

2023 NOAA California Bay Watershed Education and Training (B-WET) Program- Build
Capacity for Implementing Climate Literacy in Classrooms

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NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Federal Agency Name(s): National Ocean Service (NOS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce

Funding Opportunity Title: 2023 NOAA California Bay Watershed Education and Training (B-WET) Program- Build Capacity for Implementing Climate Literacy in Classrooms

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: NOAA-NOS-ONMS-2023-2007548

Federal Assistance Listings Number: 11.429, Marine Sanctuary Program

Dates: The deadline for applications is 11:59 PM Eastern Time on February 23, 2023 when submitting through <https://www.grants.gov/> (Grants.gov). PLEASE NOTE: For applicants that submit through Grants.gov, it may take Grants.gov up to two business days to validate or reject the application. Please keep this in mind when developing your submission timeline. If use of Grants.gov is impractical for technical or other reasons, paper copy applications will be accepted only as described in Section IV.D. Applications received after the deadline will be rejected without further consideration. No email and/or facsimile applications will be accepted.

Funding Opportunity Description: Through this funding announcement, the CA B-WET Program is soliciting proposals that Build Capacity for Implementing Climate Literacy in Classrooms.

California B-WET funds locally relevant, authentic experiential learning for K-12 audiences through Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs). MWEEs involve learning both outdoors and in the classroom as students engage in issue definition, outdoor field experiences, synthesis and conclusions, and environmental action projects. The goal is to increase understanding and stewardship of the ocean, its local watersheds, and special areas like national marine sanctuaries.

Funding is available to the following counties: Del Norte, Humboldt, Trinity, Mendocino, Lake, Sonoma, Napa, Marin, Solano, San Francisco, Contra Costa, Sacramento, San Mateo, Alameda, San Joaquin, Santa Cruz, Santa Clara, Stanislaus, Monterey, San Benito, Merced, Madera, Fresno, San Luis Obispo, Kern, Kings, Tulare, Santa Barbara, and Ventura.

The CA B-WET Program recognizes that equal and equitable access to meaningful watershed educational experiences will benefit all communities. We have a shared responsibility to provide

opportunities for all youth to connect and engage with the environment; whether at a nearby park, creek, or on the shores of an ocean or lake. However, many K-12 students do not have consistent access to adequately funded, high-quality environmental experiences. And historically, youth in marginalized communities have not seen their identities reflected in nature and the environment as a whole.

Therefore, the CA B-WET Program will ensure that diversity, equity, and inclusion are at the core of every action and every decision. We will prioritize opportunities for youth in marginalized communities to engage in the environment that surrounds them in meaningful ways. We know that to be effective stewards of our blue planet, we must ensure our programs reflect the communities in which we live, work and play. Creating a culture that is welcoming and inclusive of all, will connect students of all backgrounds to their environment and create environmentally literate decision makers.

FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Program Objective

The NOAA B-WET program is an environmental education program that promotes locally relevant, experiential learning in the K-12 environment. B-WET was established in 2002 in the Chesapeake Bay watershed and currently exists in seven regions: California, Chesapeake Bay, Hawai'i, Gulf of Mexico, New England, Pacific Northwest, and Great Lakes. Four of the seven B-WET regions are coordinated by or in partnership with the NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, which serves as the trustee for a network of underwater parks encompassing more than 620,000 square miles of marine and Great Lakes waters from Washington state to the Florida Keys, and from Lake Huron to American Samoa. The network includes a system of 15 national marine sanctuaries and Papahānaumokuākea and Rose Atoll marine national monuments. For more information, visit our NOAA B-WET program website at: <http://www.noaa.gov/office-education/bwet>.

The primary delivery of B-WET is through competitive funding that promotes Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs). The MWEE is a learner-centered framework that focuses on investigations into local environmental issues and leads to informed action. MWEEs are made up of multiple components that include learning both outdoors and in the classroom and are designed to increase environmental and climate literacy by actively engaging students in building knowledge and meaning through hands-on experiences. In these experiences, the core ideas and practices of multiple disciplines are applied to make sense of the relationships between the natural world and society. MWEEs help connect students with their local environment and equip them to make decisions and take actions that contribute to stronger, sustainable, and equitable communities.

While the CA B-WET Program uses the MWEE as the backbone and foundation for meaningful outdoor experiences, this solicitation does not directly fund MWEE implementation. This solicitation is focused on building capacity for climate literacy. However, the ultimate goal is to use MWEEs as a way to teach about our changing climate.

B. Program Priorities

Build Capacity for Implementing Climate Literacy in Classrooms

Our Earth is warming. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

reports that Earth's average temperature has risen over the past century and is projected to rise over the next hundred years. The global average sea surface temperature has been rising steadily for decades. Climate-related impacts like extreme weather events, sea level rise, flooding, droughts and wildfires are growing more prevalent around the globe. Human activities are changing Earth's climate. Today's rapidly changing climate will continue to challenge our planet now and in future generations. Our quality of life and, ultimately, our survival depend on our "climate literacy" — our ability to understand, predict and adapt to the reality of a warming planet.

You are climate literate if you understand the influence of climate on yourself and society - and your influence on climate. A climate-literate person understands the essential principles of Earth system governing climate patterns; knows how to gather information about climate and weather, and how to distinguish credible from non-credible sources on the subject; and communicates about climate and climate change in a meaningful way.

Projects proposed through this solicitation should build capacity for county or district-wide K-12 climate literacy initiatives which support the policies and structures necessary to advance climate literacy. Proposals should create frameworks, incentives, support systems, and/or drivers for climate literacy to encourage or support systemic planning and implementation in local school districts. Projects should also seek to connect to existing education initiatives like Career and Technical Education (CTE), Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) programming, project-based learning, or other efforts/initiatives that already have momentum at the county or district.

