

Q & A: Integrated Research on Coastal and Ocean Acidification and Harmful Algal Blooms Funding Opportunity

The following questions were received by emails to the Program Managers and via chat during the September 7, 2020 webinar on the funding opportunity for Integrated Research on Coastal and Ocean Acidification and Harmful Algal Blooms. 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) or Erica Ombres (erica.h.ombres@noaa.gov).

QUESTION: Are there restrictions on the number of LOIs or full proposals that an individual researcher, or an institution can participate in or be the lead investigator/institution?

ANSWER: No, we do not have 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: 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 atmospheric or emitted toxins relevant toxins under this funding opportunity?

ANSWER: Yes. Per the definition for "harmful algal bloom" provided in the NOFO (Section I.A.1, p. 5), any "toxic compounds or other biological, chemical, and physical impacts of the algae outbreak" that result in "nuisance conditions or harmful impacts on marine and aquatic ecosystems, coastal communities, and human health" are relevant for 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 NOFO (Section IV.B.(d)(4)b.iv, p. 18).

QUESTION: Are federal partners required?

ANSWER: Federal partners are allowed, but not required. For more information, see the Eligibility Information in the NOFO (Section III, p. 13).

QUESTION: Does the study subject have to be a toxic HAB species or can it be a nontoxic but harmful HAB species?

ANSWER: The study subject can be toxic or nontoxic/nuisance HAB species. See the definition of “harmful algal bloom” in the NOFO (Section I.A.1, p. 5).

QUESTION: Is there a requirement for research projects to include higher trophic level organisms (e.g., shellfish)?

ANSWER: There is no requirement for projects to include higher trophic level species. See the Program Priorities section of the NOFO (Section I.B., p. 9) for information on project requirements.

QUESTION: For societal implications, do we have to demonstrate an impact on higher trophic level organisms (e.g., shellfish)?

ANSWER: There does not specifically have to be an impact on higher trophic organisms, but the research question must be relevant to management (e.g., there could be an impact to human health or tourism). See the Program Priorities section of the NOFO (Section I.B., p. 9) for information on project requirements.

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

ANSWER: Yes, but they cannot be the lead PI. See the Eligibility Information in the NOFO (Section III, p. 13): “Foreign researchers must apply as subawards or contracts through an eligible U.S. entity.”

QUESTION: Would development of remote sensing algorithms for HABs be considered as non-responsive to this funding call?

ANSWER: Not necessarily. The project should address OA and HABs as co-stressors, and must include one of the approaches listed in the Program Priorities section of the NOFO (Section I.B., p. 9).

QUESTION: Does a project have to address OA-HAB interactions or will projects focusing on just HABs or OA be considered? Can warming be included as a potential interacting factor with OA?

ANSWER: See the Program Priorities section of the NOFO (Section I.B., p. 9): “Proposals **MUST** directly address research questions/needs involving **BOTH** OA and HABs, but other coastal stressors (e.g., warming, hypoxia) may also be included.”

QUESTION: Is it ok to focus on OA effects on HABs, or can OA be combined with other stressors in the study?

ANSWER: Other coastal stressors besides OA and HABs may be included, but are not required. See the Program Priorities section of the NOFO (Section I.B., p. 9).

QUESTION: Will modeling efforts that jointly consider effects of HABs and OA on ocean resources be considered?

ANSWER: Yes. See the Program Priorities section of the NOFO (Section I.B., p. 9).

QUESTION: Is this NOFO separate from traditional HAB funding avenues like ECOHAB and MERHAB? Can we expect any ECOHAB/MERHAB calls in the near future?

ANSWER: Yes, this NOFO is separate from ECOHAB and MERHAB. We anticipate projects will be assigned to one of the existing HAB programs (ECOHAB, MERHAB, or PCMHAB) for the purposes of reporting federal spending on HABs. The NCCOS Competitive Research Program (CRP) is planning for future HAB funding program opportunities and information will be shared with the HAB science community as it becomes available.

QUESTION: How important is it that proposals are coastal versus using offshore sampling opportunities?

ANSWER: Offshore sampling can be included as long as the research question is relevant to coastal management. See the Program Priorities section of the NOFO (Section I.B., p. 9).

QUESTION: Is drinking water protection an allowable societal effect?

ANSWER: Yes, but this will depend on the study. Studies conducted in inland freshwater systems are not eligible for NOAA HAB funding programs, with the exception of the Great Lakes.

QUESTION: Is it sufficient for a project to only use field OA-HAB data to improve model predictions? Or does there need to be a lab experimental component?

ANSWER: Studies may have a lab component, a field component, or both. Per the Program Priorities (Section I.B., p. 9): “We encourage the use of existing datasets and augmentation of existing data products.”

QUESTION: Are assessment/evaluation of the socioeconomic effects of HABs and OA allowed under this funding opportunity?

ANSWER: Socioeconomic studies are not excluded, but note that proposals should be responsive to the Program Priorities section of the NOFO (Section I.B., p. 9).