# National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administrative Unmanned Aircraft Systems Competitive Award Process

## *A Manual of Procedures*

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**Unmanned Systems Program**
**Earth System Research Laboratory**
**Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research**
**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

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## ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES FOR COMPETITIVE AWARD FOR PROJECT PROPOSALS

It is the policy of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA), Unmanned Aircraft Systems Program (UASP), to seek full and open competition for the award of discretionary funds. Discretionary financial assistance is awarded through a merit-based review and selection process whenever possible. Each individual request for proposals will identify whether the solicitation is open to NOAA Federal and Cooperative Institute intramural candidates and/or extramural candidates including Federal, academic, and private industry personnel. This document covers the financial assistance for awards process, with the exclusion of grants which will be administered as outline in the Department of Commerce Grants and Cooperative Agreement Interim Manual. See Appendix A.1 for a brief outline of funding mechanisms.

The UASP will maintain the program objectives to fund the best science that develops and improves NOAA capacities and capabilities for managing the use of UAS within NOAA and the Nation. The UASP also supports efforts to translate the results of its research investments, and those of others, into accessible and useful information for the nation's environmental managers and decision makers.

UASP applies a rigorous, competitive, review process to select research projects. The review process is extensive and documented, to make it as transparent as possible to applicants. UASP assures that this quest for quality science carries through the entire project from concept to final products by including peer- and system reviews at all critical levels, seeking the advice of external experts, and initiating regular reviews of the programs. Through this rigorous process, involving Federal and academic researchers, UASP is able to combine the best science in NOAA with the best in the research community (including universities, non-profit laboratories, commercial entities and institutions) to address issues with respect to UAS utilization.

## PROPOSAL PROCESS

Request for proposals (RFP) are developed from the research priorities established by the UASP. The UAS Program Manager (PM) will identify critical science and management needs. The PM will provide the project description, priorities and objectives, evaluation criteria to be used, closing date, projected start date, and the funding availability to the UAS Project Review Team (PRT) Panel. The PRT will review all proposals and rank them according to the evaluation criteria established by the UAS PM. The evaluation criteria are also posted on the UAS Sharepoint and UAS public website.

The proposal process begins with publishing the RFP. The UASP will distribute these announcements though the Line Office Transition Mangers, UAS Team Members, and the UAS Website as well as to external partners and stakeholders. Applicants must send in proposals before the published deadline by electronic copy to the UAS PM. Proposals for the UASP project investments will be submitted in accordance with the following instructions.

**Pre-Proposal Letter**

A pre-proposal letter will be requested by the UAS PM before full proposals are requested. The purpose of the pre-proposal letters is to allow investigators to submit their ideas for the UASP to evaluate, provide technical feedback and indicate whether investigators will be encouraged to submit full proposals. The letter should include:

1. Contact information for the principal and co-investigators, including full mailing address, email address and phone number for each;
2. A maximum 3-page synopsis of the proposed research, including a rationale, questions and/or hypotheses to be addressed, the methods to be used, and anticipated results. Think of this as the Executive Summary of a full proposal. A description of the role of each investigator should also be included in the three pages.
3. Investigators should focus on what is new, groundbreaking or potentially transformative about the proposed research to investigate the use UAS technology for potential NOAA application.
4. Investigations must be relevant to NOAA's science priorities, goals, and objectives. Applicants should make a statement of how the work will be relevant to NOAA and show a linkage to NOAA's mission.
5. No more than one additional page describing the estimated budget, with approximate cost per year up to a maximum of three years. Any major equipment procurements or unusual costs, e.g., ship, aircraft, computers should be identified.
6. Up to one additional page of relevant references to the literature.
7. A 1-page biographical sketch for the principal investigator and primary co-investigators, with a focus on research activities and publications relevant to the proposed research.

**Full Proposal Format for UASP Projects**

After review and evaluation of pre-proposal letters and a determination has been made by the UASP for further consideration, a request will be made to the investigator to submit a full proposal. The full proposal will cover the following areas:

**Project Abstract -** Describe the project plan in no more than 500 words. The project abstract should include: (a) objectives and benefits; (b) an outline of the proposed work and methodology; (c) the period of performance.