Examples of activities that may be funded under this priority include but are not limited to:

- 1) Developing a district-wide climate literacy strategy, plan, or framework.
- 2) Building a cadre of formal educators, including Career and Technical Education, to work across the county or districts, to increase knowledge sharing and communication pathways to scale best practices for systemic and sustainable climate literacy programming (aka "Network Weavers") with an emphasis on reaching underrepresented communities.
- 3) Creating a climate literacy advisory group to inform decision makers.
- 4) Building capacity for agencies, organizations, and collaboratives that are working to modify or enhance existing programs that ultimately support systemic climate education in classrooms.
- 5) Supporting and providing resources for key partners to elevate awareness of and the importance of climate literacy among decision makers, including boards of education, superintendents, county or district department of education leadership, funders, and others who create policies, set standards of learning, and make funding decisions to support formal

education (aka “Network Influencers”).

Projects should specifically include the Climate Literacy Essential Principles. This document can be accessed at the following website:

https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/education/literacy/climate_literacy.pdf

This solicitation priority does not directly fund MWEE implementation. However, the ultimate goal of this priority is to use MWEEs as a way to teach about our changing climate. This priority is focused on the coordination, networking, leadership, and other support structures necessary for building capacity to advance climate literacy at the county or district level. After capacity is established, meaningful and engaging outdoor experiences can be used to advance climate literacy. The MWEE educational framework can directly foster climate knowledge, skills, and competencies to address climate change, climate impacts, and the opportunities to contribute to climate solutions in their own communities. For more information on the MWEE components, please refer to the following website:

<https://www.noaa.gov/education/explainers/noaa-meaningful-watershed-educational-experience>

1. Additional Required Components

1.1 Includes NOAA Assets

NOAA provides data, tools, and information to understand and prepare for climate variability and change. Many resources exist that can support teachers and students including but not limited to: Climate.gov (<https://climate.gov/teaching>), the U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit (<https://toolkit.climate.gov>), Climate Explorer (<https://crt-climate-explorer.nemac.org>), Ocean Acidification Resource Collection (<https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/education/teachers/ocean-acidification>) and the Chesapeake Exploration Teaching Climate Change on line course (<https://cbexapp.noaa.gov/course/view.php?id=5581>). An additional list of relevant assets (<https://www.noaa.gov/office-education/elp/resilience-assets>) provide links to NOAA datasets, potential NOAA partners, and other resilience-related assets from federal and non-federal organizations.

Additionally, NOAA personnel can serve as important role models. For more on NOAA assets for education please see: NOAA Education (<https://www.noaa.gov/education/resource-collections>), NOAA in your state (<https://www.legislative.noaa.gov/NIYS>), and NOAA in your backyard (<https://www.noaa.gov/education/noaa-in-your-backyard>).

1.2 Educating Every Student

B-WET is committed to diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice in our grantmaking. Projects should support these practices in all aspects of design and implementation, i.e., audience(s), partners, project leadership team perspectives, location of project, and use of culturally relevant approaches. In support of this, projects should meaningfully apply NAAEE's Community Engagement Guidelines for Excellence (https://cdn.naaee.org/sites/default/files/community_engagement_-_guidelines_for_excellence.pdf) in developing and executing their project plans. The Community Engagement Guidelines for Excellence includes five key characteristics:

Community Centered
Based on Sound EE Principles
Collaborative and Inclusive,
Oriented Toward Capacity Building and Civic Action
Long-Term Investment in Change

C. Program Authority

Under 33 USC 893 a(a), the Administrator of the NOAA is authorized to conduct, develop, support, promote, and coordinate formal and informal educational activities at all levels to enhance public awareness and understanding of ocean, coastal, Great Lakes, and atmospheric science and stewardship by the general public and other coastal stakeholders, including underrepresented groups in ocean and atmospheric science and policy careers. In conducting those activities, the Administrator shall build upon the educational programs and activities of the agency.

II. Award Information

A. Funding Availability

This solicitation announces that approximately \$400,000 may be available in FY 2023 in award amounts to be determined by the proposals and available funds. The NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries anticipates that approximately 4-6 grants will be awarded with these funds.

You may apply up to \$100,000 per year, for up to 3 years.

There is no guarantee that sufficient funds will be available to make awards for all qualified projects. The exact amount of funds that may be awarded will be determined in pre-award negotiations between the applicant and NOAA representatives. Publication of this notice does not oblige NOAA to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds. If

applicants incur any costs prior to an award being made, they do so at their own risk of not being reimbursed by the government. Notwithstanding verbal or written assurance that may have been received, there is no obligation on the part of NOAA to cover pre-award costs unless approved by the Grants Officer as part of the terms when the award is made.

Applicants are hereby given notice that funds have not yet been appropriated for this program. Future opportunities for submitting proposals to the California B-WET competitive process are anticipated, but will depend on funding levels and resources available to support new projects.

B. Project/Award Period

The project start date should not begin before August 1, 2023. Applications should cover a project period of between one and three years. Projects that request multi-year funding must include in their submission a full description of the activities and estimated budget by line item (e.g. personnel, equipment, supplies) for all proposed work for each year. When a multi-year project is awarded, the scope of work and budget for all years is approved at the time of the award, but funding is usually provided only for the first year of the project with the remainder of the award subject to incremental funding, usually annually. NOAA anticipates continuing these multi-year awards for the entirety of their project periods; however, the agency has no obligation to provide any additional funding in connection with the award beyond the initial funding increment.

