

2018/2019 Monkfish Research Set-Aside (RSA)

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ANNOUNCEMENT OF FEDERAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Federal Agency Name(s): National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce

Funding Opportunity Title: 2018/2019 Monkfish Research Set-Aside (RSA)

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: NOAA-NMFS-NEFSC-2018-2005338

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 11.454, Unallied Management Projects

Dates: Complete proposals/applications must be received on or before 5 p.m. EDT on Thursday, December 21, 2017. Proposals received after the established deadline will be rejected and returned to the sender without consideration. For proposals submitted through Grants.gov, a date and time receipt indication will be the basis of determining timeliness. The proposal must be validated by Grants.gov in order to be considered timely. PLEASE NOTE: It may take Grants.gov up to two (2) business days to validate or reject the application. Please keep this in mind in developing your submission timeline.

For those without access to the Internet, one signed original and two hard copy applications must be postmarked or received by the established due date for the program at the following address: Cheryl A. Corbett, NMFS, Northeast Fisheries Science Center, 166 Water Street, Woods Hole, MA 02543, ATTN: 2018/2019 Monkfish Research Set-Aside Program. Use of U.S. mail or another delivery service must be documented with a receipt. (Note that late-arriving hard copy proposals provided to a delivery service on or before 5:00 p.m. on the closing date for applications will be accepted for review if the applicant can document that the proposal was provided to the guaranteed delivery service by the specified closing date and time and if the proposal is received by Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) no later than 5 p.m., two business days following the closing date.)

No facsimile or electronic mail proposals will be accepted. May 1, 2018, should be used as the proposed start date on proposals, unless otherwise directed by the Program Officer.

Funding Opportunity Description: NMFS, in coordination with the New England and Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Councils), is soliciting Monkfish research proposals to utilize monkfish RSA Days At Sea (DAS) that has been set-aside by the Councils to fund monkfish research endeavors through the 2018/2019 Monkfish Research Set-Aside Program. No

federal funds are provided for research under this notification. Rather, proceeds generated from the sale of RSA DAS will be used to fund research activities and compensate vessels that participate in research activities and/or harvest set-aside quota.

Projects funded under the Monkfish RSA Program must enhance the knowledge of the monkfish fishery resource or contribute to the body of information on which monkfish management decisions are made. Priority will be given to monkfish research proposals that investigate research priorities identified by both the Councils, which are detailed under the Program Priorities section of this announcement.

Applicants need to be aware that vessels operating under an Exempted Fishing Permit or conducting compensation fishing must report each trip in accordance with the instructions provided by NMFS. Reports may be required via vessel monitoring system trip reports, electronic vessel trip reports, web-based trip reports, and/or telephone-based trip reports. NMFS may require that vessels use technologies not currently mandated in the monkfish fishery, such as electronic vessel trip reports. If a vessel is unable to meet the reporting requirements, it will be ineligible to participate in compensation fishing. Non-compliance with reporting requirements is a cause for revoking compensation fishing privileges, and not awarding future NOAA projects.

FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Program Objective

Amendment 2 to the Monkfish Fishery Management Plan (FMP) established the Monkfish RSA Program, which sets-aside 500 monkfish DAS annually from the total number of monkfish DAS allocated to limited access monkfish vessels, to address monkfish research priorities identified by the Councils. NMFS, in coordination with the Councils, is soliciting proposals for monkfish research to be conducted under the 2018/2019 Monkfish RSA Program. DAS will be awarded to successful applicants.

B. Program Priorities

Projects funded under an RSA DAS award must enhance understanding of the monkfish fishery resource or contribute to the body of information on which management decisions are made. NMFS and the Councils will give priority to funding research proposals in the following areas. The priorities are listed in order of importance.

2018/2019 Monkfish RSA Program Research Needs and Priorities:

1. Research on monkfish life history focusing on: (a) age and growth, (b) longevity, (c) reproduction and (d) natural mortality;
2. Studies of monkfish stock structure/stock identification and implications for stock assessment and fisheries management;
3. Monkfish migration patterns focusing on: (a) short- and long-term movements with respect to management areas and off-shelf movements, and, (b) habitat use;
4. Research concerning trophic interactions of monkfish with other species;
5. Cooperative research surveys to supplement current monkfish survey coverage;
6. Research concerning bycatch and discard mortality focusing on: (a) Target species (e.g., monkfish or Northeast multispecies), and (b) non-target species (e.g., monkfish captured in other fisheries, or skate captured in the monkfish fishery);
7. Trawl and gillnet gear studies focusing on: (a) Size and/or species selectivity, and, (b)

bycatch reduction, including reducing bycatch of and interactions with protected species in the monkfish fishery.

