-740-1313 (fax) or email her at < Ginger.Hinchcliff@noaa.gov >.

VIII. Other Information

Applicants can refer to the Center's website for specific information about the history of the Coastal Services Center. Also, available on this website are specific instructions on filling out the NOAA standard forms for grants/cooperative agreement applications. The Center's website is < <http://www.csc.noaa.gov/funding/CSCgrant.html> >.

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