

Special Projects Competition

Community Flooding Social Science Liaisons

SPECIAL PROJECTS “J” ANNOUNCEMENT

Competition:

Community Flooding Social Science Liaisons

Closing Dates and Deadlines:

June 7, 2023

Eligible Sea Grant Programs:

This competition is open to Sea Grant programs whose geographies fall within NOAA’s milestones for operationalizing flood inundation mapping services in FY23 and FY24. These states include: NY, MD, PA, IL-IN, FL, PR, MS-AL, LA, TX, OR, and WA.

Award Time Frame:

The proposed start date should be no earlier than 10/01/2023, with projects to be completed no later than 3 years after the project start date. Additionally, project end dates may be no later than 9/30/2026.

Funding Availability:

The National Sea Grant Office (NSGO) anticipates that approximately \$1.5 million in federal funds from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (P.L. 117-58) will be available to individual Sea Grant programs to support up to two community flooding social science liaisons at approximately \$250,000 per person per year for three fiscal years. This special projects competition is a partnership effort with the NOAA Weather Program Office and does not require match funding.

Project Description:

Climate change is impacting both rainfall and flood behavior across the nation. As a result, the demand for event-driven flood inundation mapping services (FIMS) has increased dramatically in recent years as a high value resource of actionable information for emergency and water resources managers to prepare, mitigate, and respond to flood impacts. The newest additions to FIMS will provide a visual representation of where water is expected to be on the ground, also known as areal extent and, as services evolve, will indicate depth of water above ground at a given location.

Sea Grant and the Weather Program Office have shared interests to protect life, property, and mitigate flooding impacts by working with communities to advance actionable science and improve societal outcomes. Working as social scientists and boundary spanners, there is an opportunity to leverage Sea Grant’s community-based networks to inform, improve, and evaluate the development, delivery, use, and value of NOAA’s high impact forecasting capabilities, like FIMS for decision-makers such as emergency and water managers as well as the public.

NOAA's current FIMS capabilities are focused on riverine communities. NOAA will operationalize FIMS for 10% of the U.S. population by the end of FY2023 for portions of Texas and the Mid-Atlantic/Northeast. In FY2024, FIMS will increase to cover at least 30% of the U.S. population expanding to include a portion of the Pacific northwest, the Appalachians, a portion of the Midwest and eastern most Great Lakes regions, as well as Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. NOAA's operational goal is for 100% FIMS capacity across the country by the end of FY2026.

Chronic and extreme weather events show that while risk can be forecasted by tools and services, the societal outcome of mitigating risk is driven by behavioral actions of individuals. FIMS brings ground-breaking forecasting capabilities to riverine communities. However, cultural constructs and risk mitigation practices that are prevalent with coastal inundation, like evacuation zones, have yet to be established with vulnerable riverine communities. Sea Grant has decades of experience in community-based flooding research, extension, and education that can provide an integrated and trusted framework to inform, improve, and evaluate the roll-out of NOAA's FIMS capabilities from riverine to coastal communities.

Operational and societal success relies on a holistic approach that integrates evaluative capacity with research from the social, behavioral and economic sciences. Sea Grant's community-based approach and academic network provides the social capital and expertise needed to effectively engage with intended users along a spectrum of understanding and readiness, from co-production and pilot-testing through application and evaluation.

The objective of this funding opportunity is to couple research from the social, economic, and behavioral sciences with the unique capabilities of the Sea Grant network to inform, improve, integrate, and evaluate FIMS capabilities with end-user needs, resulting in community application and implementation.

The community flooding social science liaisons will sit within state Sea Grant programs and primarily focus on community-level needs and regional transferability to inform and advance the roll-out of FIMS. As community-focused liaisons, these positions are intended to build bridges, transfer knowledge and enhance collaborative connections to improve societal outcomes at local scales.

Proposals should describe how, using Sea Grant's unique capabilities, the community flooding social science liaison(s) will address the following regarding NOAA's FIMS expanded capabilities:

- Understand and address equity challenges for populations at risk of high impacts from flooding
- Apply research regarding the intersection of climate, flooding, health, socioeconomic vulnerability, and social inequity
- Build or enhance relationships with respect to data (including data needs and possible data partners) to identify locally-relevant data gaps, including new data pathways with a focus on community-relevancy, timelines, and scale (e.g. social vulnerability metrics, infrastructure vulnerability, public health, FIMS verification, etc.).
- Identify opportunities and pathways to socialize, promote, and evaluate end-user relevance of FIMS

- Connect with community groups, NGOs, academia and other organizations to co-produce, test, and implement communication and education strategies with and for diverse and underserved audiences
- Develop an evaluative framework for FIMS information, products and tools inclusive of end-user application and societal outcome measures
- Facilitate the transfer of project impacts, methodologies, and operational outcomes across the Sea Grant network and National Weather Service offices (e.g., Weather Forecast Offices, River Forecast Centers, and the National Water Center).