C. Program Authority

Statutory authority for this program is found under sections 303(b)(11), 402(e), and 404(c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, 16 U.S.C. 1853(b)(11), 16 U.S.C. 1881a(e), and 16 U.S.C. 1881c(c), respectively. The Monkfish RSA Program was established by Amendment 2 to the Monkfish FMP, (70 FR 21927, April 28, 2005), and implementing regulations at 50 CFR 648.92(c).

II. Award Information

A. Funding Availability

DAS will be awarded to successful applicants. No Federal funds are provided for research under this notification. Funds generated from landings harvested and sold under the Monkfish RSA Program shall be used to cover the cost of research activities, including vessel costs. For example, the funds may be used to pay for gear modifications, monitoring equipment, the salaries of research personnel, or vessel operation costs. The Federal Government is not liable for any costs incurred by the researcher or vessel owner should the sale of catch not fully reimburse the researcher or vessel owner for their expenses. Any additional funds generated through the sale of set-aside landings, above the cost of the research activities, shall be retained by the vessel owner as compensation for the use of his/her vessel.

To apply for RSA DAS, applicants must submit a budget that is based on funds necessary to execute the research plan and funds necessary to compensate vessel owners using RSA DAS. Upon project selection, NMFS will negotiate with successful applicants on the specific RSA DAS award. Projects will be selected based on technical merit, management relevance, and responsiveness to Council research priorities, although additional factors such as individual project needs and cost effectiveness may be considered during negotiations. NMFS will establish a common monkfish RSA DAS value and monkfish price estimate, based on the best and most recent data available at the time of negotiations, to determine the amount of set-aside necessary to cover research and compensation fishing expenses.

B. Project/Award Period

The research project may encompass all or part of the 2018 and 2019 monkfish fishing

years (May 1, 2018 through April 30, 2020). Multi-year grant awards will be considered under this announcement.

C. Type of Funding Instrument

Proposals selected for funding will be funded through a grant or cooperative agreement depending upon the amount of collaboration, participation, or involvement by NOAA in the management of the project. Examples of substantial involvement may include, but are not limited to, proposals for collaboration between NOAA scientists and a recipient scientist. Funding for contractual arrangements for services or products for delivery to NOAA is not available under this notice.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

1. Eligible applicants include, but are not limited to, institutions of higher education, hospitals, other nonprofits, commercial organizations, individuals, state, local, and Native American tribal governments. Federal agencies and institutions are not eligible to receive Federal assistance under this notice. Additionally, employees of any Federal agency or Regional Fishery Management Council, as well as Council Members, are ineligible to submit an application under this program.

2. DOC/NOAA supports cultural and gender diversity and encourages women and minority individuals and groups to submit applications to the RSA program. In addition, DOC/NOAA is strongly committed to broadening the participation of historically black colleges and universities, Hispanic serving institutions, tribal colleges and universities, and institutions that work in underserved areas. DOC/NOAA encourages proposals involving any of the above institutions.

3. DOC/NOAA encourages applications from members of the fishing community and applications that involve fishing community cooperation and participation.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

None required.

C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility

1. Research proposals submitted under the 2018/2019 Monkfish RSA Program must be received within the application submission period to be eligible for consideration.

2. Proposals for different and distinct projects must be submitted separately in accordance with the format requirements in Section IV.B. Multiple stand-alone projects in the same proposal will not be accepted.

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Address to Request Application Package

Application information is available at <http://www.grants.gov>. Electronic copies of the Standard Forms for submission of research proposals may be found on the Internet in a PDF (Portable Document Format) version at <http://www.ago.noaa.gov/acquisition/standard.html>. Delays may be experienced when registering with grants.gov near the end of a solicitation period. Therefore, NOAA strongly recommends that you do not wait until the application deadline date to begin the application process through grants.gov.

Applicants without Internet access may contact Cheryl Corbett, NMFS, Northeast Fisheries Science Center, 166 Water Street, Woods Hole, MA 02543, by phone 508-495-2070, fax 508-495-2004, or email cheryl.corbett@noaa.gov. To apply for this NOAA Federal Funding Opportunity, go to <http://www.grants.gov>, and use the following funding opportunity #: NOAA-NMFS-NEFSC-2018-2005338.