Continuation of an award to increase funding or extend the period of performance beyond the initial funding increment is at the sole discretion of NOAA and will be contingent upon satisfactory performance, continued relevance to the NOAA mission and priorities, and the availability of funds. Recipients of incrementally-funded projects will not need to compete for funding in subsequent years, and current recipients seeking continued funding of these multi-year awards issued under the incremental funding policy do not need to apply to this funding announcement. Single-year awards and awards for which NOAA shortens the period of performance are required to re-compete for continued funding after the initial period of performance. Any renewal of the project will depend on the submission of a new proposal subject to review, adequate progress on previous award(s), and available funding. Future opportunities for submitting proposals to the B-WET competitive process are anticipated, but will depend on funding levels and resources available to support new projects.

C. Type of Funding Instrument

Whether the funding instrument is a grant or a cooperative agreement will be determined by the amount of the NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries' involvement in the project. A cooperative agreement will be used if National Marine Sanctuary System staff

share responsibility for management, control, direction, or performance of the project with the recipient. Specific terms regarding substantial involvement will be contained in special award conditions.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are:

K-12 public and independent schools and school systems
institutions of higher education
community-based and nonprofit organizations
state or local government agencies
interstate agencies
Indian tribal governments

For profit organizations, foreign organizations, and foreign public entities are not eligible to apply. However, for-profit and foreign organizations and foreign public entities may participate with an eligible applicant as a project partner. Likewise, Federal agencies are not eligible to receive Federal assistance under this announcement, but may be project partners.

Funding is available to the following counties: Del Norte, Humboldt, Trinity, Mendocino, Lake, Sonoma, Napa, Marin, Solano, San Francisco, Contra Costa, Sacramento, San Mateo, Alameda, San Joaquin, Santa Cruz, Santa Clara, Stanislaus, Monterey, San Benito, Merced, Madera, Fresno, San Luis Obispo, Kern, Kings, Tulare, Santa Barbara, and Ventura. Applicants must be located within the U.S. and can be physically located in any state, but must work within the following counties listed above.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

Cost sharing is not required under this program. Any voluntary cost sharing or matching does not impact scoring and must be consistent with the requirements of 2 CFR §200.306.

C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility

None

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Address to Request Application Package

1. Electronic Submission

Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit applications electronically through <https://www.grants.gov/>. You may access the electronic grant application for the California B-WET Program through the same website.

Please note that applicants must locate the downloadable application package for this program by the NOFO number (found on the first page of the NOFO) or CFDA number (11.429). Users of Grants.gov are now required to use a new application process called Workspace. For more information regarding this platform, please visit: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/workspace-overview.html>.

After electronic submission of the application, applicants will receive an automatic acknowledgment from Grants.gov that contains a Grants.gov tracking number. NOAA may request that you provide original signatures on forms at a later date. Information on the CA B-WET program, including examples of currently supported projects, can be found at <https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/news/bwet/welcome.html>.

2. Hard Copy Submission

If an applicant does not have Internet access or if Grants.gov has technical issues that make submission impractical, hard copy applications will be accepted. A signed original may be submitted to Attn: Seaberry Nachbar, B-WET Coordinator, Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Office, 99 Pacific Street, Building 455A, Monterey, CA 93940. Hard copy applications must be postmarked by the deadline posted in this announcement of February 23, 2023.

B. Content and Form of Application

1. Required Federal Forms

Proposals must adhere to the following provisions and requirements.

The required Federal forms are as follows:

Standard Form 424: Application for Federal Assistance

Standard Form 424A: Budget Information, Non-construction Programs

Standard Form 424B: Assurances, Non-Construction Programs

Form CD-511: Certification Regarding Lobbying

Standard Form LLL: Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (if applicable)

2. Proposals

Applicants should not assume prior knowledge on the part of the NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries as to the relative merits of the project described in the application.

a. Proposal Requirements: Required elements for all submissions

(1) Components of the proposal outlined in Section IV. B. 2b. (1-8) should be submitted as a single PDF document and uploaded into the Grants.gov system as a single PDF document. The order of the documents should reflect the order outlined below (Project summary, Project description (items 2- 6), Budget narrative, Budget table, Letters of support, CVs, Logic model, and all other Supporting documents).

(2) Proposal format must be in a 12-point font and single-spaced. The entire project description (items 2- 6), should not exceed 15 pages. The budget narrative, budget table, Federal forms, indirect cost rate and the project summary are not included in this 15-page limit.

(3) Appendices and supporting documentation may be included, but may not exceed a total of 15-pages. Appendices may include information such as curriculum, resumes, and/or letters of endorsement. Additional informational material will be disregarded.

b. Proposal Format:

Proposals should include the following information and it is recommended that they follow the format outlined below:

(1) Project Summary (1-page):

- Organization Title
- Principal Investigator(s) (PI)
- Address, telephone number, and email address of applicant and PI
- Partner(s)
- Project Title
- Project Duration
- Summary of Work to be Performed
- Total Federal Funds Requested
- Cost-Sharing to be provided from non-Federal sources, if any (specify whether contributions are project-related cash or in-kind)
- Total Project Cost

(2) Project Description (15-pages)

- Need: Provide a statement that describes the need for this type of project. Define the barriers to advancing climate literacy at the county or district level and explain how the proposed work will fill a recognized gap. Cite studies or sources, where appropriate, that

validate the need for your project. It should be made clear in this section that your organization's proposed project is not duplicating other efforts in your region.

- Objectives: Explain your objectives and how you are going to accomplish these objectives. Objectives should be simple and understandable; as specific and quantitative as possible (please reference the CA B-WET Evaluation website:

<https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/education/evaluation/> when developing your objectives). Clearly explain how you will achieve your expected outputs and outcomes.

- What: Provide a statement of your project that includes a clear statement of the work to be undertaken. Demonstrate how your project meets the criteria defined in the solicitation.

- Where: Give a precise location of the project and the area(s) that will be served.

(3) Who: Organization Leads and Partners.