**Project Objective** – Describe the project operating plan for the proposed period of performance and a longer term strategic plan for research to operations transition. Provide a statement of work that concisely describes each task or milestone to be accomplished in the course of the research and/or development activity. Define the success criteria associated with each task or milestone.

**Expected Significance** – Describe the expected significance of the project to the UASP, to the NOAA Strategic Plan, and the OAR Strategic Plan or relevant Line Office Strategic Plans.

**Technical Plan** – Describe the science and technical plan of the proposed project. The proposed plan could include: (1) laboratory and/or field demonstration of UAS payloads, platforms, or concept of operations in relevant and/or operational environments, (2) instrument development or modification for UAS application or (3) UAS observation impact studies, data assimilation experiments or decision support experiments. For projects including laboratory or field demonstrations, describe UAS platform, sensors, and sample mission scenarios to be tested. If applicable, identify total number of missions and flight hours per mission to successfully accomplish project goals and describe the typical decision process for mission planning.

**Management Plan** – Describe the management structure of the project for overall project coordination, logistics, decision-making, communication, data collection, and data management. Include description of expected procurements, airspace access and clearances, travel, and shipping needs. Include a schedule chart that identifies critical milestones and expected deliverables.

**Deliverables –** Provide a description of expected deliverables to NOAA including new or modified instruments, platforms, data systems and data sets. Minimum deliverables to the UAS PM and the Office of Marine and Aviations Operation's (OMAO) UAS Operations Lead, should include a Safety and Operations Plan report, Summary of Field Operations report, Summary of Scientific Results report, and Technology Assessment of UAS Concept of Operations for Future Research and Operational Application report.

**Key Personnel** – Describe key personnel needed to accomplish the project goals including level of effort, organization, and project role for each person in the personnel list. Identify percentage of funding expected from UASP and percentage of other funding expected to support each person.

**Comparative Technology Assessment**– Describe the anticipated advantages of the UAS technology compared to current observing capabilities - e.g., reduction of size, mass, power, volume or cost, improved performance, or enabling of a new capability not previously possible. Review the current state of the art and relate it to the proposed work. Identify the entrance technology readiness level at the beginning of the project and the expected exit technology readiness level at the conclusion of the project.

**Project Risk Mitigation** – Describe the major risks to the project success and how they could be mitigated. For each risk, provide a description, how likely the risk could be (high, moderate, and low), the potential impact to the project (great, moderate, and little), and what steps could be taken to mitigate the risk.

**Budget Breakdown** – Provide a budget breakdown by quarter and for each year for all major project expenses including personnel, platform flight hours, sensors, other hardware, software, shipping, travel, and data management.

**Letters of Commitment** – Provide a letter from the Principal Investigator's supervisor stating the organization's commitment to the scope, schedule, budget, and deliverables of the proposed activities. Letters of commitment are also required for partners sharing project costs or providing in-kind contributions.

## UAS PROJECT REVIEW TEAM (PRT) PANEL PROCESS

UASP adheres to a panel review process to review Proposals. This part of the *Manual of Procedures* provides information on the steps taken by UASP to conduct proper reviews. Proposals received by UASP as a result of an RFP are subject UAS Project Review Team (PRT) Panel reviews. The PRT Panel will be made up of individuals selected by the UAS PM.

UASP uses the panel review of research proposals as a means to obtain the best available science to achieve its mandate in NOAA. The panel review provides a general assessment and evaluation of how proposals fit within the context of research needs and a comparative overview. UASP uses panel reviews to obtain advice on the merits of proposals and their usefulness in achieving program goals and objectives. Panels are constituted with technical experts from the UASP and subject matter experts when requested by the PM. It is recommended that panels include one or more individuals that are familiar with NOAA's mandates and mission.

### Reviewer Instructions

UASP has a set of standardized instructions for proposal reviews. The UAS PM can modify these instructions to fill specific competition needs. These instructions are posted on the UAS Sharepoint site (*see appendix B.1 for details*).

**Forms**

UASP has adopted a standardized evaluation form that covers all the required evaluation criteria. The form also provides space for reviewers to include additional comments. The form can also be found on the UAS Sharepoint Website (*see appendix B.2*).

