NOAA NCCOS

Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

HAB Innovation Challenge: Toxin Detection in Seafood

Frequently Asked Questions

Relevant Links

NOFO: https://www.grants.gov/search-results-detail/361499

NCCOS Funding Opportunities: https://coastalscience.noaa.gov/about/funding-opportunities/

NOFO Webinar Slides:
https://cdn.coastalscience.noaa.gov/page-attachments/funding/FY26-Toxins-NOFO-webinar-slides.pdf

NOFO Webinar Recording:
https://cdn.coastalscience.noaa.gov/csvideo/recording-toxin-detection-in-seafood-mar2026.mp4

Frequently Asked Questions

NOFO Objectives:

What are the NOFO objectives and priorities?

All proposals must aim to develop or advance HAB toxin detection in seafood and address at least one of the following priorities:

- Adaptation of a current toxin detection technology to make it more rapid, portable, or cost-effective.
- Evaluation of adapted or novel toxin detection technologies (e.g., single or multiple laboratory validation studies, matrix, or platform extension studies) for improved speed, accuracy, and cost over currently available methods.
- Development, demonstration, or validation of novel detection technologies for HAB toxins in seafood.

Is this funding opportunity restricted to novel HAB toxin detection methods, or does it also include safety evaluation methods?

This funding opportunity prioritizes innovative toxin testing methods for seafood that increase portability, or reduce costs, time, required training, or expertise. While this includes both novel technologies and adaptations of existing methods, it does not include safety evaluation methods such as dose-response evaluations or determination of exposure or action levels for specific toxins or toxin classes to guide risk management and safety thresholds.

Does this NOFO cover rapid assay development for HAB toxins in water?

No. While we recognize the importance of HAB toxin detection in water, the primary objective of this funding opportunity is to develop or advance the detection of HAB toxins in seafood.

Can the proposed toxin detection method be focused on toxin production in a HAB species prior to its accumulation in seafood?

No, this would not fulfill the main objective for this funding opportunity of developing or advancing the detection of HAB toxins in seafood. While we recognize the value of monitoring toxin production in HAB species for early warning, this topic is not within the scope of this competition.

Eligibility:

Can industry/for-profit organizations submit a proposal or partner on one?

Yes, for-profit organizations may lead or serve as a partner on proposals for this competition. This competition is open to U.S. institutions of higher education, non-profits, state and local governments, tribal government entities, U.S. Territories, U.S. Affiliated Pacific Islands institutions, and for-profit organizations. Public-private-academic partnerships are encouraged, but not required.

Can science teams include International partners/collaborators? Are funds transferable to foreign countries?

Yes, but foreign researchers must apply as subawards or contracts through an eligible U.S. entity. Eligible U.S. entities include: U.S. institutions of higher education, non-profits, state and local governments, tribal government entities, U.S. Territories, U.S. Affiliated Pacific Islands institutions, and for-profit organizations. Note that the proposed work should aim to develop or advance innovative, efficient, and effective point-of-use HAB toxin detection technologies in support of U.S. nutritional, cultural, and economic seafood interests.

If you are proposing to provide funds to an International partner or collaborator, you can verify their eligibility to receive U.S. federal funds on SAM.gov and the U.S. International Trade Administration's Consolidated Screening List (CSL).

Budget:

Do the award amounts include direct and indirect costs?

Yes, the annual and total award amounts include both direct and indirect costs. There is both an annual cap ($100,000 - $250,000) and a total cap ($750,000) for awarded projects. Projects may range from 1 to 3 years in length. The $750,000 cap assumes that you've chosen a project that is 3 years in length using the maximum annual cap of $250,000 (direct + indirect costs).

Application Process:

Do you have an idea of how many applicants you may receive?

In past competitions similar to this one, we have received around 10-25 proposals. For larger competitions, there have been higher numbers. The number of proposals varies from one competition to the next. We typically receive higher numbers of Letters of Intent (LOIs) than full proposals.

How many Letter of Intent (LOI) applicants may be encouraged to submit a full proposal?

All LOIs that meet the funding opportunity priorities will be encouraged to submit a full proposal.

Potential Resources:

Where might I find potential collaborators working in the HAB toxin testing field?

This is NOT an exhaustive list and does not represent an endorsement of any kind.

- Commercial HAB Toxin Testing - Services and Products
- National Shellfish Sanitation Program (NSSP) - US Domestic Laboratory List
- Federal Biospecimen Lab Inventory
- US EPA's List of Laboratories that Analyze for Cyanobacteria and Cyanotoxins

What are the currently accepted regulatory methods for HAB toxin detection in shellfish?

- Interstate Shellfish Sanitation Conference (ISSC) Laboratory Reference Methods
- US FDA's Fish and Fishery Products Hazards and Controls