- Organization Leads: Explain who from your organization will conduct the project. Include key individuals who will work on the project and a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution. A CV for each individual that is participating significantly in the project is required. These can be embedded within the Project description or as a part of the supporting documents. Please demonstrate to the reviewers that the staff employed is representative of the target audience needs. For example if you are working with a Latino audience, you have/will be employing a bi-lingual staff member.

- Partners/Collaborators: List each partner organization, collaborator, or other key individuals who will work on the project. A partner is defined as an organization that contributes funding and/or in-kind resources and actively collaborates in the planning, promotion, execution, evaluation and interpretation of the program. Essentially the program would not be able to take place without the partner. A collaboration involves cooperation in which parties are not necessarily bound contractually. There is a relationship, but it is usually less formal. The most important thing to remember is: Organizations don't collaborate – people collaborate (representing their organization). A letter of support from each partner/collaborator must be included in the supporting documents.

- Community-Based Partnerships that Lead with Equity

In order to be effective, sustainable, and equitable, environmental education must be integrated within organizations that understand and support the needs of their community. Therefore, the CA B-WET Program is interested in projects that partner specifically with organizations and institutions that serve marginalized groups, particularly minority communities, and/or that are located within those communities. Applicants are strongly encouraged to develop meaningful and mutually-beneficial partnerships that honor the strengths of community organizations. In successful partnerships, organizations have shared goals and work together to share resources, communicate effectively, collaborate on decision-making, and competently engage members of diverse cultures and expertise (Israel et al. 2005). Adequate compensation should be provided for community-based organization

partners and community members for the effort they are contributing to the project.

Community partnerships may look different across proposals but may include:

- Organizations and institutions that serve marginalized groups, particularly communities of black, indigenous, and people of color, and/or that are located within those communities;
- Partnerships that help to address a watershed challenge, problem, or phenomenon by bringing in local expertise on existing environmental issues and creating innovative solutions; and/or
- Partnerships that enhance the local context, cultural relevance, and cultural competence in professional development for all teachers.

(4) Project Timeline: Provide a project timeline in a table format that outlines the project from beginning to end. Include a project schedule that indicates when each action, event, milestone, product development, and evaluation will occur.

(5) Project Evaluation: Evaluation here is defined as the systematic collection and documentation of information about your project's outcomes in order to improve the project's effectiveness, guide judgments about its impact, and/or inform decisions about future programming or funding. Up to 10% of the budget can be spent on the evaluation component of your proposal.

For this section, please include a logic model. An excellent example of a logic model can be found on the CA B-WET website: <https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/news/bwet/welcome.html>.

In your evaluation plan, please describe how you will measure and document the outcomes and impacts of your project on your audience(s). Also describe how your audience(s) will be different after their involvement in your project and how you will measure those differences. Please include in your supporting documents any evaluation tools that you will be using as a part of your evaluation.

Identify and document the results or benefits to be derived from the proposed activities. Include any evaluation data and results that your organization may have conducted. For detailed information on how to develop an evaluation plan, please visit the CA B-WET website at <https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/education/evaluation/welcome.html>.

Participation in B-WET National Evaluation

In the past, B-WET has collected data on B-WET program grantee and participant activities and outcomes through its national evaluation system, above and beyond project-level evaluation work conducted by grantees. However, we are currently analyzing existing evaluation data and will enhance our evaluation approach based upon that analysis.

Therefore, we are not currently collecting data via the B-WET National Evaluation System. Grantees may be invited to participate in future data collection activities and will be given advance notice about these opportunities so they can incorporate data collection into project and implementation plans, as appropriate.

Additional information about B-WET national evaluation work is available here:

<https://www.noaa.gov/office-education/bwet/grantee-resources/national-evaluation>.

Some aspects of project evaluation may require institutional review board (IRB) approval. It is the applicant's responsibility to determine if this is necessary and report back to NOAA.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office for Human Research Protections website has resources to help you determine the necessity of IRB approval. You can find those resources at: <https://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/regulations-and-policy/decision-charts-2018/index.html>. As part of the project evaluation plan, applicants must provide, in writing, a description of whether or not IRB review will be sought and a justification if not. If the applicant determines IRB review is necessary, the applicant must include a timeline for IRB review, and no expenditures related to data collection may occur until IRB approval has been obtained.

(6) Outreach and Education: Explain how your project will work with the target audience to educate and inform others of the results of your project, and any products, outcomes, or benefits of your project. Examples include community events, conferences, as well as peer to peer, media, and social media sharing.

(7) Budget Narrative: The budget narrative should be composed of two parts, a budget table and a budget description. The budget narrative should include the total project costs that are required to accomplish what is proposed in the project description and includes contributions and donations. The budget narrative should provide the information needed to determine how the numbers outlined in the budget table and budget information form (SF- 424A) were derived. The narrative should explain the specific budget categories that are outlined in the SF-424A form, such as personnel/salaries, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, contract costs, and indirect costs. The budget narrative submitted with the application should match the dollar amounts on all required Federal forms (SF-424, SF- 424A). Additional cost detail may be required prior to a final analysis of overall cost allowability, allocability, and reasonableness. See 2 CFR part 200, Subpart E "Cost Principles" for additional information.

Please note the following:

- If applying for multiple years of funding, the budget should be broken down for each year requested. Ensure that there is a detailed budget narrative detailing the budget requested for each year that matches the Form SF-424A.