**UAS Project Review Team (PRT) Panel Responsibilities**

The advisory panels for proposal review serve several functions. When a broader range of experience and expertise is required than is represented on the UASP staff, the UAS PM may request external reviewers to supplement the PRT.

The panel members will be expected to have carefully read the proposals being considered by the program, and to write reviews for several proposals. We suggest that you first look through the proposals to get a general idea of the topics to be discussed.

If you are designated as a **primary** reviewer, plan to present a *brief* synopsis of the proposal to the panel (less than 2 min) and lead the general discussion of the proposal (ideally less than 10 min). These overall discussions for a proposal should generally last about 15 minutes. If you think that a short discussion will suffice, please say so at the outset. If other panelists need information in addition to what you provide, they will ask for it. You are asked to write a review for all proposals for which you are a primary discussion leader.

We don't just want input from scientists that are intellectually close to the subject matter. We would like general views on the research; for example, is the proposal's thrust important to marine ecology and management? Is it appropriate that the work be funded by the program? If the proposal is interdisciplinary, does the value of the whole exceed the sum of the parts? Does the research plan seem clear and well organized? Does the PI seem qualified to conduct the research? Are the budget and ship requests reasonable? Is the research indeed compelling? Such evaluations help provide some cross-disciplinary balance to the review process.

One very important fact to keep in mind when preparing for the panel and for the panel evaluations: many meritorious proposals are declined for lack of funds. Any advice you can provide to help us make some of the difficult decisions we make is greatly appreciated. We want to fund proposals that are timely, truly exceptional, and relevant to the NOAA mission.

**Confidentiality**

Proposals submitted to NOAA are confidential documents. Please do not discuss with anyone the proposals you review. Likewise, please do not discuss the specifics of the panel proceedings with anyone.

## PRE-AWARD PROCEDURES

Upon completion of the review process, the UAS PM will place the proposals in rank order and makes recommendations using the rank order, the evaluation, and selection criteria published in the solicitation as the measuring standard to determine the funding of successful proposals (Proposals rated as "Good" or higher that are not funded in the current fiscal period may be considered for funding in another fiscal period without repeating the competitive review process.) Departures from rank order in the recommendation process are allowed but must be based on decision criteria that were posted RFP. Such criteria could be regional priorities, programmatic needs, etc. The PM develops the rank order of proposals from each competition and makes funding recommendations based on the priorities and selection factors, and submits the recommendation memo and ranking spreadsheet to the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's, Deputy Assistant Administrator of Laboratory and Cooperative Institutes (DAA/LCI), for review and comment. The DAA/LCI approves or disapproves the selection memo and spreadsheet and submits back to the UAS PM for comment and clearance.

## POST-AWARD PROCEDURES

Proposal awards are bilateral agreements. After an award has been signed by the UAS PM it is sent to the applicant for a counter signature. By signing the award, the recipient agrees to abide by the terms and conditions of the award and achieve the scope of work and other activities delineated in the proposal. The program officers along with the award recipients are jointly responsible for project monitoring. Monitoring may take the form of site visits, written and/or oral reports, meetings, or any other form of communication deemed appropriate for keeping apprised of project progress.

## PROGRESS REPORTS

The UASP will perform a series of project reviews and programmatic analyses to monitor progress of the project to ensure the terms and conditions of the awards are being fulfilled. The UASP will use the financial reports along with other monitoring activities to measure the progress of each project and keeps abreast of any situations that may prevent the project from being accomplished. Depending on the project requirements, the UASP will oversee Mission Concept Reviews, Preliminary Design Reviews, Critical Design Reviews, Airworthiness and Flight Safety Reviews, Flight Readiness Reviews, Mission Readiness Reviews, and Post Mission Review and Report. The award recipient will be responsible for submitting the financial reports on a semiannual basis to the UASP for review. Any unobligated funds will be returned to the UASP.

**Project Monitoring Plan for UAS Program**

The purpose of monitoring is not solely to record when recipient problems arise, but also to prove that the agency is responsibly watching over the federal funds it has awarded. The UAS PM is the responsible monitoring official and will develop a monitoring plan for each project before the project begins. The PM will determine the type and frequency of monitoring activities based on the risk assessment of the project and the available resources. Monitoring plan templates can be found in on the UAS Sharepoint site (*see appendix C.1*).