Proposals also need to address planned coordination and collaboration among the community flooding social science liaisons, National Sea Grant, and Weather Program Offices. The National Sea Grant Office and Weather Program Office will provide input and support coordination, as appropriate, among the community flooding social science liaisons and applicable federal weather and water partners during the period of performance.

Application Requirements:

Consult the NOFO [NOAA-OAR-SG-2023-2007550](#), available at [Grants.gov](#), for eligible applicants, required elements of the application, how to submit, general programmatic priorities and selection factors, and other necessary information. Submit your application to **SPECIAL PROJECTS "J"** under this opportunity in [grants.gov](#).

Discrepancies between this special project announcement and the NOFO may exist. Specific application details and instructions outlined in this special project announcement take precedence over guidelines in the NOFO.

Applications must include the following elements. Failure to adhere to these provisions may result in a delay in award processing or rejection of the application, based on the extent of the noncompliance.

- 1. Project Narrative** - The Project Narrative must include the following elements:
 - a. Project Description.** The total number of pages in the project description can be up to fifteen (15). Applicants do not need to use the entire 15-page maximum. Depending on the complexity of the proposed activities, a shorter description may suffice. Any works cited, CVs, letters of support, and current and pending support sections included do not contribute to the suggested page limit.
 - i. Cover page** (not included in the page count)
 - Project title and names, titles, affiliations, and contact information (email and phone) of co-PIs.
 - Budget overview - Total cost and annual breakdown of requested funding, including by partner if appropriate.
 - ii. Project Abstract** (½ page maximum; not included in the page count)
 - iii. Project background**
 - Explain the specific problem(s) this project seeks to address and justify

- its importance.
- iv. Project objectives
 - Provide a list of clearly defined objectives. For each objective, provide a concise statement explaining how it is aligned with the goals and priorities of this funding opportunity.
 - v. Project details
 - Provide an explanation of the methods you will use to address your project objectives. This must include a position description with minimum requirements, roles, and responsibilities for the community flooding social science liaison and outline plans for collaboration and coordination among community, Sea Grant, and NOAA partners.
 - vi. Anticipated outcomes and results
 - What are the expected outcomes and results?
 - vii. Project timeline
 - Provide a timeline for accomplishing the proposed work covering the entire duration of the project. Include approximate dates for key milestones related to the proposed work, partner and community engagement points, accomplishment of anticipated outcomes and the transfer of methodologies.
 - Applicants submitting proposals that involve the use of human test subjects should state so clearly in their application. These proposed research activities require approval of the applicant's Institutional Review Board (IRB) before such research can proceed. Applicants are responsible for obtaining IRB approval from their institution and providing that documentation to NOAA once the approval is obtained and prior to any NOAA-funded human subject testing. Proposals intending to use human test subjects should specify clearly in the timeline approximately when IRB approval will be obtained and when the testing is expected to occur.
 - viii. Outreach and engagement plan
 - Provide a cohesive strategy, including travel budget support, to ensure that users and interested parties across the greater geographic region, beyond those who actively participate in the proposed work, will engage with and learn about the project's methods, outcomes, and potential for transferability.
 - ix. Diversity statement
 - In this section, describe how well the proposed activity broadens the participation of underrepresented groups (e.g., race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, geography, etc.) and how these groups are given a voice in the community of practice. Examples could include (but are not limited to) the full participation of women, persons with disabilities, and underrepresented minorities in conducting this work or benefitting from its outcomes.
 - Applicants are encouraged to review the resources and best practices compiled by NSGO related to diversity, equity and inclusion:
<https://seagrant.noaa.gov/insideseagrant/Implementation/Network-Visiting/DiversityInclusion>
 - x. Works cited (does not count towards page limit)