- Funds for salaries and fringe benefits may be requested only for those personnel who are directly involved in implementing the proposed project and whose salaries and fringe benefits are directly related to specific products or outcomes of the proposed project. NOAA strongly encourages applicants to request reasonable amounts of funding for salaries and fringe benefits to ensure that your proposal is competitive.
- For any equipment, defined in 2 CFR §200.1 as “tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost which equals or exceeds the lesser of the capitalization level established by the non-Federal entity for financial statement purposes, or \$5,000,” a description of the item and associated costs is required, including a description of how it will be used in the project. For more information on equipment, see 2 CFR §200.313 and §§ 200.317-.327
- Non-profit and university applicants should identify, if this information is known when submitting the grant application, who they plan to request that NOAA transfer equipment or property ownership titles to after the project ends. The decision on grant ownership requests will be made by the Grants Officer during the grant closeout process. Property disposition must be consistent with the requirements under 2 CFR §200.313(e).
- Applicants must include the budgets and budget justifications of subawards and price or cost information supporting contracts. Information must include, to the extent known, the name of the entity receiving funds, the location of the entity receiving the funds (e.g., city, state, and Congressional district), the location of the entity receiving funds (city, state, and Congressional district), and the location of the primary place of performance under the contract/subaward. All subawards and contracts must be made consistent with the requirements of 2 CFR §§200. 331-333 for subawards, and 200.317-200.327 for procurements.

Please refer to the NOAA Budget Narrative Guidance found on NOAA’s Grants Office webpage <https://www.noaa.gov/acquisition-grants> for assistance.

- If indirect costs are requested, indirect-cost-rate agreements must be included for the applicant organization and the negotiated rate must be requested. If an applicant does not have an indirect cost rate and wants to include indirect costs, the applicant has up to 90 days after the award start date to submit an indirect cost proposal or cost allocation plan. Indirect-cost-rate-agreement documentation is not required for sub-awardees, however, indirect cost rates at the negotiated levels should be paid by the primary awardee. Under 2 C.F.R. §200.414 “Indirect (F&A) Costs,” any applicant that does not have a current negotiated indirect cost rate may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs which may be used indefinitely. Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs, but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 200.403 “Factors affecting allowability of costs.” If chosen, this methodology once

elected must be used consistently for all Federal awards until such time as a cooperator chooses to negotiate for a rate, which the non-Federal entity may apply to do at any time. The negotiation and approval of a rate is subject to the procedures required by NOAA and the Department of Commerce Standard Terms and Conditions Section B.06.

The NOAA contact for indirect or facilities and administrative costs is: Lamar Revis, Grants Officer, NOAA Grants Management Division 1325 East West Highway, 9th Floor Silver Spring, Maryland 20910, lamar.revis@noaa.gov

(8) Supporting Documentation: The amount of information given in this section will depend on the type of project, but should be no more than 15 pages (this does not include the budget narrative, budget table, Federal forms, indirect cost rate, and the project summary).

- Letters of Support: If the applicant organization has partners, such as schools, state agencies, or other organizations, letters of commitment should be included from partners/collaborators explaining their role in and/or funding of the proposed project. If no letters are included, it will be assumed the applicant has no partners/collaborators. Letters of recommendation may also be included to demonstrate previous work.

- Curriculum Vitae

- Evaluation Tools

C. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)

To enable the use of a universal identifier and to enhance the quality of information available to the public as required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act, 31 U.S.C. 6101 note, to the extent applicable, any proposal awarded in response to this announcement will be required to use the System for Award Management (SAM), which may be accessed online at <https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/> Applicants are also required to use the Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System, as identified in Office of Management and Budget guidance published at 2 CFR Parts 25, which may be accessed at <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A>.

D. Submission Dates and Times

Proposals must be received by 11:59 PM Eastern Time on February 23, 2023 when submitting through <https://www.grants.gov/>. Proposals being submitted in hard copy must be postmarked or provided to a delivery service on or before February 23, 2023. Electronic proposals received in Grants.gov after this due date and time, will not be considered for funding.

E. Intergovernmental Review

Applications under this program are not subject to Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs.

F. Funding Restrictions

1. The CA B-WET Program should not be considered a long-term source of funds.
2. Funding may not be used to support endowments; individuals; building campaigns or capital construction; deficit financing; annual giving; or fund-raising.

G. Other Submission Requirements

Applicants are strongly encouraged not to wait until the application deadline date to begin the application process through <https://www.grants.gov>. In developing your submission timeline, note that validation or rejection of your application by Grants.gov may take up to two (2) business days after submission. In addition, potential funding applicants must register with Grants.gov before any application materials can be submitted, and first-time registration with Grants.gov can take up to three weeks or more. It is therefore strongly recommended that this registration process be completed as soon as possible to allow sufficient time to ensure applications are submitted before the closing date. Also, even if an applicant has registered with Grants.gov previously, the applicant's password may have expired or their registration may need to be renewed prior to submitting to Grants.gov. Grants.gov will not accept submissions if the applicant has not been authorized or if credentials are incorrect. Authorizations and credential corrections can take several days or longer to establish.

To use Grants.gov, an applicant must have a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Number 25 System (DUNS) number and be registered in the System for Award Management (SAM), <https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/>, and periodic renewals are required. Allow a minimum of five (5) days to complete the SAM registration. (Note: Your organization's Employer Identification Number (EIN) will be needed on the application form.) Applicants can receive a DUNS number at no cost by calling the dedicated toll-free DUNS Number request line at 1-866-705-5711. See also <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-1-obtain-duns-number.html>.

The Grants.gov site contains directions for submitting an application, the application package (forms), and is also where the completed application is submitted. Applicants using Grants.gov must locate the downloadable application package for this solicitation by the Funding Opportunity Number or the CFDA number listed in the Executive Summary of this Announcement. Applicants will be able to download a copy of the application package, complete it offline, and then upload and submit the application via the Grants.gov site.