Risk assessments should be developed for each project based on:

- The size and complexity of the project;
- Public and congressional interest of the project;
- Potential hindrances;
- Experience of the recipients and
- Prior problems with the recipient organization

This assessment combined with available resources will determine the frequency of the monitoring activities. The list of possible monitoring activities is below.

- Telephone progress reviews;
- Email progress reviews;
- Annual progress reports;
- Monthly draw down reports;
- Semi-annual (4/30 and 10/31) financial reports;
- Site visits;
- Annual audits;
- Media coverage;
- Internet searches;

**The benefits of effective monitoring:**

- Ability to tie information obtained during monitoring activities to the progress and financial reports submitted by the recipients.
- Timely assistance can be offered before the project is too far off course; which will ensure the outputs and outcomes are delivered and the projected program goals and objectives are met.

## Appendix A.1- RESEARCH FUNDING MECHANISMS

The information detailed on this section is taken directly from the Department of Commerce (DOC), Interim Grants Manual;

1. OVERVIEW:

The DOC has a diverse mission, which is accomplished via both in-house activities and non-Federal organizations, using instruments reflecting either a financial assistance, procurement, or other agreement. These instruments are different in purpose and create different relationships between the Department and outside parties.

The Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreement Act of 1977, as amended, 31 U.S.C §6301-6308, (the Act) requires executive agencies to distinguish procurement relationships from assistance relationships with non-Federal parties and provides some general guidance on helping make these distinctions. The Act requires the use of procurement contracts for all agency acquisition activity, and the use of assistance instruments (grants and cooperative agreements) for specified types of assistance relationships.

This chapter summarizes and augments the guidance in the Act on distinguishing between those situations in which an assistance instrument (grant or cooperative agreements), or other type of agreement is the appropriate instrument.

2. GRANTS

A grant is the legal instrument reflecting a relationship between DOC and a recipient whenever: (a) the Principal purpose of the relationship is to transfer money, property, services, or anything of value in order to accomplish a public purpose of support or stimulation authorized by Federal statute, and (b) no substantial involvement is anticipated between DOC and the recipient during the performance of the contemplated activity.

3. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS

A cooperative agreement is the legal instrument reflecting a relationship between DOC and a recipient whenever: (1) the principal purpose of the relationship is to transfer money, property, services, or anything of value to accomplish a public purpose of support or stimulation authorized by Federal Statue, and (2) substantial involvement (e.g., collaboration, participation, or intervention by the DOC in the management of the project) is anticipated between DOC and the recipient during performance of the contemplated activity. See 31 U.S.C.§ 6305. Cooperative agreements are subject to the same laws, OMB, Treasury, and other Federal directives as grants. The following information by be helpful in deciding whether there is substantial involvement in the scope of work of a proposed award.

## Appendix A.1- RESEARCH FUNDING MECHANISMS

a. Sections C. and G. of the OMB Guidelines 31 U.S.C.§ 6305 of August 18,1978, describe the characteristics of the factors which each Grants Officer should consider in deciding whether there will be substantial involvement of the organization unit in the performance of activities under the assistance instrument.

b. Listed below are examples of involvement which may be substantial depending upon the circumstances, and examples of situations which would not be considered substantial. The examples are not meant to be a checklist nor does the presence of a single factor necessarily constitute substantial involvement. Rather, they illustrate concepts that, in varying degrees or combinations, could suggest the use of either a grant or a cooperative agreement. For more detailed examples, see the OMB guidelines, Implementation of Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreement Act of 1977 (43 FR 36860).

i. The following are examples of requirements that would demonstrate substantial involvement if they were included in the terms and conditions of a financial assistance award:

(a) Authority to halt immediately an activity if detailed performance specifications (e.g., constructions specifications) are not met.

(b) Stipulation that the recipient must meet or adhere to specific procedural requirements before subsequent stages of a project may continue.

(c) Approval by an appropriate DOC official of substantive provisions of proposed sub awards.

(d) Involvement in the selection of key recipient personnel.

(e) Requirement that the appropriate DOC official (1) collaborate with the recipient by working jointly with a recipient scientist or technician, in carrying out the scope of work, (2) train recipient personnel, or (3) detail Federal personnel to work on the project effort.

