Navigating the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Proposal Submission Process Part 1

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Overview

- **Part 1: Background Information**
  - NOAA Information – who, what, how; Organization
  - Guidance Structure
  - Finding Funding Opportunity Announcements
  - Submission Portals
  - Timeline & Internal Information
  - Take-a-way
- **Part 2: Proposal Contents**
  - Format Guidance
  - Forms & Files
  - Subcontracts
  - Submission
  - Common Errors
- **Part 3: After Submission**
  - Other Actions
  - Review
  - Communicating with NOAA
  - Special Notes and Take-a-Way

Overview

Part 1: Background Information

- NOAA Information– who, what, how; Organization

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NOAA Information– who, what, how

- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is under the U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC).

    - DOC Mission: Create conditions for Economic Growth and Opportunity.

    - Some information and guidance for NOAA will flow back to US DOC.

    - Secretary is Presidential nomination with Congressional approval.

- Website has section on grants and contracts, budget info, and some research related announcements (high level view).

    - [U.S. Department of Commerce](#)

- NOAA's Under Secretary of Commerce for NOAA is also a Congressional nomination with Congressional approval.

    - [Homepage | National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (noaa.gov)](#)

NOAA Information – who, what, how

- "NOAA is an agency that <u>enriches life through science. Our reach goes from the surface of the sun to the depths of the ocean floor</u> as we work to keep the public informed of the changing environment around them."

- "The mission of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is to provide daily weather forecasts, severe storm warnings, climate monitoring to fisheries management, coastal restoration, and the supporting of marine commerce. <u>NOAA's products and services support economic vitality and affect more than one-third of America's gross domestic product</u>. NOAA's dedicated scientists use cutting-edge research and high-tech instrumentation to <u>provide citizens, planners, emergency managers and other decision makers with reliable information</u> they need when they need it."

- "NOAA's mission to better understand our natural world and help protect its precious resources <u>extends beyond national borders to monitor global weather and climate, and work with partners around the world</u>."

- "Our mission :To <u>understand</u> and <u>predict</u> changes in climate, weather, oceans, and coasts, to <u>share</u> that knowledge and information with others, and to <u>conserve and manage</u> coastal and marine ecosystems and resources."

These versions of NOAA's mission were found on Wikipedia and the NOAA website.
Underlined areas are from me.

NOAA Organization

- NOAA is led by the Under Secretary of Commerce for NOAA

- There are three main 'divisions':

  - Staff Offices

  - Corporate Services

  - Line Offices

- [Homepage | National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (noaa.gov)](noaa.gov)

NOAA Organization

Staff offices

- Office of Communications
- Office of Education
- Office of the Federal Coordinator for Meteorology
- Office of General Counsel
- Office of International Affairs
- Office of Legislative & Intergovernmental Affairs

Corporate services

- Acquisition and Grants Office
- Office of the Chief Administrative Officer
- Office of the Chief Financial Officer
- Office of the Chief Information Officer
- Office of Human Capital Services
- Office of Inclusion and Civil Rights

Line offices

- National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service
- National Marine Fisheries Service
- National Ocean Service
- National Weather Service
- Office of Marine & Aviation Operations
- Office of Oceanic & Atmospheric Research

NOAA Organization

NOAA works toward its mission through six major line offices:

- National Environmental Satellite, Data and Information Service (NESDIS)

- National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)

- National Ocean Service (NOS)

- National Weather Service (NWS)

- Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR)

- Office of Marine & Aviation Operations (OMAO).

- and in addition, more than a dozen staff offices, including the Office of the Federal Coordinator for Meteorology, the NOAA Central Library, the Office of Program Planning and Integration (PPI).

Note: I believe that any office has the capacity to posts a funding notice. We just see them more commonly from the Line Offices, the Acquisition and Grants Office, and the Office of Education.