After electronic submission of the application through Grants.gov, the person submitting the application will receive within the next 24 to 48 hours two email messages from Grants.gov updating them on the progress of their application. The first email will confirm receipt of the application by the Grants.gov system, and the second will indicate that the application has either been successfully validated by the system before transmission to the grantor agency or has been rejected because of errors. After the application has been validated, this same person will receive a third email when the application has been downloaded by the Federal agency. Only validated applications are sent to NOAA for review, and the validation time is deemed the time NOAA received it.

If you experience a Grants.gov “systems issue” (technical problems or glitches with the Grants.gov website) that you believe threatens your ability to complete a submission before an applicable funding cycle deadline, please (i) print any error message received; and (ii) call the Grants.gov Contact Center at 1-800-518-4726 for immediate assistance. Ensure that you obtain a case number regarding your communications with Grants.gov.

Please note: problems with an applicant organization’s computer system or equipment are not considered “systems issues.” Similarly, an applicant’s failure to: (i) complete the required registration, (ii) ensure that a registered Authorized Organizational Representative submits the application, or (iii) receive an email message from Grants.gov validating or rejecting its application are not considered “systems issues.” A Grants.gov “systems issue” is an issue occurring in connection with the operations of Grants.gov system, such as the temporary loss of service by Grants.gov due to unexpected volume of traffic or failure of information technology systems, both of which are highly unlikely. In the event of confirmed “systems issue,” or a significant natural disaster affecting submission, NOAA may allow more time for applicant submission due to system problems at Grants.gov at the time of application submission that are beyond the control of the applicant.

V. Application Review Information

A. Evaluation Criteria

For reviewers to determine how well your project fits within the guidelines of the CA B-WET program, it is very important to address all of these evaluation criteria below.

1. Importance and/or relevance and applicability of proposal to the program goals (30 points) This criterion ascertains whether the proposed work addresses B-WET program priorities and if the project is relevant to NOAA.

- a. Does the proposal articulate how it supports the Climate Literacy Essential Principles? Does the project meaningfully advance climate literacy activities related to climate literacy at the county or district-wide level? (10 points)
- b. Does the proposal clearly define the barriers to advancing climate literacy at the county or district level? Does the project aim to address one or more specific needs and will it fill a recognized gap? (5 points)
- c. Does the applicant demonstrate an understanding of climate literacy and its role in K-12 education and stewardship? Does the applicant describe how climate literacy programming will be supported through their project? (10 points)
- d. Does the proposal demonstrate how NOAA assets will be used in the implementation of the climate literacy project? (5 points)

2. Technical Merit (30 points)

This criterion assesses whether the approach is technically sound, logical, feasible, if the methods are appropriate, and whether there are clear project goals and objectives.

- a. Does the proposal demonstrate a firm understanding of desired outputs and short-, mid-, and long-term outcomes that result in changes that support county or district-wide environmental literacy? Does the applicant provide a logic model that clearly illustrates appropriate mechanisms and processes across this continuum? (5 points)
- b. Will the project result in one or more products that codifies or supports the long-term implementation of county or district-wide climate literacy strategies? Does the proposal describe in what ways these project outputs help to establish a means to communicate priorities and practices across the county or district level? (5 points)
- c. Does the applicant describe the steps that will be taken to execute the project? Is there sufficient detail about how these activities are connected to the stated objectives (e.g. duties of a funded position, contents of a plan or strategy, and/or function of a network)? Is this approach sufficient and reasonable to reach the stated objectives? (5 points)
- d. Does the project use best practices and/or innovative approaches (i.e. collective impact framework, network-building strategies) to meet the stated goals? (5 points)
- e. Is it evident from the proposal that the applicant used strategies from the Community

Engagement Guidelines for Excellence in designing the project and does the applicant sufficiently describe how strategies from the Guidelines will be employed in the project? (5 points)

f. Does the applicant provide an effective evaluation strategy to determine if project objectives and outcomes are being met? (5 points)

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.

a. Does the applicant demonstrate an understanding of the intended community, including an in-depth understanding of current challenges and opportunities that school districts face in relation to climate literacy? (5 points)

b. Does the applicant demonstrate a commitment to building relationships that reach beyond usual partners in climate education? Were these partners meaningfully involved in the design of the project? Are any of these partners focused on ensuring equity while working to meet the unique needs of their community? (5 points)

c. Does the proposal demonstrate that the applicant and/or their partners have the educational, scientific, and cultural expertise to successfully complete this project? Is this clearly described in the resumes or narrative included in the proposal? (5 points)

d. Does the proposal include partnerships that contribute to project implementation, and are those partners documented with support letters detailing how they will support the project (as opposed to simply voicing support)? Does the applicant demonstrate that they have involved county or district department of education representatives in the design of the project? (5 points)

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.

a. Is there sufficient detail to verify that the budget request is reasonable for the number of participants and/or target audience to be reached? (5 points)

Are the requested funds for salaries and fringe benefits realistic and only for those personnel who are directly involved in the implementation of the proposed project? (5 points)

5. Outreach and Education (10 points)

This criterion assesses whether the project involves mechanisms for significant external sharing and communication about the project by students, teachers, or project staff.

- a. Does the project involve mechanisms for significant external sharing and communication about the project? (5 points)
- b. Does the proposal describe an outreach strategy that will effectively communicate the program models to other partners in California? Will this outreach strategy help to broaden and deepen the understanding of the lessons learned from this project? (5 points)

B. Review and Selection Process

1. Initial Evaluation of the Application

Once a full application has been received by the NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, an initial administrative review is conducted to determine compliance with requirements and priorities of the application. If applications do not comply, they will be returned without further review. NOAA, in its sole discretion, may continue the review process for applications with non-substantive issues that may be easily rectified or cured.

