U.S. Coastal Research Program (USCRP)
2019 Call for Awards

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. **What is the U.S. Coastal Research Program (USCRP)?**
A: The U.S. Coastal Research Program (USCRP) is a partnership of the coastal research community to coordinate Federal activities, strengthen academic programs, and build a strong workforce. As identified by its' National Plan, the USCRP addresses societal needs along the coast through a coordinated effort backed by researchers from Federal agencies, academia, industry, and non-governmental organizations.

Q: Was the informational webinar held in December recorded?
A: No, but the slides are available on the USCRP website: https://uscoastalresearch.org/2019-awards-info

Q: Are Federally Funded Research and Development Agencies (FFRDCs) such as the National Labs are eligible for this program?
A: No, Federally-funded research laboratories are not eligible. These funds are intended to support academic research studies. Please feel free to forward the opportunity to your academic partners if they may have interest. Academic government labs are eligible.

Q: From the FAQs page and webinar information, it seems that only principal investigators on proposals have to be at institutions in the CESU network, and collaborators with PIs don't necessarily have to be. Is this correct?
A: This is correct: because the USCRP proposals will be submitted through the CESU network, at least one of the PIs on the proposal must be a CESU network member to facilitate submission. The other PIs and/or collaborators do not need to be members of the CESU network.

Q: Do governmental institutions, such as academic government labs, qualify for funding?
A: It depends. The Naval Postgraduate School is eligible to apply for an award. In this instance, we recommend contacting the California CESU to see if the NPS is included in their CESU.

Q. **How much funding is being awarded through this competition in FY2019?**
A. Dependent on FY19 appropriations, USCRP intends to award up to $5 million for this competition.

Q: Are we expecting funding in future years?
A: Funding in future years is a federal budget decision that is out of our hands, and it may depend on the success of the first year.

Q: **How will the current government shutdown or continuing resolution (CR) impact funding availability?**
A. This award should not be affected by a CR or any potential government shutdown; however, timelines may slip somewhat depending on the length of the shutdown.

Q: Are there any funding match requirements?
A: No, but proposals that demonstrate the leveraging of funds from other projects are encouraged and will be taken into consideration during the review process.

Q. When will funded projects be implemented?
A. USCRP plans to award projects by the end of June 2019.

Q: What is the maximum award level, and the number of expected awards that will be made?
A: Student Challenges are expected to be awarded in $100K range over a **1-2 year period** while Academic Research awards are eligible for up to $250K **per year a 2-3 year period**. There are no set expectations for the number of student or academic awards that will be made.

Q: Do you have an idea of how many projects are expected to be funded through this call?
A: No.

Q: What is a typical award amount?
A: Award amounts depend on the type of project proposed. Funding will be awarded based on the quality of the proposals.

Q: How much of $5M will go toward DUring Nearshore Event eXperiment (Topic #10, DUNEX)?
A: Funding will be awarded based on the quality of the proposals. There is no set amount assigned to each topic. Ranges of funding will be included in the advertised requests for Statements of Interest. While DUNEX is associated with USCRP, USCRP is not the only granting organization providing funding for the project. Specific to DUNEX, a separate webinar will be held on the experiment.

Q: **Why is a pre-proposal required?**
A: For the 2019 USCRP awards, the process requires a 2-page pre-proposal or Statement of Interest (SOI) as part of the review and vetting process. The deadline for the 2-page SOI submission is 10 days after the request for statements of interest (rSOI) is posted, (tentatively January 15, 2019). This process will streamline the effort for applicants and the application reviewers. Only those projects closely aligned with the goals of the USCRP will be asked to submit a full proposal.

Q: **What is the format required for the pre-proposal?**
A: The following information must be included in the 2-page Statement of Interest (see example provided below):
1. Name, Organization and Contact Information
2. Brief Statement of Qualifications (including): a. Biographical Sketch, b. Relevant past projects and clients with brief descriptions of these projects, c. Staff, faculty or students available to work on this project and their areas of expertise, d. Any brief description of capabilities to successfully complete the project you may wish to add (e.g. equipment, laboratory facilities, greenhouse facilities, field facilities, etc.).

