

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

FY22 COPING WITH DROUGHT: ECOLOGICAL DROUGHT COMPETITION

UPDATED JULY 15, 2021

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Q: Where can I find more information about the National Integrated Drought Information System?

A: <https://www.drought.gov/about>

Q: Where can I find more information about the NOAA Climate Program Office?

A: <https://cpo.noaa.gov/Who-We-Are/About-CPO>

Q: Where can I find all the details about the FY22 Notice of Funding Opportunity including the Coping with Drought Competition?

A: <https://www.drought.gov/drought-research/coping-with-drought-competition> and
<https://cpo.noaa.gov/Funding-Opportunities/2022-Notice-of-Funding-Opportunity>

QUESTIONS RELATED TO THE FOCUS OF THE FY22 COPING WITH DROUGHT COMPETITION ON ECOLOGICAL DROUGHT

Q: Can you apply if you are not located in a region with a formal Drought Early Warning System?

A: Yes, there is no requirement that you be located or working within the boundaries of an existing Drought Early Warning System.

Q: You stated that proposals will include partners and decision-makers. What role(s) must the partners play? Be full members of the research team? Interact with researchers only in developing the applications to planning/decision making? Can you give some examples of what interactions with federal agencies (or state agencies, local groups, etc.)?

A: At minimum, we would like to see partners and decision-makers engaged at all stages of the project – from inception and design to co-production of applications and products to support planning and decision-making. Depending on their contributions, they could be full members of the research team or they could serve more in an advisory position to be consulted throughout the life of the project. Engagement could result in a better understanding the decisions to be made, identifying gaps in information needed to make informed decisions, decision products and services based on research outcomes, etc. Interactions could take many forms (meetings, workshops, interviews, etc.).

Q: Can partners be awarded funding via subcontracts with the recipient entity?

A: The recipient institution could choose to do a subaward to key partners.

Q: Would research that led to the development of a decision-making tool for land use planning be in scope? It would consider the water-energy-food-carbon nexus and drought would have definite impacts on this.

A: Applicants are encouraged to read and thoroughly understand the focus and requirements of the competition. We will not comment at this time on specific project ideas and whether they fit the scope of the competition, this is the purpose of the Letters of Intent (LOI). If you feel your project is in scope for the competition, we encourage you to submit a LOI.

Q: Droughts impact multiple jurisdictions in my region, including international. Is it possible to submit a proposal that would help facilitate a coordinated response in the US and in Canada?

A: Applicants are encouraged to read and thoroughly understand the focus and requirements of the competition. This competition funds applied research, while the outcomes could support a multi-jurisdictional, coordinated response to drought, applicants are encouraged to submit LOIs that directly address the research focus of the competition.

Q: Is this funding for new business owners?

A: Applicants are encouraged to read and thoroughly understand the focus and requirements of this competition to fund applied research. A business owner is eligible to apply.

PROCESS AND FUNDING QUESTIONS

Q: Is a budget required at the Letter of Intent (LOI) stage?

A: We do not require a full budget, but an estimated total project cost is required.

Q: Would you please explain the indirect cost policy for these awards? What is allowed indirect cost rate?

A: A copy of the institution's current Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (IDCRA) must be included. The IDCRA does not, however, count as part of the required page limit. To obtain an indirect cost rate if your institution does not already have one, a grantee must submit an indirect cost proposal to its cognizant agency and negotiate an indirect cost agreement. If an applicant has not previously (ever) established an indirect cost rate with a Federal agency they may choose to negotiate a rate with the Department of Commerce or use the de minimis indirect cost rate of 10% of MTDC (as allowable under 2C.F.R. 200.414).

Q: Is cost share required? If not, is documented cost share weighted in scoring?

A: Cost sharing and/or match funds are not a requirement of this competition and therefore are not specifically considered in scoring the proposals. However, if you do

have a cost-share or match funds, it is good to include in the proposal as that does demonstrate willingness of partners to invest in the work.

Q: Could you explain the "cooperative agreement" funding format/mechanism?

A: According to the grant-terminology section of www.grants.gov, a Cooperative Agreement is a legal instrument of financial assistance between a Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity and a non-Federal entity that, consistent with 31 U.S.C. 6302–6305...and is distinguished from a grant in that it provides for substantial involvement between the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity and the non-Federal entity in carrying out the activity contemplated by the Federal award... For more information on the difference between a grant and cooperative agreement see this Grants.gov blog <https://blog.grants.gov/2016/07/19/what-is-a-cooperative-agreement/>

Q: What do you recommend if an academic wants to partner with a federal agency? How should we proceed with a proposal submission? How would the cooperative agreement work if there was a federal partner?

A: In order to submit a proposal that includes PIs from both academic and federal agencies, the academic PI would submit a proposal through www.grants.gov and the federal partner would submit a proposal directly to the program manager (Britt Parker; britt.parker@noaa.gov). Both proposals should adhere to the funding opportunity guidelines. As per page 21, the proposals would be identical but with personalized budget information. If the proposed project is funded, monies would be distributed through two separate mechanisms – a cooperative agreement to the academic institution and an interagency transfer to the federal agency.

Q: We are a small business considering partnering with a university and a retired member of the EPA who does water research. Would you recommend we have one or three PIs? If a grant proposal involves two or more institutions, should we combine as one or submit it separately?

A: Please read the [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#) carefully as it pertains to proposals involving multiple institutions - each institution should submit a proposal with common title and project information but with federal budget forms, narratives, etc. for their specific institutions. Please see more details in the instructions for full proposals.