

**Fiscal Year 2024 NOAA Marine Debris Removal under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law
Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOAA-NOS-ORR-2024-2007993)**

FULL PROPOSAL EVALUATION CRITERIA:

Scores are assigned value by question

Importance and Applicability of Proposal to Program Priorities	40
Technical Merit	25
Overall Qualification of Applicant	10
Project Costs	15
Community Support	10

Criteria	Question Value	Sub-Criteria Value	Criteria Value
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<p>Importance and Applicability of Proposal to Program Priorities This criterion ascertains whether the proposed work is relevant to the goals set out by the NOAA MDP in this announcement. Applications will be evaluated based on the following:</p>			40
Project Outcomes			
Will the project have impactful benefits to NOAA trust resources, and the surrounding coastal environment or community (as described in Section I.B)? Will the project cover an appropriate geographic scale and remove large marine debris?	10	30	
Does the proposal clearly describe the anticipated ecological and socio-economic outcomes that the project is expected to produce?	10		
Does the proposal include strategies to prevent the reaccumulation of marine debris? This may include project activities aimed at building capacity to address chronic large marine debris problems, or activities aimed at sustaining the benefits of the marine debris removal proposed in the application.	6		
Does the proposal clearly describe how the prevention strategies will ensure the project benefits will be sustained beyond the life of the project?	4		
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Justice, and Accessibility			
Does the applicant identify project activities taking place in and/or benefits flowing to a Tribal or underserved community, and does that community have a connection to the project activities? Applicants that reference CEJST (https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/) will score higher in this criterion. If CEJST does not have adequate data to identify a community as disadvantaged, applicants should outline other identifying burdens that define that community as underserved.	4	10	
Does the application indicate the removal of this debris will help address other challenges the underserved community is facing (eg. removal of debris will help improve local fisheries/food security)?	2		
Does the applicant describe how their team will bring a diversity of viewpoints to this project?	2		
Does the applicant describe any experience they or their project partners have in promoting diversity, equity, inclusion, justice, and accessibility in their past work?	2		
Projects that demonstrate a thoughtful approach to coordinate among diverse groups and ensure federal funding is allocated in the most efficient and equitable way, and does not duplicate any existing efforts, as well as those that aim to prioritize the use of local partners/contractors, where possible and appropriate, will score higher on this criterion.			
<p>Technical Merit This criterion assesses whether the approach is technically sound and if the methods are appropriate, and whether there are clear goals and objectives. Applications will be evaluated based on the following:</p>			
Project Goals and Objectives			
Does the proposal clearly identify the project's overall goals and objectives and are they realistic and achievable? Reference Section IV.B.2 which describes the requirements for the Project Narrative.	5	5	
Project Description			
Does the application provide a realistic project timeline (in line with the award period guidelines described in Section II.B)	2	10	
Does the application provide a clear description of proposed removal, disposal, prevention, and monitoring techniques and activities likely to be implemented and are these techniques appropriate for the project?	8		
Environmental Impacts			
Does the application include detailed maps of removal sites and information on the expected species that may be encountered in the area and affected by project activities?	3		