B. Content and Form of Application

Should a recipient wish to include a coversheet with his/her proposal, the coversheet should summarize key information already contained in detail within the proposal. Such information might include, for example, the program name, date, applicant name, project title, project duration, principal investigator(s), program priorities addressed, pounds requested, and funds requested, and funds requested broken down by research, compensation, and total value. Applications must adhere to the provision under "Applications" and the nine requirements under "Required Elements" by the application deadline. Failure to follow these provisions will result in proposals being returned to the applicant without review.

1. Applications

a. Applications submitted to the 2017/2018 Monkfish RSA Program must include a Standard Form 424 (Application for Federal Assistance), including a detailed budget using Standard Form 424A, (Budget Information--Non-Construction Programs), Standard Form 424B (Assurances--Non-Construction Programs), Commerce Department Form CD-511, (Certification Regarding Lobbying), and if applicable, Standard Form SF-LLL (Disclosure

of Lobbying Activities). These forms are available at <http://www.grants.gov>. These forms should be submitted through the Grants Online website. Applicants submitting hard copy must include one signed original and two signed unbound copies of the application (including supporting information).

b. The Standard Form SF424 must include the estimated monetary value of the entire project, including costs of compensation fishing and research project costs. This value must be recorded under item 18. Estimated Funding (e) "Other" on the SF424.

c. The Standard Form SF424A must report the total value under "Non-Federal."

d. Applicants must identify the specific research priority or priorities to which they are responding. If the proposal addresses more than one priority, it should list the priority that most closely reflects the objectives of the proposal first. Each application must address only one research investigation. If an application does not fulfill a priority category, it must be clearly stated in the application. Applicants should not assume prior knowledge on the part of NMFS as to the relative merits of the project described in the application.

2. Required Elements Proposals should be limited to 12 pages, excluding item "e" below. The format may vary, but must include:

a. A narrative project description to include project goals, and objectives. Funding objectives should be simple and understandable; as specific and quantitative as possible; clear as to the "what and when," but avoiding the "how and why;" and attainable within the time, funding, and resources available. Proposals should be accomplishment oriented and identify specific performance measures, describing how investigators foresee research results being used in the management and/or science arena to enhance the understanding of the scallop resource or contributing to the body of information on which management decisions are made (see Section I.B.). The main body of the narrative should be a clear statement of the work to be undertaken and include: (1) Project design and management, including who is responsible, expected products, and participants other than applicant; (2) project year, or years, including the duration (starting on the first day of the month and ending on the last day of the month); (3) names and affiliations of the principal investigator(s) (PI); (4) contribution and relevance of the proposed work; and (5) a summary of the existing state of knowledge related to the project;

b. A detailed budget, including a description of the funds needed to execute the research plan and compensate vessels that harvest set-aside quota. The budget must include a breakdown of research costs including labor, vessel contracts, equipment, supplies, and overhead, as

applicable. The proposal must state how the proceeds from the sale of compensation fishing activities, including those derived from incidental catch, will be divided between the vessel and applicant. Proposals must provide a description of the safeguards that will be used to ensure that the set-aside award will not be exceeded;

c. A list of any Federal regulations that the applicant needs to have waived and a brief justification for such a waiver;

d. Each proposal must identify the activities for the vessel(s) participating in the project, including research and compensation fishing activities. The applicant should differentiate between fishing industry partners that would participate in the project, if funded, and those where no such agreement exists (e.g., previous partners). Only vessel(s) that will participate in the study should be listed in the proposal;

e. Supporting documents, including resumes, letters of intent for vessels to participate in research activities, and any relevant contracts; and

f. As part of this application process, questions from The Environmental Compliance Questionnaire for NOAA Federal Financial Assistance Applicants, OMB Approval Number 0648-0538, must be answered and submitted with the application. This form is located at <http://www.nepa.noaa.gov>. Failure to complete all of the questions with current and relevant information will result in the application being considered incomplete.

C. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)

To enable the use of a universal identifier and to enhance the quality of information available to the public as required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006, to the extent applicable, any proposal awarded in response to this announcement will be required to use the System For Award Management (SAM; available online at: <https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/##11>) and Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System and be subject to reporting requirements, as identified in Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidance published at 2 CFR Parts 25 and 170 (available online at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/browse/collectionCfr.action?collectionCode=CFR>).