(f) Specify direction or redirection of the scope of work due to inter-relationships with other projects, such as requiring recipients to achieve a specific level of cooperation with other projects.

(g) DOC operational involvement during the project to ensure compliance with such statutory requirements as civil rights and environmental protection.

(h) Limitation on recipient discretion with respect to scope of work, organizational structure, staffing, mode of operations and other management process, coupled with close monitoring of operational involvement during performance.

ii. The following are examples of circumstances that would demonstrate non-substantial involvement:

(a) Award follows normal procedures as set forth in 15 CFR Part 14 or 15 CFR Part 24 concerning Federal review of recipient's procurement standards and sole source procurements.

(b) The DOC program and grants administration offices become involved in the project solely to correct deficiencies in project or financial performance.

(c) DOC performs a pre-award survey and required corrective action to enable the recipient to account for Federal funds.

## Appendix A.1- RESEARCH FUNDING MECHANISMS

4. NON-COMPETITIVE AWARDS:

a. Discretionary Funds: These awards are made without the benefit of competition. In those instances when noncompetitive awards are recommended for funding, complete and detailed justifications must be submitted by the Program Officer to the Grants Officer for review and approval. Noncompetitive awards using discretionary funds for a new award are allowed in only the following situations:

(i) Future awards under institutional grant programs where the recipient should have been initially selected based on competition. The Program Office must provide to the Grants Officer summary information about the original competition and the date and results of the latest periodic review.

(ii) In instances where an applicant submits an application on its own initiative (not as a result of solicitation by the funding agency), the application does not fall with the scope of a published competitive notice, and the agency determines in accordance with Chapter 8, Section F., DOC Interim Grants and Cooperative Agreement Manual, that the application has merit and falls within one of the six listed categories.

(iii) If more than five percent (5%) of the total number of awards made under a program within one fiscal year are made on the basis of recipient initiative, the Program Officer and the Grants Officer should examine the annual Federal Register notice and make any corrections deemed necessary to the next annual notice so that the solicitation better reflects the goals or needs of the program.

b. Nondiscretionary Funds: Nondiscretionary funds are also referred to as "Congressionally-Mandated" or "Earmarked" funds. The statutory authority is the basis for making awards with nondiscretionary funds. The two types of awards made with nondiscretionary funds are listed below.

(i) Awards Mandated by Statute: These mandatory awards are made to organizations which are specifically named (not just generally described as to type of organization) in a statue and for which funds may be set aside in an appropriations act. The recipient is entitled to the award and has an enforceable right to receive financial assistance. This category does not include projects that are only contained in legislative history.

(ii) Awards Limited by Statute: These awards are made to organizations for which eligibility has been limited by law to a particular class of applicants, every one of which has been notified of the availability of funding, and every applicant that applies and that meets statutory requirements is assured an award (e.g., there may be special language in an appropriations act directing an agency to make awards to every state that applies for funding and meets certain criteria). Included in this category are NOAA programs which are listed in the Federal Register notice, "Guidelines for Nondiscretionary Financial Assistance," as published on April 28, 1994, (59 FR 21959). Depending upon the program and its

legislation, there may be competition among the eligible applicants for additional funding as an incentive for receiving proposals for innovative or pilot/demonstration projects.

5. MULTI-YEAR FUNDING

Multi-year awards are awards which have an award period of more than 12 months of activity. Multi-year awards are partially funded when the awards are approved, and are subsequently funded in increments. The Department encourages long –range program planning for the award and administration of financial assistance actions. One mechanism for facilitating this goal is funding through multi-year awards. This particularly pertains to awards that support research projects that may span several years. One of the purposes of multi-year awards is to reduce the administrative burden on both the applicant and the operating unit. For example, with proper planning, one application can suffice for the entire multi-year award period. It is the Department's policy that the period of activity of multi-year awards should not exceed five years. Grants Officers should establish additional internal policies for consistent selection and approval of programs and awards that may be funded under these multi-year funding procedures

6. COOPERATIVE INSTITUTES

Joint and Cooperative Institutes are formal, collaborative long-term research partnerships established under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)/Agreement (MOA) between NOAA through the Office of the Under Secretary of Oceans and Atmosphere and participating universities and non-profit research institutions with programs dedicated to oceanographic and/or atmospheric research, education and outreach. Funds can be transferred to OAR in order to fund a Cooperative Institute.