Q: There does not appear to be a location to submit to as the CESU portal does not list the rSOI yet. To confirm, I presume that the deadline is extended, and will be announced via the mailing list as mentioned?
A: Correct: The timelines for submitting the SOI were approximate, and dependent on our contracting office completing the paperwork and vetting of the draft rSOIs. The contracting process is largely out of our hands. Once rSOIs are posted, the USCRP will send out an email that they are available. The USCRP process is not affected by the shutdown.

Q. **Do we need to adhere precisely to the format example shown in the webinar slides, or do we just need to be sure to include everything requested in the "call for research proposals" document? For example, (1) may we integrate relevant publications (not mentioned in "call for research proposals" document) in with the past projects section, (2) may we include all faculty coPIs in the biographical sketch section (or must coPIs show up in the paragraph discussing student available), (3) may we flip the content to discuss the proposed research first, then follow it with the bio sketch, etc.?**
A: (1) Relevant publications should be included in the "Selected Relevant Publications" section (2nd section of the SOI). They can also be mentioned in the "Past projects section" (3rd section) if they illustrate work with clients in the topical area. (2) The "Research Team" should include the primary team members that would be working on the research topic.

We realize that there may be a future MS or PhD student still to be determined at a later date, if so, please indicate this. (3) The structure and format of the SOI is fixed by the contracting team, so please do not reorder the responses.

Q: On the SOI, do the selected relevant publications and relevant past projects and clients with brief descriptions of these projects sections need to only be information from the primary investigator (PI) on the project or could these include information about others on the project team?
A: The publication list on the SOI can include all relevant publications from the project team. However, because the likelihood of success for a project will be largely based on the PI's expertise and skills in working with clients, we are very interested in the PIs publications and track record of success in the topic area. Please remember that the SOI is limited to 2 pages.

Q. Can proposals that relate to more than one of the 10 research topics be submitted to more than one topic?
A: No, SOIs should be directed to a specific topic area. Connections to other topic areas should be discussed in the SOI as interdisciplinary proposals are encouraged. The same SOI should NOT be submitted to multiple topics.

Q: Is there a goal to cover as many different CESU regions as possible with the funded projects or is geographical distribution not a factor in the selection process?
A: The USCRP Review Team will select the strongest proposals submitted. Geographic location or region will not play a role in determining the strength of the proposal.

Q: If we are planning to collaborate with USCRP agency researchers, how should we make that clear through the proposal?
A: Include this information in the SOI as part of the brief description. USCRP encourages collaboration with government scientists and engineers – but the emphasis of the USCRP is to fund research that is utilized by a practicing partner ("practitioner") in addressing societal needs in coastal communities. Agency researchers possibly could qualify as practitioners in some special cases. The practitioner's role is to apply the results to assist in addressing societal needs along the coast, and is envisioned to be coastal managers and stakeholders and others with similar roles.

Q: Are all applicants who submit a pre-proposal eligible to submit a full proposal?
A: No. To be eligible, applicants must be invited to submit a full proposal. This invitation will be based on the strength of the pre-proposal. The pre-proposal applicants will be directly contacted regarding their eligibility to submit a full proposal. Applicants eligible to submit a full proposal will be notified and advised of the full proposal deadline. Reviewer feedback will be available to all pre-proposal applicants upon request, regardless of whether they are invited to submit a full proposal.

Q: Can we submit proposals even if SOIs are rejected?
A: No. You must receive an invitation to submit a proposal after the SOI process.

Q: Can we submit SOIs with several co-PIs?
A: Yes, several co-PIs are permitted to be included in a single SOI. The faculty and/or students can be from multiple institutions and all request funding; however, funds will only be awarded to a single academic institution for each proposal through USCRP.

Q: Can we add senior personnel and/or students to the full proposal if the SOI is chosen?
A: Please list the entire team on the SOI, or as many as you know at the time of submission. We realize that you may not know future team members' names, especially if they are to be students hired at a later date – if so, please indicate by "Additional MS Student" or similar. If the SOI is selected, you and team will be asked to write a full proposal, at which time you can list out full qualifications of the final team.