D. Submission Dates and Times

Full proposals must be received and validated by Grants.gov on or before 5 p.m. EST on Thursday, December 21, 2017. Please note: Validation or rejection of your application by Grants.gov may take up to 2 business days after submission. Please consider this process in developing your submission timeline. If an applicant does not have Internet access, hard copy proposals will be accepted, and date recorded when they are received in the program

office. Electronic or hard copies received after the deadline will not be considered, and hard copy applications will be returned to the sender. Mark hard copy proposals "Attention-2018/2019 Monkfish Research Set Aside Program."

E. Intergovernmental Review

Applicants will need to determine if their State participates in the intergovernmental review process. This information can be found at the following website: www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc. This information will assist applicants in providing either a Yes or No response to Item 16 of the Application Form, SF-424, entitled "Application for Federal Assistance."

F. Funding Restrictions

1. The research project may encompass all or part of the 2018 and 2019 monkfish fishing years (May 1, 2018 through April 30, 2019, and May 1, 2019 through April 30, 2020, respectively). Multi-year grant awards may be approved under this announcement. If a multi-year grant award is approved, the research DAS available under subsequent RSA solicitations will be adjusted accordingly. Proposals to fund research started before final approval of the project for RSA DAS awards are eligible for consideration, but any project expense incurred prior to the final determination is done solely at the researcher's risk.

2. Set-aside DAS awarded under this competition must be harvested by the end of April 2019 or 2020, as determined by the fishing year from which the award was derived. If a successful applicant is unable to harvest the entire set-aside award before the end of the monkfish fishing year, the applicant may request that the unused RSA award be carried forward into the subsequent fishing year.

3. The Federal Government shall not be liable for any costs incurred in the conduct of the project. Any additional funds generated through the sale of set-aside landings above the costs of the research activities, shall be retained by the vessel owner as compensation for the use of his/her vessel.

G. Other Submission Requirements

1. Applications should be submitted through <http://www.grants.gov>. If an applicant does not have Internet access, hard copies should be sent to, NMFS, Northeast Fisheries Science Center, 166 Water Street, Woods Hole, MA 02543. Mark hard copy proposals "Attention 2018/2019 Monkfish Research Set Aside Program."

2. NOAA employees (whether full-time, part-time, or intermittent) are not permitted to assist

in the preparation of an application, except that staff may provide information on program goals, funding priorities, application procedures, and completion of application forms. Because this is a competitive program, NMFS and NOAA employees will not provide assistance in conceptualizing, developing, or structuring proposals, or write letters of support for an application. However, the Council or NMFS contact person may provide assistance to researchers who are seeking vessels to participate in research projects.

3. NOAA must analyze the potential environmental impacts, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), for applicant projects or proposals that are seeking NOAA federal assistance opportunities, including special fishing privileges. The provisions of the Monkfish RSA Program, and the associated 2018 and 2019 sub-ACLs were considered under the Environmental Impact Statement for Amendment 15, and will be considered under the Environmental Assessment for Framework 29. Applications that propose research that is not within the scope of the NEPA analysis for these management actions may require the applicant to provide additional information that will serve as the basis for any further analyses.

4. Permits and Approvals

a. If field research will occur in state or federal waters, investigators must secure the appropriate vessel documentation, as determined by the Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office, Sustainable Fisheries Division. Such documentation may include a Letter of Acknowledgment, Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP), Exempted Educational Activity Authorization, or Temporary Possession Letter of Authorization. Investigators will be notified if there is no required or recommended research specific vessel documentation. In order to assist NMFS in determining whether or not the proposed research would require a permit, researchers should briefly address the following:

- i. Location and Time of Year - specific time of year and areas where fishing will occur (e.g., coordinates, 10-minute squares, closed areas; include map if possible);
- ii. Gear Type, Including Mesh Size or gear modification (trawl; pot; gillnet; dredge; acoustic gear, including frequency and amplitude);
- iii. Fishing Effort (number of vessels, number of tows, length of tows, number of pots, duration of tended gear, sampling frequency, etc.);
- iv. Catch - estimated species composition and amount (directed catch and bycatch);