- All in-text citations should be listed here.
 - xi. Curriculum vitae (CV) for each PI (does not count towards page limit)
 - Each person’s CV should not be longer than 2 pages. Excess pages will not be included in the review.
 - xii. Letters of support (optional, if included does not count towards page limit)
 - xiii. Current and pending support (if applicable, does not count towards page limit)
- b. Abbreviated Environmental Compliance Questionnaire (OMB Control No. 0648-0538)
- i. Applicants **must** ensure that the questionnaire is completed in full and includes detailed information regarding project location, methodology, and permits. Copies of all permits required for project activities should be included with application materials. If a permit is pending or planned, please provide this information.
 - ii. A separate questionnaire must be completed for each relevant action/project in the proposal.
 - iii. The questionnaire can be found [here](#).
 - iv. Guidance on how to complete the questionnaire, including how to describe work that will not involve any environmental impact, can be found [here](#). Examples of questionnaires can be found [here](#).*
- c. Data Management Plan
- i. All applications **must** include a Data Management Plan that is compliant with NOAA’s [Public Access to Research Results](#) Plan. The Data Management Plan should not exceed 2 pages. The Data Management Plan should include descriptions of the types of metadata and data expected to be created during the course of the project, plans for disseminating the metadata and data to the broader community, and plans for long-term archiving of the metadata and data.
 - ii. If proposed activities will not generate any environmental data, such as the scoping activities and research competition, please include the following statement at the end of your proposal: “Because this project will not generate environmental data, a Data Management Plan is not required.”

2. Budget Narrative and Justification. *The Budget Narrative must include the following documents (Sea Grant 90-4 Forms and Budget Justification) in that order and format. Additional budget narrative guidance can be found [here](#).*

- a. Sea Grant 90-4 Form (OMB Control No. 0648-0362) - Sea Grant 90-4 Forms are required to provide budget breakdowns and budget justifications by year and object class for the proposal. A completed Sea Grant 90-4 Form should be completed for each project year as well as a total budget for the entire project duration (i.e., Year 1, Year 2, Year 3, and Years 1-3). Guidance on filling out these forms is located in the [Sea Grant General Application Guide](#).
- b. Budget Justification - For each year of the project, a Budget Justification is required. Each Budget Justification should explain the budget items in sufficient detail to enable review of the appropriateness of the funding requested. Each Budget Justification should be attached as a PDF to each Sea Grant 90-4 Form, as appropriate. Guidance on

completing the Budget Justification is located in the [Sea Grant General Application Guide](#).

- 3. Overall Application.** *In addition to the forms required above, standard Federal Forms and Assurances are required for the overall application and can be found with the application package on Grants.gov or on the Sea Grant website (links found below). These include:*
- a. SF-424 Form ([Grants.gov](#), OMB Control No. 4040-0004)
 - i. This form, titled “Application for Federal Assistance,” **must** identify the entire funding period, as well as the federal funding amount being requested by the applicant. The form must be completed with the institution’s accurate EIN and DUNS and Point of Contact, and signed by the institution’s authorized representative or designee.
 - b. SF-424A Form ([Grants.gov](#), OMB Control No. 4040-0006)
 - i. This form, titled “Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs,” should describe the entire funding period in federal dollars for the entire application. Fill out Section B of this SF-424A form to show the overall budget breakdown by object class by year. Each federal year should have its own column.
 - c. Additional SF-424A Form, Extra Section B (<https://seagrants.noaa.gov/insideseagrants/Implementation>, OMB Control No. 4060-0006)
 - i. The SF-424A Form described above only includes space to report the applicant’s yearly federal and non-federal dollars over two years. If the application covers more than two years of federal and non-federal dollars, then please complete the Additional SF-424A, Extra Section B to report the yearly non-federal matching fund budget of the grant. Guidance on filling out the form is located in the Sea Grant [How to Use Form “424A Extra Section B” Document](#). This form is an outlier and will be added to the “Budget Narrative Attachment” section on Grants.gov, as described in Section IV. C. 2 of the NOFO.
 - d. SF-424B Assurances ([Grants.gov](#), OMB Control No. 4040-0007)
 - i. The form, titled “Assurances – Non-Construction Programs,” should be completed and signed by the institution’s authorized representative or designee.
 - e. CD-511 ([Grants.gov](#), US Department of Commerce)
 - i. The form, titled “Certification Regarding Lobbying,” should be completed and signed by the institution’s authorized representative or designee. In some instances, the SF-LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities form may also be required. See the instructions on the CD-511 for further information.
 - f. SF-LLL ([Grants.gov](#), OMB Control No. 0348-0046) if applicable
 - i. The form, titled “Disclosure of Lobbying Activities,” should be completed and signed by the institution’s authorized representative or designee, if appropriate.

Application Evaluation Criteria:

The following criteria will be used to evaluate proposals. Note that the weights of each criteria are different from the Evaluation Criteria laid out in the Special Projects NOFO announcement. Proposals submitted to this competition will be evaluated by at least three independent written reviews. Additionally, the competition manager may choose to hold a panel at their discretion based upon the number of applications received.