Q: Is it possible to submit one Student Challenge and one Academic Research Award proposal?

A: Yes; however, it is likely that only one proposal from each PI will be prioritized for funding.

Q: How do you submit the 2 page SOI? Does it go through the CESU in some way, or is it a web upload or direct email?
A: Please follow the instructions for your regional CESU as set out in the Requests for Statements of Interest (rSOI) which will be posted online at *http://www.cesu.psu.edu/.* The Statements of Interest (SOI) should be submitted per the instructions included in the rSOIs, which will identify the person of contact, as opposed to the actual CESU network. The SOIs are being processed through contracting and will be posted on the CESU website when available. The deadlines for submitting SOIs are approximate as the contracting process is largely out of our immediate purview. We will send out an email to the USCRP mailing list once requests for SOI are posted.

Q: **How many calendar days will applicants have to submit an application?**
A: Pre-proposals (Statements of Interest) are required to be submitted 10 days after Requests for Statements of Interest (rSOI) are advertised. Applicants invited to submit a full proposal will have a minimum of 28 days to submit their full proposal. They will be notified of the full proposal deadline when they receive their eligibility notification and reviewer comments.

Q: How many proposals are expected to be funded through this call?
A: As the USCRP expects this to be a highly competitive process, there is no set expectation for how many proposals will be funded. The USCRP plans to fund the strongest proposals possible utilizing the fullest extent of available funding.

Q: **Can a PI submit more than one proposal?**
A: Yes; all proposals will be ranked based on the review criteria. However, because a goal of the USCRP is to build a strong workforce, it is likely that only one proposal from each PI will be prioritized for funding.

Q: Can a person be co-PI (not main PI) for multiple SOIs?
A: Yes, an individual can submit a pre-proposal as the primary PI and as co-PI for additional proposals.

Q: Are SOI's limited to 1 per faculty or 1 per student? May a faculty or student be listed as supporting faculty/student on more than 1 SOI?
A: Yes, more than one student or faculty member can be listed on multiple SOIs.

Q: H**ow will submitted project applications be selected for funding?**
A: Project selection is expected to be highly competitive. Applications are subject to rigorous reviews conducted by subject matter experts around the country and based on the following criteria:
1. Scope - topical relevance; applicability to USCRP goals (25%): this requires the proposal to support
    1. One of the 10 FY19 priority topics;
    2. Be applicable to the USCRP's mission and goals;
    3. That the results of the proposal will increase access to or understanding of information for coastal managers;
    4. Demonstrate instate in the community to practice; and
    5. Leverage existing USCRP collaborative efforts.
2. Technical and scientific merit - appropriate methods defined; novel approach (25%): the proposal should include,
    1. An objective that is technically sound;
    2. An approach fully described and appropriate for achieving stated goals;
    3. Proposal has a novel approach; and
    4. Results that have a high likelihood of use/implementation with coastal practitioners.
3. Experience/staffing - expertise and experience; graduate student supported; informed by coastal manager (20%):
    1. The team includes the appropriate experience, experience and capacity (i.e. resources such as facilities

or instrumentation to achieve the stated goals/objectives);
2. Supports a graduate student(s);
3. Involves the appropriate partners such as nonprofit organizations, regional organizations, private entities, and/or local, state, and tribal governments in order to execute the project; and
4. Demonstrate support of and benefits to coastal managers.
4. Budget - proposed project costs, in-kind contributions (20%):
   1. Budget request is reasonable;
   2. Requested costs are justified;
   3. Requested funds for salaries and benefits are for those directly involved in the work; and
   4. Cost effectiveness is optimized by cost sharing through cash or in-kind matches (which are NOT required but encouraged).
5. Products/timeline (10%):
   1. Clearly defined products are described with some supporting details;
   2. Products show connection to users; and
   3. A reasonable timeline is proposed and within the prescribed period of performance (1-2 yrs student awards & 2-3 yrs academic awards).