- b. If an exemption from Federal regulations is proposed, a list of the specific regulations to be exempted and a brief justification for each regulation to be exempted must be included. Should an applicant submit a request for an EFP to NMFS, the completed application should be received by NMFS at least 60 days before the requested start date of the proposed research to allow for additional review and analysis.
- c. Successful applicants must obtain compensation fishing permits from NMFS prior to initiating compensation fishing.
- d. Grant recipients and partnering vessel owners and operators must adhere to compensation fishing permit and exempted fishing permit terms and conditions. Failure to do so may result in the revocation of RSA compensation fishing and exempted fishing privileges for the remainder of the project period.
- e. Projects may not have more than 50 vessels authorized to conduct compensation fishing at any given time, unless sufficient rationale can demonstrate that more than 50 vessels are needed. In addition, principal investigators and project coordinators should be aware that it may take NMFS up to 4 weeks to process requests to revise the list of vessels that are authorized to conduct compensation fishing.
- f. Successful applicants will be required to submit project results in electronic form in accordance with data collection protocols of the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) and/or other data base formats as may be required by NMFS.

To apply, please go to <http://www.grants.gov>, and use the following Federal Funding Opportunity #NOAA-NMFS-NEFSC-2018-2005338. Applicants without Internet access may contact Cheryl Corbett, NMFS, Northeast Fisheries Science Center, 166 Water Street, Woods Hole, MA 02543, phone 508-495-2070, fax 508-495-2004, or email cheryl.corbett@noaa.gov.

V. Application Review Information

A. Evaluation Criteria

NMFS will solicit written technical evaluations from three or more federal and public/private sector experts to determine the technical merit of the proposal and to provide a rank score of the project based on the evaluation criteria.

1. Importance and/or relevance and applicability of the proposed project: This criterion ascertains whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and/or relevance to NOAA,

Federal, regional, state, or local activities. Applicants should provide a clear definition of the problem, need, issue, or hypothesis to be addressed. The proposal should describe its relevance to RSA program priorities. If not directly related to priorities listed in this solicitation, applicants should provide justification why the proposed project should be considered. (20 points)

2. Technical/scientific merit: This criterion assesses whether the approach is technically sound and/or innovative, if the methods are appropriate, and whether there are clear project goals and objectives. Special emphasis will be given to proposals that foster and improve cooperative interactions with the fishing industry, other research organizations conducting monkfish research, NMFS, and other stakeholders. A clear description of the project design, including a detailed description of field and laboratory work, and analysis methods, should be provided. The time frame for utilizing research DAS and conducting the proposed research should be clearly specified. Activities that take place over a wider versus narrower geographical range, where appropriate, are preferred. (30 points)

3. Overall qualifications of the project: This criterion assesses whether the applicant, and team members, possess the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project. This includes demonstration of support, cooperation and/or collaboration with the fishing industry, and qualifications/experience of project participants. (15 points)

4. Project costs: This criterion evaluates the budget to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time frame. Cost-effectiveness of the project is considered. (25 points)

5. Outreach and education: This criterion assesses whether the project involves a focused and effective education and outreach strategy regarding NOAA's mission to protect the Nation's natural resources. This includes identification of anticipated benefits, potential users, likelihood of success, and methods of disseminating results. (10 points)

B. Review and Selection Process

In addition to the technical evaluation as described above, NMFS, in consultation with the Council, will convene a management review panel, including Council members and monkfish fishery experts, to review and individually critique the scored proposals to enhance NOAA's understanding of the proposals as they relate to the program priorities enumerated in Section I.B. above. Applicants may be required, in consultation with NMFS, to further refine/modify the study methodology as a condition of project approval. No consensus recommendations will be made by the management review panel.

C. Selection Factors

The program officer will make recommendations to the Selecting Official based on technical ranking, management panelist support, and responsiveness to program priorities. The Selecting Official may also consider one or more of the following factors:

1. Availability of funding.
2. Balance/distribution of funds:
 - a. Geographically
 - b. By type of institutions
 - c. By type of partners
 - d. By research areas
 - e. By project types
3. Whether this project duplicates other projects funded or considered for funding by NOAA or other Federal agencies.
4. Program priorities and policy factors.
5. Applicant's prior award performance
6. Partnerships and/or Participation of targeted groups.
7. Adequacy of information necessary to conduct a NEPA analysis and determination.