Does the applicant provide assurances that implementation will meet all federal, state, and local environmental laws?	2	5	25
Applications submitted with all of the above information, along with evidence of completed environmental assessments, completed consultations, or secured permits, and that demonstrate that proposed debris removal activities are legally permissible in the project area are likely to score higher on this criterion. Additionally, proposals that demonstrate that the project site selection process included consideration of benefit to/impact on a Tribal and/or underserved community or how those communities were meaningfully engaged in the selection process are also likely to score higher.			
Project Metrics			
Does the applicant describe how they and any project partners or subawardees will collect specific, measurable metrics on removal, disposal, prevention, monitoring, species/habitat impacts, volunteer participation, economic benefits, benefits to Tribal and/or underserved communities and other performance measures as described above in Section IV. B? Do they provide realistic estimates of these metrics?	3	5	
Does the proposal include a Data Management Plan? If so, does it adequately describe what data will be collected during the project and how it will be made accessible and independently understandable to general users in a timely manner, in compliance with Data Management requirements described in Section VI.B.9?	2		
Overall Qualifications of Applicant This criterion ascertains whether the applicant possesses the necessary experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to meet proposal objectives. Applications will be evaluated based on the following:			10
Applicant Technical & Administrative Qualifications			
Do the applicant and any identified project partners or subawardees have the ability and expertise to conduct the scope and scale of the proposed work? Does the applicant propose to prioritize the engagement of local partners or removal contractors? This should be indicated by the qualifications, planning, and/or past experience of project partners in designing, implementing, and effectively managing large debris removal, disposal, prevention, and post-removal monitoring projects, or regional coordination efforts.	5	10	
Does the applicant have the administrative capacity (i.e., the administrative resources and capabilities that the applicant has, or that are available to the applicant) to successfully manage both the federal award as well as any potential subawards?	5		
Proposals that demonstrate access to extensive technical expertise and federal grant experience, or that have systems and personnel in place to effectively manage federal grant requirements are likely to score higher on this criterion. Applicants with the ability to ensure project success through on-the-ground monitoring and oversight, and effectively track and report on project/subaward accomplishments are likely to score higher on this criterion.			
Project Costs This criterion evaluates the budget to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the project needs and timeframe. Applications will be evaluated on the following:			15
Project Budget Composition			
Is the overall budget realistic, enabling the applicant to effectively and successfully meet all proposed objectives with the funding requested?	3	5	
Is the overall budget reasonable, including only those costs necessary to effectively and successfully meet all proposed objectives?			
Applications that propose to use NOAA funds to expand an organization's day-to-day administrative activities are unlikely to score high under this criterion. Funding directed at supporting new or impactful efforts, or programs that require funding to scale-up or expand their existing efforts to achieve broader and more impactful outcomes are likely to score higher under this criterion.			
Project Budget Organization			
Does the budget justification narrative contain a sufficient level of detail, as required in Section IV.B.? This includes whether the applicant includes a detailed summary budget table, the budget is organized by SF-424A object classes, and describes both the federal and non-federal funding needs for all required project costs (i.e., for both implementation and administration activities).	5	5	
Proposals with detailed Budget Narratives that follow the format of NOAA's Budget Narrative Guidance document (link is provided in Section IV.B.) are likely to score higher on this criterion.			
Cost-sharing and Leveraging Federal Funds			

<p>Does the applicant complement NOAA's investment with other funding sources, including formal, non-federal matching contributions and/or informal, leveraged funds? Are matching and/or leveraged funding sources (both planned and confirmed) documented in the proposal? In cases where non-federal match or informal leverage are not provided, does the proposal describe challenges in a way that indicates it is unlikely the applicant could have done more to secure match or leveraged funds?</p>	5	5	
<p>Community Support This criterion evaluates whether the project has effective engagement from relevant stakeholders, including engagement of underserved and underrepresented communities, if applicable. Applications will be evaluated based on the following:</p>			
<p>Community Support</p>			
<p>Does the proposal effectively integrate well with existing regional or national publicly vetted programs, priorities, or strategic plans?</p> <p>Program or plan examples include, but are not limited to: NOAA Marine Debris Action Plans, National Estuary Program or NOAA Habitat Focus Area sites, 2021-2025 NOAA MDP Strategic Plan, National Marine Sanctuary management plans etc. Check your region's page on the NOAA MDP website (https://marinedebris.noaa.gov/your-region) for a regional Marine Debris Action Plan. Projects that work toward actions prioritized in the above, or similar, plans will score higher on this criterion.</p>	2		
<p>Has the applicant demonstrated meaningful engagement from project partners (as defined in Section I.B.), and strong community support for the project? This may be reflected by the diversity, strength and involvement of project participants, partners and local entities, as well as include letters of support from project partners, state and local governments, members of Congress, private landowners, community groups, or relevant resource agency personnel familiar with the issue? Do these letters indicate that the partners are meaningfully involved in both the planning and execution of the project?</p> <p>Proposals that include letters of support from all proposed project partners will score higher on this criterion if those letters demonstrate the specific commitments to the project. This also includes letters from landowners and other stakeholders involved with or impacted by the project, granting permissions and other assurances that the project has their full support. As appropriate, projects that make connections to underserved and/or underrepresented individuals or communities, both in the development of the proposal and/or to broaden participation of stakeholders for whom there is currently limited direct engagement on marine debris issues and/or for whom social and economic vulnerability due to marine debris impacts is high, may score higher on this criterion.</p>	8	10	10