Q: What's the difference between a Student Challenge and the Academic Research Award?
A: Student challenge awards are similar in scope and funding to the projects funded by previous USCRP workshops (Dune Management Challenges on Developed Coasts in 2015; Storm Processes and Impacts in 2018) in which ~Master's level research addresses short-term, focused initiatives to address coastal management challenges over the course of 1-2 years with guidance from their advisor. The Academic Research Awards are intended to be ~Ph.D. level research or above to address strategic needs and provide the resources and time to undertake a more substantial examination of a topic over the course of 2-3 years. Applicants can submit either type of proposal for the 10 research topics identified.

Q: Are there any differences between the student challenge and academic research projects with regard to collaboration with CESU members or the way in which the research is directed? For instance, are there requirements that student challenge projects be closely managed by a person associated with the USCRP?
A: There is no requirement for a project manager to be associated with the USCRP. Candidates for either award will need to follow the CESU process.

Q: Should Student Challenge SOIs be submitted by the student or the advisor?
A: Students, with advisor approval, should submit the Statement of Interest (SOI) for the Student Challenge.

Q: Are students required to submit the Student Challenge SOIs?
A: No, advisors may assist in, or submit, the Statement of Interest (SOI) for the Student Challenge. Advisors statement of qualifications should be the focus of the SOI.

Q: How were 10 topics derived?
A: They represent a combination of the three themes recommended by the community in the Nearshore Report, subsequent research needs identified by the USCRP, and federal agency coastal research priorities for FY19.

Q: What is funding amount for each category?
A: Student Challenge awards will be capped at $100K and Academic Research Awards will be capped at $250K per year. There is no average award amount as propose project costs will vary and should be specifically tailored to the SOI.

Q: What agency logistical and data collection support for Topic #10 (DUNEX) is available?
A: Information on baseline data already being collected at the FRF is available here www.frf.usace.army.mil. Include additional collaborative data needs in your proposal, particularly the spatial and temporal bathymetric data requirements.

Q: Are proposals that are nationally applicable given more weight?
A: The ten identified priority topic areas, as set out by federal agencies a current research needs, are nationally applicable and will receive equal weight. The USCRP Review Team will review all proposals to determine the best candidates based on the criteria (scope, technical and scientific merit, experience/staffing, budget, and products/timeline) identified.

Q: Are U.S. students studying internationally eligible to apply for the award?
A: Yes, U.S. students are eligible to apply for the Student Challenge even when studying abroad. The USCRP Review Team will weigh proposals evenly against students studying at U.S. institutions.

Q: Can student projects (or projects in general) be used to support international students?
A: Yes, international students may apply for the Student Challenge. Academic Research Award proposals can include international students.

Q: Will the Student Challenges only be awarded to US citizens?
A: No, USCRP Review Team will select the strongest proposals for an award. Citizenship is not an eligibility factor in the review process.

Q: **Are international institutions eligible to submit proposals for the Academic Challenges?**
A: Yes. International institutions are welcomed to submit proposals and will go through the same review and ranking process as other proposals. All viable proposals are expected to have strong connection to USCRP goals and engagement with the U.S. research and practitioner communities.

Q: Does the 2 page limit for the Statement of Interest include the Brief Statement of Qualifications?
A: Yes, the 2 page limit does include a brief statement of qualifications.

Q: Can you elaborate on the requirements to partner with a CESU network member?
A: The CESU is the funding mechanism for the FY19 awards. Each CESU has an administrative structure that allows partners to work cooperatively and efficiently. Federal and host institutions are linked to individual CESUs through cooperative and joint venture agreements that address indicted or overhead costs, cost sharing, and other initial elements of cooperative ventures. These agreements allow participating federal agencies to transfer funds to university partners while maintaining the responsibility for agency-sponsored activities within CESUs.

