

Frequently Asked Questions
FY2024 Ecology & Oceanography of Harmful Algal Blooms (ECOHAB) Program
Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)
NOAA-NOS-NCCOS-2024-2008161

The following questions were received by emails to the Program Manager and via chat during the October 12, 2023 webinar on the FY2024 Ecology & Oceanography of Harmful Algal Blooms (ECOHAB) funding opportunity. They have been edited for clarity and conciseness.

If you have questions that are not answered here, please contact Maggie Broadwater (maggie.broadwater@noaa.gov).

QUESTION: Where can I access information about this funding opportunity?

ANSWER: The Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) is posted at [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov), and can be directly accessed here: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=350259>. Also, see links under “New Funding Opportunities” on the [NCCOS Funding Opportunities](#) page to access the webinar recording, slides and this FAQ document.

QUESTION: For the Letter of Intent (LOI), should the approximate cost of the project be a total or an estimated per year cost?

ANSWER: See the NOFO Section IV.B. Content and Form of Application (p. 16). The total cost of the project is required; you may also include the per year cost estimates.

QUESTION: Should the applicant specify whether the proposed project is a targeted vs. regional project?

ANSWER: Yes, but this is not required. If the project type is not specified, it will be classified as targeted or regional based on the average annual budget. Targeted annual project costs should range from \$200,000 to \$500,000 and regional or cross-regional annual costs should range from \$500,000 to \$1,000,000. See the NOFO Section I.B.2. (p. 7-9) for characteristics of targeted and regional ECOHAB projects.

QUESTION: Can an applicant submit more than one LOI (as lead PI or co-PI)?

ANSWER: Yes. There are no specific restrictions on the number of LOIs/proposals that can be submitted by one PI or institution. PIs (and co-PIs) should consider the time constraints related to working on multiple projects, and should not overcommit in case more than one of their projects is selected.

QUESTION: Does the project team have to be complete prior to submitting a LOI? Are changes allowed before a full proposal is submitted?

ANSWER: No, the team does not have to be complete. Changes are allowed before the proposal is submitted (and after the LOI).

QUESTION: How do matching funds factor into the project costs evaluation criterion?

ANSWER: Cost sharing or matching funds do not factor into the project costs evaluation. Matching funds are not required (NOFO Section III.B., p. 16). Contact the program manager to discuss if the proposed project classification would change to regional (from targeted) due to matching funds.

QUESTION: If you are involved in both a regional and targeted proposal team, are you competing against yourself in the proposal review? Or are the targeted and regional proposals considered separately?

ANSWER: Yes and no. Regional and targeted projects will be awarded from the same funding (anticipated to be \$3,000,000 total for all FY2024 ECOHAB projects). Merit reviewers will be instructed to consider regional and targeted proposals separately (using the same evaluation criteria).

QUESTION: Are academic or non-profit partners preferred when a for-profit organization is the lead institution?

ANSWER: No. For-profit organizations are eligible applicants. See the NOFO, Section III.A. (p. 15-16) for more information on applicant eligibility.

QUESTION: In the case of a targeted project where proposal objectives can be applied to different HAB taxa, can we use multiple HAB taxa (i.e. from different regions) as models to address questions?

ANSWER: Yes.

QUESTION: Are any of the FY2024 ECOHAB program priorities related to human health?

ANSWER: Yes, see the Program Priorities in the NOFO Section I.B.1. (p. 7) for specifics. Also see the NOFO Section I.B.3. Examples of Non-Applicable Research Topics (p. 9-10). Specifically, disease surveillance, clinical characterization, and therapeutic guidance in humans are the purview of other agencies, such as NSF/NIEHS COHH, CDC and FDA.

QUESTION: Is there a geographic range or area size that separates targeted vs. regional projects?

ANSWER: No. The classifications targeted and regional are defined based on scope and budget and not geographic range. See the NOFO Section I.B.2. (p. 7-9) for characteristics of targeted and regional ECOHAB projects.

QUESTION: What is NOAA's jurisdiction, vs. EPA, for HAB science?

ANSWER: NOAA's HAB portfolio addresses HABs that occur in the Great Lakes and marine and coastal waters, including estuaries and the "freshwater-to-marine" continuum. EPA addresses HABs occurring in freshwater bodies including the Great Lakes. NOAA and EPA work together to address HABs in the Great Lakes and the "freshwater-to-marine" continuum. See the NOFO Section I.B.3. Examples of Non-Applicable Research Topics (p. 9-10). Specifically, NOAA's National Competitive HAB programs, including ECOHAB, will not fund research on inland or freshwater HABs except in the Great Lakes and coastal waters, which, as defined in the Coastal Zone Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1453 (3)), contain a measurable quantity or percentage of seawater. Research on freshwater HABs that are transported into the coastal zone is permitted.

QUESTION: Are macroalgal blooms (e.g., *Sargassum*, *Ulva* species) included as harmful algal blooms for the purpose of this funding opportunity?

ANSWER: Yes, macroalgal blooms are included as harmful algal blooms under this funding opportunity.

QUESTION: Are there any geographical restrictions on where the proposed work can be carried out?

ANSWER: While there is nothing in the NOFO that specifically restricts this award geographically, we encourage you to choose a species that is relevant to the US and to US management.

QUESTION: Are letters of support from stakeholders required?

ANSWER: No, but they may be included in the "Application to Management" section of the Project Description (See NOFO Section IV.B.(d)(4), p. 17). Note that letters of support do count against the combined 15-page limit for the "Proposed Research" and "Application to Management" sections of the Project Description. If the project has a Management Transition Advisory Group (MTAG), letters of support from MTAG members may be included, but are not required, to indicate that they have agreed to serve on the MTAG; these letters do not count against the page limits. See the NOFO Section IV.B.2.(c)(4)b. Application to Management (p. 18).

QUESTION: Are federal partners required?

ANSWER: Federal partners are allowed; they are not required. For more information, see the NOFO Section III.A. Eligibility (p. 15-16).

QUESTION: Can international researchers be on a proposal as a funded collaborator?

ANSWER: Yes, but they cannot be the lead PI. See the NOFO, Section III.A. (p. 15-16) for more information on applicant eligibility. Specifically, Foreign researchers must apply as subawards or contracts through an eligible U.S. entity.