How Guidance 'funnels' down

- Federal Requirements (Uniform Administration Requirements, Cost Principles, Audit requirements [Uniform Guidance – UG])—Code Federal Requirements = CFR Title 2 Parts 1 - 5999

- Agency Guidelines

  - General and sometimes specific (use both)

  - Sometimes you will also have submission system manuals and post-award management systems and manuals.

- State Requirements

- Local Policy

NOAA Guidance

- At this time NOAA has NO general guidance that is overarching; however, some line agencies have guidance:

  - https://www/noaa.gov/guidance

  - National Ocean Service

  - National Marine Fisheries Service

- Research Activities has a website

  - https://www.noaa.gov/research

  - Also called NOAA's Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR) or "NOAA Research"

- Department of Commerce Grants Management Division does have a Grants and Cooperative Agreements Manual.

- Follow Notice of Funding Opportunity instructions.

  - Modifications to NOFO are posted in Grants.gov.

Finding Funding Opportunity Announcement

- NOAA calls Funding Opportunity Announcements (FOA) a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO).

- Where to start:

  - Grants.gov and betaSAM.gov (both grants and contracts)

    - CFDA/Assistance listing number = 11.000

    - FedBizOpps info is now in betaSam.gov

  - OU VPVP website

  - Commercial 'data mining' software

  - General internet searches

  - Research NOAA website for each of the divisions; there may be some you will want to routinely monitor

What NOAA Says should be in a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

- **Executive Summary**

- Federal Agency Name(s):
  Funding Opportunity Title:
  Announcement Type:
  NOFO Number:
  Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number:
  Dates:
  Funding Opportunity Description: (FRN uses word "Summary")

- **Full Text of Announcement**

- **I. Funding Opportunity Description**
  A. Program Objective
  B. Program Priorities
  C. Program Authority

- **II. Award Information**
  A. Funding Availability
  B. Project/Award Period
  C. Type of Funding Instrument

- **III. Eligibility Information**
  A. Eligible Applicants
  B. Cost Share or Matching Requirement
  C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility

What NOAA Says should be in a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

- **IV. Application and Submission Information**
  A. Address to Request Application Package
  B. Content and Form of Application
  C. Unique entity identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)
  D. Submission Dates and Times
  E. Intergovernmental Review
  F. Funding Restrictions
  G. Other Submission Requirements
  H. Address for Submitting Proposals (FRN only. For the NOFO, the text for this field is added to the end of the text for IV.F. Other Submission Requirements)

- **V. Application Review Information**
  A. Evaluation Criteria
  B. Review and Selection Process
  C. Selection Factors
  D. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

- **VI. Award Administration Information**
  A. Award Notices
  B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements
  C. Reporting

- **VII. Agency Contacts**

- **VIII. Other Information**

NOAA NOFO 'Heads Up'

- NOAA's Weather Program Office (WPO; formerly OWAQ, the Office of Weather and Air Quality) is soliciting proposals for weather, atmospheric composition, and earth system modeling and observations research reflecting multiple science objectives spanning time scales from hours to seasons, and from weather and water observations and earth system modeling to fire weather and social, behavioral, and economic science.

- There will be six grant competitions from this notification valued at approximately $16,500,000 per year as follows: 1) Fire Weather & Atmospheric Composition (FWAC), 2) Climate Testbed (CTB), 3) Weather Testbeds, 4) Joint Technology Transfer Initiative (JTTI), 5) Subseasonal-toSeasonal (S2S) , and 6) Verification of the Origins of Rotation in Tornadoes Experiment in the United States (VORTEX-USA).

NOAA NOFO 'Heads Up'

NOAA Office for Coastal Management's competitive grant announcements can be found on Grants.gov by searching under the following Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CDFA) numbers:

- 11.419 – Coastal Zone Management Administration (Projects of Special Merit, Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program, NERR Collaborative Science Program)

- 11.420 – Coastal Zone Management Estuarine Research Reserves

- 11.473 – Office for Coastal Management (Coastal Resilience, Bay Watershed Education and Training, Great Lakes Areas of Concern Land Acquisition)

- 11.482 – Coral Reef Conservation Program

Reading an opportunity

- Is it current? Correct for what you are doing?