Q: Can we still apply if our institution is not a part of CESU? If not, what is the expected level of partnership with a CESU institution?
A: No, only CESU institutions are eligible in order to achieve the benefits listed in the previous answer. Any level of partnership with a CESU institution is acceptable as long as the above benefits related to overhead costs, cost sharing, etc. are achieved.

Q: Will you post to all Regional CESU Networks?
A: Yes.

Q: If my institution isn't a CESU network member yet, but can mobilize immediately to become one, can a statement of interest be submitted in the interim?
A: Yes.

Q: Can you clarify how the local host CESU should be included in the SOI and within the proposed research project?
A: Funding will be awarded to the CESU institution, so the researchers must be affiliated with that institution. Follow your institution's guidelines regarding PI involvement with the regional CESU.

Q: When applying through a CESU, should it be the CESU where the potential experiment will be completed, or the CESU where the PI home institution is located?
A: Apply to the CESU where the PI's home institution is located.

Example Statement of Interest:

Student Challenge OR **Academic Research Study:** Investigation of Nearshore Bathymetry, **Topic #X**

PI: Name, Organization, Phone: --, Email: --
Co-PI: Name, Organization, Phone: --, Email: --
Student: Name, Organization, Phone: --, Email: --

Biographical Sketch:

Dr. ABC is Professor of Coastal Sciences at XYZ University (XYZ). Prior to joining XYZ, she was a professor of coastal engineering at QRS. She conducted postdoctoral research at TUV, and doctoral research at DEF. Dr. ABC specializes in the development and application of numerical models for coastal dynamics, the long-term processes driving coastal sediment budgets, and coastal extreme events. Her research includes field experiments and numerical modeling to solve fundamental science questions that inform societally relevant coastal management problems. Dr. ABC has secured over $15 million of federal, state, and industry research grants, which include the prestigious agency X award.

Selected Relevant Publications:

ABC, McBride, J.L., Chan, J., Emanuel, K., Holland, G., Landsea, C., Held, I., Kossin, J.P., Srivastava, A.K., and Sugi, M. (2010). Tropical cyclones and climate change, Nature Geoscience, **3**, 157–163, https://www.nature.com/articles/ngeo779, accessed November 14, 2018.

ABC, Gralher, C., and Do, K. (2013). Effects of Woody Plants on Dune Erosion and Overwash. *Journal of Waterway, Port, Coastal, and Ocean Engineering*, 139(6), 466–472.

ABC, and Franklin, J.L. (2013). Atlantic hurricane database uncertainty and presentation of a new database format. *Monthly Weather Review*, 141(10), 3576-3592.

ABC, Erikson, L., and Hanson, H. (2004). An analytical model to predict dune erosion due to wave impact. *Coastal Engineering*, 51(8-9), 675–696.

Relevant Past Projects and Clients with Brief Descriptions of These Projects:

ABC, Analysis of dune development and migration along developed coasts in southeast Florida, funded by Agency G, 2015-2017. (one sentence description of this effort which might emphasize past partnering experiences with other academics, agencies, NGOs)

Research Team and Capabilities:

The research team consists of Dr. ABC, Dr. CBA (post-doc), and Ph.D. (or Master's) student BCA. Together, they have successfully developed string theory to reveal that sand bars on the west coast know what sand bars on the east coast are doing. Dr. ABC has developed Python code that operates within the new West Coast model test bed to replicate sand bar behavior based on remotely sensed field measurements from southern California and the outer banks of North Carolina. In this three year, $100,000 Academic Research study, the team will utilize this model to address Topic #X, enlist the assistance of undergraduate STEM students at XYZ University, leverage the coastal management strategy of the state of Oregon, and make a clear connection to practitioners through facilitated training workshops. This research will provide insights to fundamental science questions that have puzzled nearshore oceanographers since SandyDuck. By resolving the east and west coast sand bar behavior patterns, the research team will better understand the implications of their movement on life safety and coastal infrastructure investments. Lifeguards and coastal managers around the world will be trained to recognize these sand bar patterns and will present their findings to their fellow practitioners at conference Q in Providence, Rhode Island in 2022. The research team will publish their findings in R journal and present their findings at T conference.