1. Importance/relevance and applicability of proposed projects 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 the Community Flooding Social Science Liaison competition this includes support of Sea Grant strategic priorities (Healthy Coastal Ecosystems, Resilient Communities and Economies, Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture, Environmental Literacy and Workforce Development), and/or [Community Response to Flooding: A 10 year Vision for the National Sea Grant Program](#), as well as alignment with societal outcomes in [NOAA's Weather, Water, and Climate Strategy](#).
2. Technical/scientific merit (25 points). This criterion assesses whether the approach is technically sound and/or innovative, if the methods are appropriate, and whether there are clear project goals and objectives. This also includes ensuring specific, measurable, relevant goals that are achievable, and any data management considerations. For the community flooding social science liaison competition this includes demonstrated understanding of the social, behavioral, and/or economic sciences, their topical and methodological applications to flood inundation mapping and associated services as well as evaluative approaches with stakeholders that support knowledge creation and improve societal outcomes.
3. Overall qualifications of applicants (20 points). This criterion ascertains whether the applicant possesses the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project. For the community flooding social science liaison competition this includes the scientific knowledge of the social, behavioral, or economic sciences, program capacity for qualitative and quantitative data analysis, evaluation approaches, and engagement expertise working with end-users at community and regional scales as well as with partners across NOAA.
4. Project costs (10 points). This criterion evaluates the budget to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time frame. This also includes cost-effectiveness (whether the proposal makes the most economical use of available resources to maximize project results and is not duplicative of existing work). For the community flooding social science liaison competition this includes consideration of costs necessary to support equitable, inclusive, and meaningful social science research and engagement with communities and project partners at local and regional scales.
5. Outreach and Education, including efforts to ensure inclusive and equitable engagement (20 points). This criterion assesses whether the project provides a focused and effective education and outreach strategy regarding NOAA's mission to protect the Nation's natural resources. For the community flooding social science liaison competition this includes defining end-user communities, current community outreach and education gaps, and creation of/support for feedback loops that effectively share information, research, and evaluative outcomes among the local, state, and federal partners.

Additionally, projects will be recommended for funding only if they have a complete application package and if funds are available.

Other Information:

Webinar Information:

An informational webinar about this funding opportunity will be held March 8, 2022 at 3:00pm ET. [Register in advance here.](#)

Demographics Information:

- NOAA will not provide collected demographics information to reviewers for any purpose, including evaluation, and will not consider demographics information during selection.
- Programs must submit documentation by either including a statement within the application, or via email to sg.grants@noaa.gov, that they have responded to the new requirement to provide the following information for all named collaborators on the proposal. (2022, OMB approved for PRA under DOC generic clearance information collections, 0690-0030 and 0690-0035).
- Note: Programs may use their own method of collecting this information. The NSGO has also developed an [online form](#) as an optional method for collection. Submission to this form would count as fulfillment of this requirement.
 1. Do you or your organization identify with any of the following groups that the federal government, in Executive Order 13985, has identified as underserved? List all that apply.
 - a) Black
 - b) Latino
 - c) Indigenous and/or Native American
 - d) Asian American
 - e) Pacific Islander
 - f) Other person of color
 - g) Members of religious minorities
 - h) Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) persons
 - i) Persons with disabilities
 - j) Persons who live in rural areas
 - k) Persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality
 - l) No, I do not identify with any of these groups

Reporting:

This will be a stand-alone (i.e., non-omnibus) award for which annual progress reporting will be required.

Once applications have been recommended for funding, applicants must submit a Sea Grant 90-2 Project Summary Form (for each project within the application) through the [90-2 Webform portal](#). This is due within 30 calendar days after the applicant has been notified via email that their application has been awarded. A detailed step-by-step guide for completing the web-based 90-2 Form is available on [Inside Sea Grant](#). Once the project is approved and funded, that information will be publicly available and searchable on the [National Sea Grant College Program public website](#).

Recipients are required to use the National Sea Grant Planning Implementation and Evaluation Reporting (PIER) project database to communicate with the National Sea Grant Office on activities relating to this award. This includes tracking progress and impacts, in addition to performance metrics.

All public-facing products produced with funding from the award(s)/project(s) must ensure compliance with Section 508 of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Agency Contacts:

Questions about this competition or the Special Projects Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) may be sent to sg.grants@noaa.gov. Please specify that your question is related to the Community Flooding Social Science Liaisons Competition in the subject line.

Fillable versions of required Sea Grant forms can be found here:

<https://seagrant.noaa.gov/insideseagrant/Implementation>

Guidance for completing these forms is located in the Sea Grant General Application Guidance

Document: <https://seagrant.noaa.gov/Portals/1/Guidance/SeaGrantGeneralApplicationGuide.pdf>