- Are you/OU eligible? Is it a limited submission?

- What do they want in the submission files?

  - Some require special forms or files

- How do they want it submitted?

- What is the deadline?

  - Many of the NOAA divisions have somewhat cyclic postings with windows for submission; however, if you miss the window, they rarely take late or unsolicited submissions.

NOAA Submission Portals

- Grants.gov
  - This is NOAA's primary portal; At OU we use System to System for Grants.gov.
  - If PI desires to use grants.gov for OU submission it requires special (and advance) permission.
- System to System (S2S)
  - This is the primary and preferred system used by OU for grants.gov submissions.
  - This system is used 99% even if the only avenue of submission mentioned in the solicitation is grants.gov.
  - It is a program under CAYUSE that allows for extra error checks and gives us a copy of the submission.
  - It transmits the submission into grants.gov and we get a grants.gov tracking number.
- GrantsOnline System
  - This is the system NOAA uses for grants management.
- Special Instructions may ask for submissions to email addresses (rare, but may be used for corrections, responses to questions, etc.). There are a few that require establishing a special account with a NOAA office such as Hollings Undergraduate Scholarship or some intern programs.

Timeline Before Due Date

8-12 Months

1. Lit review and prelim data
2. Find division(s) of interest and locate Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)
3. Build your research team

4-8 Months

4. Submit OU Info sheet
5. Decide if you should reach out to Point of Contact in division or in NOFO. If yes draft a one-page Summary/Abstract to send.
6. Build your review team

2-4 Months

7. If proposal involves subcontracts, initiate process to gather documents with their PIs.
8. Write & Review; work on budget

2-4 Weeks

9. Preliminary budget to ORS, followed by Routing documents to ORS (including final budget and subcontract routing documetns0.
10. Start submitting Application components to ORS

1 Week

11. Complete submission

Internal Information

- OU has a grants.gov account and all required organizational registrations (SAM, DUNS/UEI, GrantsOnline).

- Submissions normally go in showing the organization as the applicant.

- Be very careful with compatible adobe versions, file names and name length, and file extensions. PI will send required files to ORS, ORS loads them into application.

- It is not uncommon that an LOI/NOI may be required; failure to provide one by the deadline specified prevents full submission.

- At OU, completion of the routing is what gives the PI and ORS the permission to submit any proposal.

- Be cognizant of submitting accurate subcontract and consultant information – is what you are submitting officially approved?

Take-a-Way

- Be aware of the effect of US Presidential changes.

- Points of Contact/Program Officers are not as cyclic as some federal agencies.

- Decide what divisions/offices your research might fit within -

    - How does your research support the mission and priorities for funding

    - Some offices have a wide range of information available (News, Press Releases, Blogs, Bulletins, Multi-Media, Outreach).

    - Some use Twitter, Face-book, and some will post heads-up on NOFOs.

    - Look at the Next Generation Strategic Plan [Next Generation Strategic Plan : NOAA Office of Performance, Risk & Social Science](#)

- Start process early and do your information sheet.

- Read the NOFO closely.

- Note that we'll talk about NOAA Cooperative Institutes in Part 2 of our series.

Contacts for Help

- RIS@ou.edu will answer questions or put you in contact with who can answer your questions for anything pre-award/Office of Research Services (ORS) related.

- Submit an info sheet [Office of Research Services - Proposal Information Sheet|| The University of Oklahoma (ou.edu)](#) and someone from ORS will contact you

- The ORS website (under VPRP) has a variety of training, funding announcements, and general proposal development and proposal submission information.

- Center for Faculty Excellence (CFE) provides proposal assistance and some training cfe@ou.edu

- If your question is related to post award, then contact Research Financial Services (ReFS) refsinfo@ou.edu