7. INTER-AGENCY AGREEMENTS

A formal, written agreement between CSCOR and another Federal agency, used to transfer funds to pay for
research conducted by the other agency. The agreement must be approved by both agencies. CSCOR funds can not pay for Federal salaries.

8. INTRA-NOAA FUNDING (BOPS)

Transfer funds directly to other Offices within NOAA to pay for research conducted with academic or non-profit partners. Funds can pay for travel expenses, contracts, and equipment, but not Federal salary.

## Appendix B.1- INSTRUCTIONS FOR REVIEWERS

Please provide both written comments and a summary rating on the Proposal Evaluation Form by employing the criteria provided below.

**Proposal Evaluation Criteria:**
We ask reviewers to use the following five criteria when evaluating a proposal:

**1. Importance and/or Relevance and applicability of proposed project to the program goals: (XX percent):** This ascertains whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and /or relevance to NOAA, federal, regional, state or local activities. For the purposes of this competition, [**enter criteria here**].

**2. Technical/scientific merit (XX percent):** This assesses whether the approach is technically sound and/or innovative, if the methods are appropriate, and whether there are clear project goals and objectives. For the purposes of this competition, [**enter criteria here**].

**3. Overall qualifications of applicant (XX percent):** This ascertains whether the applicant possesses the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project. For the purposes of this competition, [**enter criteria here**].

**4. Project costs (XX percent):** The budget is evaluated to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time-frame. For the purposes of this competition, [**enter criteria here**].

Your ranking should take the form of written comments on the above criteria, with an overall rating having the following characteristics:

- **Excellent:** Probably will fall among the top 10% of proposals in the subfield; highest priority for support. This category should be used only for truly outstanding proposals.
- **Very Good:** Probably will fall among the top 1/3 of proposals in the subfield; should be supported.
- **Good:** Probably will fall among the middle 1/3 of proposals in the subfield; worthy of support.
- **Fair:** Probably will fall among the lowest 1/3 of proposals in the subfield; should not be supported without serious revision.
- **Poor:** Proposal has serious deficiencies; should not be supported.

## Appendix B.2 - PANEL REVIEW EVALUATION FORM

### A. Proposal Information:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Principal Investigator:** | **Panelist ID:** |
| **Institution:** | **Proposal Number:** |
| **Proposal Title**: | |

### B. Proposal Evaluation:

For details see "Instructions for Reviewers." Note: boxes will adjust in size as appropriate.

| **Please evaluate this proposal using the following five criteria.** |
|---|
| 1. Importance and/or Relevance and applicability of proposed project to the program goals: (XX percent): |
| 2. Technical/scientific merit (XX percent): |
| 3. Overall qualifications of applicant (XX percent): |
| 4. Project costs (XX percent): |
| 5. Outreach/education (XX percent): |
| Additional Comments: |
| Rating: ☐ Excellent (5) ☐ Very Good (4) ☐ Good (3) ☐ Fair (2) ☐ Poor (1) |
| Verbatim but anonymous copies of reviews, ratings, and associated correspondence will be sent to the principal investigator. Subject to this policy and applicable laws, including the Freedom of Information Act (USC 552), reviewers' comments and identities will be given maximum protection from disclosure. |

**Appendix C.1 - Monitoring Plan**

A plan for each project should be developed in advance of the start date. The below template will be used by the UASP.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Program Name:** | **Recipient Organization:** |
| | |
| **Project Name:** | **PI Name:** |
| | |
| **Monitoring Activity:** | **Frequency:** |
| **Site visits:** | |
| **Phone calls:** | |
| **Progress Reports:** | **Annual:** |
| **Financial Reports:** | **Semi-Annual:** |
| **Audits:** | **Annual:** |
| **Prior Approvals:** | |
| **Other** | |

**Appendix C.2 - Monitoring Activities Record**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Program Name:** | **Project Name:** |
| | |
| **Recipient Organization:** | **PI Name:** |
| **Monitoring tool used:** | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| **Reason for Contacting Recipient:** | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| **Results of Conversation/Meeting:** | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| **Next Steps/Recommended Actions (describe any further follow up needed and what the recipient will be expected to do):** | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| **Program Manager: _____** | |

## Appendix C.3 - Suggested Monitoring Questions

Before phone calls, emails or site visits are conducted; the UAS PM should analyze the financial reports, prior approval requests and the current progress of the project to identify the progression towards the approved milestones. In order to capture the current state of the project, the following questions should be asked of the Principal Investigator (PI).