2. Merit Review

Applications meeting the requirements of this solicitation will be evaluated and scored by independent reviewers. Reviewers serving on these panels may be Federal or non-Federal experts in areas relevant to the priorities under consideration. Each proposal will be reviewed by a minimum of three reviewers. The CA B-WET Program Coordinator will neither vote nor score applications as part of the review panels. Before the panels convene, each reviewer will individually evaluate and score proposals using the evaluation criteria provided in Section V.A. above. Scores and comments will be submitted to the Federal Program Officer and the individual reviewers' ratings will be used to establish a preliminary rank order for each panel.

The panel will convene to review the ranking and comments and discuss the proposals as a group. During the panel meeting, reviewers can revise their scores and comments. Reviewers must individually submit final ranking to the CA B-WET Program Coordinator by the end of the panel meeting. If more than one non-Federal reviewer is used, no consensus advice will be given by the review panel members. The reviewers' final ranking will be used to produce a rank order of the proposals for each of the panels.

The CA B-WET Program Coordinator will make the recommendations for funding to the Selecting Official based on rank order of each panel and the selection factors listed in

Section V.C. below.

The Selecting Official will recommend selected applications to a NOAA Grants Management Division (GMD) Grants Officer, who is authorized to obligate Federal funding and execute the award. The NOAA GMD Grants Officer will review financial and grants administration aspects of the proposed award, including conducting an assessment of the risk posed by the applicant in accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.206. Refer to Section VI.B. of this announcement regarding the agency's Review of Risk and the applicant's opportunity to provide information to the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System. In addition to reviewing repositories of government-wide eligibility, qualifications or financial integrity information, the risk assessment conducted by NOAA may consider items such as the financial stability of an applicant, quality of the applicant's management systems, an applicant's history of performance, previous audit reports and audit findings concerning the applicant and the applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on non-Federal entities.

Applicants should be in compliance with the terms of any existing NOAA grants or cooperative agreements and other eligible to receive Federal awards, or make arrangements satisfactory to the Grants Officer, to be considered for funding under this competition. All reports due should be received and any concerns raised by the agency should be timely addressed in order to receive a new award. Upon review of these factors, if appropriate, specific award conditions that respond to the degree of risk may be applied by the NOAA Grants Officer pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 200.208. In addition, NOAA reserves the right to reject an application in its entirety where information is uncovered that raises a significant risk with respect to the responsibility or suitability of the applicant. The final approval of selected applications and issuance of awards will be by the NOAA Grants Officer. The award decisions of the Grants Officer are final.

C. Selection Factors

The CA B-WET Program Coordinator will review the ranking of the proposals and recommendations of the review panel. The numerical ranking from the review panel will be the primary consideration in deciding which of the proposals will be recommended for funding to the Selecting Official.

The Selecting Official shall award in 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. Whether this project duplicates other projects funded or considered for funding by NOAA or other federal agencies
4. Applicant's prior award performance
5. Partnerships and/or participation of targeted groups
6. Adequacy of information necessary for NOAA staff to make a National Environmental Policy Act determination and draft necessary documentation before recommendation for funding are made to the Grants Officer. See Section VI.B. of this announcement

NOAA may select all, some, or none of the applications, or part of any application, or ask applicants to work together or combine projects, defer applications to the future, or reallocate funds to different funding categories to the extent authorized. Selected applicants may be asked to modify objectives, project plans or budgets, and provide supplemental information required by the agency prior to the award. When a decision has been made (whether an award or declination), verbatim anonymous copies of reviews and summaries of review panel deliberations, if any, will be made available to the applicant.

D. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

Subject to the availability of funds, review of proposals will occur during February and March of 2023. Funding is expected to be awarded by August 1, 2023. Projects should not be expected to begin prior to August 1, 2023.

Successful applicants will receive electronic notification that the application has been funded from the NOAA Grants Management Division. This notification will be sent by email from Grants Online to the institution's Authorizing Official. The official notification of funding, signed by a NOAA Grants Officer, is the authorizing document that allows the project to begin.

Successful applicants may be asked to modify objectives, work plans, or budgets prior to

final approval of an award. The exact amount of funds to be awarded, the final scope of activities, the collaboration duration, and specific NOAA cooperative involvement in the activities of each partnership will be determined in pre-award negotiations among the applicant, the NOAA Grants Office, and the NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries. Project activities should not be initiated in the expectation of Federal funding until a notice of award document is received from the NOAA Grants Office.

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified that their proposal was not recommended for funding (declined) or was not reviewed because it did not meet the minimum requirements prescribed in IV.B (Content and Form of Applications).

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

The official notice of award is the Standard Form CD-450, Financial Assistance Award, issued by the NOAA Grants Officer electronically through NOAA's online grants management system, Grants Online. The Internet Explorer browser should be used with Grants Online.

Also, each recipient will need to have a U.S. Treasury Automated Standard Application for Payment (ASAP) account in order to draw funds electronically.

The Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions will apply to awards in this program. A current version of this document is available at https://www.commerce.gov/sites/default/files/2020-11/DOC%20Standard%20Terms%20and%20Conditions%20-%202012%20November%202020%20PDF_0.pdf. These terms will be provided in the award package in Grants Online at <https://www.noaa.gov/acquisition-grants>. In addition, award documents provided by NOAA in the Grants Online award package may contain special award conditions unique to this program and the applicant's project, including conditions that may limit the use of funds for activities due to outstanding environmental compliance requirements and may lead to modification of the project's scope of work. These special award conditions may also include other compliance requirements for the award, such as due diligence documentation, and will be applied on a case-by-case basis. Applicants are strongly encouraged to review award documents carefully before accepting a Federal award to ensure they are fully aware of the relevant terms that have been placed on the award.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

1. Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements

The Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements contained in the Federal Register Notice of December 30, 2014 (79 FR 78390), are applicable to this solicitation and may be accessed online at <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2014-12-30/pdf/2014-30297.pdf>.

2. Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards

The Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance) at 2 C.F.R. Part 200, adopted by the Department of Commerce through 2 C.F.R. 1327.101, applies to awards in this program. Refer to <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-II/part-200> and <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-B/chapter-XIII/part-1327>.

3. DOC Terms and Conditions

Successful applicants who accept a NOAA award under this solicitation will be bound by Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions. This document will be provided in the award package in NOAA's Grants Online system at <http://www.ago.noaa.gov> and at https://www.commerce.gov/sites/default/files/2020-11/DOC%20Standard%20Terms%20and%20Conditions%20-%2012%20November%202020%20PDF_0.pdf.

4. Limitation of Liability

Funding for programs listed in this notice is contingent upon the availability of appropriations. Applicants are hereby given notice that funds may not have been appropriated yet for the programs listed in this notice. NOAA or the Department of Commerce are not responsible for proposal preparation costs. Publication of this announcement does not oblige NOAA to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds.

5. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

If recommended for funding, applicants whose proposed projects may have an environmental impact will be asked to furnish sufficient information to assist NOAA in assessing the potential environmental consequences of supporting the project. NOAA must analyze the potential environmental impacts, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), for each project, which seeks NOAA funding. Detailed information on NEPA can be found at the following NOAA NEPA website: <https://www.noaa.gov/nepa>, including our NOAA Administrative order 216-6 for NEPA, https://www.osec.doc.gov/opog/dmp/daos/dao216_6.html, and the Council on

Environmental Quality implementation regulations, <https://ceq.doe.gov/laws-regulations/regulations.html>.

If needed by NOAA for NEPA assessment, applicants will be asked 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 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.

6. Data Sharing Plan

This announcement is not seeking proposals that generate environmental data. Therefore, a Data Management Plan is not required as part of the proposal.

7. Unpaid or Delinquent Tax Liability

When applicable under Federal appropriations law, an authorized representative of the selected applicant(s) may be required to provide certain pre-award certifications regarding federal felony and federal criminal tax convictions, unpaid federal tax assessments, and delinquent federal tax returns.

8. Review of Risk

After applications are proposed for funding by the Selecting Official, the Grants Office will perform administrative reviews, including an assessment of risk posed by the applicant under 2 C.F.R. 200.206 These may include assessments of the financial stability of an applicant and the quality of the applicant's management systems, history of performance, and the applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on non-Federal entities. Special conditions that address any risks determined to exist may be applied. Applicants may submit comments to the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System about any information included in the system

about their organization for consideration by the awarding agency.

9. Minority Serving Institutions - The Department of Commerce/National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (DOC/NOAA) is strongly committed to increasing the participation of Minority Serving Institutions, i.e., Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-serving institutions, Tribal colleges and universities, Alaskan Native and Native Hawaiian institutions, and institutions that work in underserved communities.

10. Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) - In the event that an application contains information or data that you do not want disclosed prior to award for purposes other than the evaluation of the application, mark each page containing such information or data with the words "Privileged, Confidential, Commercial, or Financial Information - Limited Use" at the top of the page to assist NOAA in making disclosure determinations. DOC regulations implementing the FOIA, 5 U.S.C 552, are found at 15 C.F.R. Part 4, which sets forth rules for DOC to make requested materials, information, and records publicly available under FOIA. The contents of funded applications may be subject to requests for release under the FOIA. Based on the information provided by the applicant, the confidentiality of the content of funded applications will be maintained to the maximum extent permitted by law.

C. Reporting

Grant recipients are required to provide semi-annual financial and performance reports consistent with 2 C.F.R. Part 200 and Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions. Grant recipients will be required to submit financial and performance (technical) reports and a comprehensive evaluation report.

1. Financial Reports

All financial reports shall be submitted through the NOAA Grants Online system, <https://grantsonline.rdc.noaa.gov>.

2. Performance Reports

Performance reports should be submitted to the NOAA Program Officer. Electronic submission of performance reports is required through the NOAA Grants Online system, <https://grantsonline.rdc.noaa.gov>. The semi-annual reports must be submitted no later than 30 days following the end of each 6-month period from the start date of the award. A final comprehensive report is due at the end of the award period. The final comprehensive report shall be submitted through the NOAA Grants Online. It is recommended that recipients follow the progress report format provided in the following link:

<https://www.noaa.gov/office-education/bwet/resources/grantee-resources>.

In addition, The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act, 31 U.S.C. 6101 note, includes a requirement for awardees of applicable Federal grants to report information about first-tier subawards and executive compensation under Federal assistance awards. All awardees of applicable grants and cooperative agreements are required to report to the Federal Subaward Reporting System (FSRS) available at <https://www.fsrs.gov/> on all sub-awards over \$30,000. Refer to 2 CFR Part 170.

VII. Agency Contacts

Please visit the National Marine Sanctuaries CA B-WET website at: <https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/news/bwet/welcome.html> or contact Seaberry Nachbar, Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary office; 99 Pacific Street, Bldg. 455A, Monterey, CA 93940, or by email at Seaberry.Nachbar@noaa.gov

VIII. Other Information

There is no guarantee that funds will be available to make awards for this federal funding opportunity or that any proposal will be selected for funding. If an applicant incurs any costs prior to receiving an award agreement signed by an authorized NOAA official, they do so at their own risk of these costs not being included in a subsequent award. NOAA or the Department of Commerce are not responsible for any proposal preparation costs. Recipients and subrecipients are subject to all federal laws and agency policies, regulations, and procedures applicable to federal financial assistance awards.

Applicants should be in compliance with requirements in any existing NOAA grants and/or cooperative funding agreements or make arrangements satisfactory to the Grants Officer in order to receive funds.