**What progress has been made towards meeting the approved milestones?**

*Is the project staying within the scope of work?*

*Will there be any changes in the near future that will impact the progress (i.e. PI or key personnel changes, unexpected findings, etc.)?*

*Does the progress of the project approximately match the pace of the project spending?*

*If not; why not?*

*How can future financial information be retailored to approximately match the actual progress of the project?*

*Are bills paid on a regular schedule or delayed for some reason?*

**If the pace of the research is slower or faster than originally planned, is this a permanent change to the proposal milestones?**

**Will more or less funds than originally estimated be needed in the next release?**

*If yes, what is the new estimate?*

**Appendix D.1 - Selection memo to DAA/LCI**

MEMORANDUM FOR: [DAA]

FROM: [PROGRAM MANAGER]

SUBJECT: [FY 20XX Funding Recommendations]

DATE: [TODAY'S DATE]

This memorandum provides funding recommendations resulting from the open competition for the [FY 20XX PROGRAM NAME] Announcement of Opportunity. The overall goal of this program is…[paragraph on goals and objectives].

We solicited proposals for projects up to X years in duration for [regional-scale or targeted] ecosystem research studies with the following elements to ensure achievement of management-based outcomes…[paragraph on elements (articulation of management outcomes, managers as co-PIs, managers meeting, Management Transition Board, etc.)]

Proposals were submitted in response to the FY20XX RFP. XX proposals were received by the published closing date of the 3:00 PM ET XXXXXXXXX. Proposals were evaluated by a Program Review Team Panel made up of of XX independent scientists and managers. The review panel was convened [DATE OF PANEL AND LOCATION].

Reviewers assigned proposals an overall summary rating of Excellent (E), Very Good (VG), Good (G), Fair (F) or Poor (P). Review panel members were also asked to make comments and give a numerical summary rating of 1 (Poor) to 5 (Excellent); half scores were allowed (e.g. a score of 4.5 is equivalent to a rating of E/VG). The panel did not provide consensus advice, panelists rated each proposal separately. The final ranking of proposals is based on the average of the individual ratings given by all XX review panelists.

The attached Table 1 lists the XX proposals in descending numerical order as ranked by the review panel. It also presents funding recommendations based on the panel rankings and by applying the project funding priorities listed in the [PROGRAM NAME] AO. Table 2 presents our suggested FY10 through FYXX funding amounts for recommended proposals. The total amount required to fund all recommended proposals in FY10 at our suggested amounts is $XXX. Of this total, $XXX is requested for shiptime and $XXX is requested for extramural research. Note that the amounts presented are recommendations; negotiations with the PIs have not yet taken place, and some changes in the amounts could result from recalculation by the PIs' institutions.

Strategy for Program Success: We are recommending full support for X projects (XX, XX) and partial support for X projects (XX, XX).

[This is an overview of Program Manager's rationale for making recommendations, including how the recommended study(ies) would advance UASP mission objectives, long-range program goals, and partnering opportunities. This is the place where you justify investment. This can include presentation of a tiered recommendation approach based on available funds. Also, this should provide explanation for out-of-rank funding recommendations – support for lower ranked proposals and decline of higher ranked proposals.]

Recommendations (in rank order): [up to the lowest ranked proposal recommended for funding, and other proposals ranked equally but not supported]

1. **Proposal #, Title**
   Lead Investigator: XX (Institution)
   FY10 Full Funding Request: **$XX**
   **Program Manager Recommendation: Full Support, Partial Support of $XXX, No Support (for any out of rank)**
   Rating: Numerical (category = Excellent, etc.)

Goal and objectives; relevance to Program; any significant Panel review comments; justification for recommendations.