Key program policy factors (see 4 above) to be considered by the Selecting Official are: (1) The time of year the research activities are to be conducted; (2) the ability of the proposal to meet the applicable experimental fishing requirements; (3) redundancy of research projects; and (4) logistical concerns. Therefore, the highest scoring projects may not necessarily be selected for an award. All approved research must be conducted in accordance with provisions approved by NOAA. Unsuccessful applications will be returned to the submitter. Successful applications will be incorporated into the award document.

D. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

Award announcements are expected 6 months following the deadline for this announcement.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

Successful applicants will receive notification that their applications have been recommended for selection to the NOAA Grants Management Division. This notification is not an authorization to begin project operations. Official notification of selection, signed by the NOAA Grants Officer, is the authorizing document that allows a project to begin. Notifications will be issued to the Authorizing Official and the Principal Investigator of the project. Successful and unsuccessful applicants will be notified electronically.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

1. The Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements contained in the Federal Register Notice of December 30, 2014 (79 FR 78390), are applicable to this solicitation and may be accessed online at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2014-12-30/pdf/2014-30297.pdf>.

2. Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements. Through 2 C.F.R. § 1327.101, the Department of Commerce adopted Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards at 2 C.F.R. Part 200, which apply to awards in this program. Refer to <http://go.usa.gov/SBYh> and <http://go.usa.gov/SBg4>.

3. Department of Commerce Standard Terms and Conditions. Successful applicants who accept a NOAA award under this solicitation will be bound by Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions. This document will be provided in the award package in NOAA's Grants Online system at <http://www.ago.noaa.gov> and at <http://go.usa.gov/hKbj>.

4. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). NOAA must analyze the potential environmental impacts, as required by NEPA, for applicant projects or proposals which are seeking NOAA federal funding opportunities. Detailed information on NOAA compliance with NEPA can be found at the following NOAA NEPA website: <http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/>, including our NOAA Administrative Order 216-6 for NEPA, http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/NAO216_6.pdf, and the Council on Environmental Quality implementation regulations, http://energy.gov/sites/prod/files/NEPA-40CFR1500_1508.pdf. Consequently, as part of an applicant's package, and under their description of their program activities, applicants are required to provide detailed information on the activities to be conducted, locations, sites, species and habitat to be affected, possible construction activities, and any environmental concerns that may exist (e.g., the use and disposal of hazardous or toxic chemicals, introduction of non- indigenous species, impacts to endangered and

threatened species, aquaculture projects, and impacts to coral reef systems). In addition to providing specific information that will serve as the basis for any required impact analyses, applicants may also be requested to assist NOAA in drafting an environmental assessment, if NOAA determines an assessment is required. Applicants will also be required to cooperate with NOAA in identifying feasible measures to reduce or avoid any identified adverse environmental impacts of their proposal. Failure to do so shall be grounds for not selecting an application. In some cases if additional information is required after an application is selected, funds can be withheld by the Grants Officer under a special award condition requiring the recipient to submit additional environmental compliance information sufficient to enable NOAA to make an assessment on any impacts that a project may have on the environment.

5. Review of Risk. After applications are proposed for funding by the Selecting Official, the Grants Office will perform administrative reviews, including an assessment of risk posed by the applicant under 2 C.F.R. 200.205. These may include assessments of the financial stability of an applicant and the quality of the applicant's management systems, history of performance, and the applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on non-Federal entities. Special conditions that address any risks determined to exist may be applied. Applicants may submit comments to the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS) about any information included in the system about their organization for consideration by the awarding agency.

6. DATA SHARING (up to 2 pages)

a. Environmental data and information collected or created under NOAA grants or cooperative agreements must be made discoverable by and accessible to the general public, in a timely fashion (typically within two years), free of charge or at no more than the cost of reproduction, unless an exemption is granted by the NOAA Program. Data should be available in at least one machine-readable format, preferably a widely-used or open-standard format, and should also be accompanied by machine-readable documentation (metadata), preferably based on widely used or international standards.

b. Proposals submitted in response to this Announcement must include a Data Management Plan of up to two pages describing how these requirements will be satisfied. The Data Management Plan should be aligned with the Data Management Guidance provided by NOAA in the Announcement. The contents of the Data Management Plan (or absence thereof), and past performance regarding such plans, will be considered as part of proposal review. A typical plan should include descriptions of the types of environmental data and information expected to be created during the course of the project; the tentative date by

which data will be shared; the standards to be used for data/metadata format and content; methods for providing data access; approximate total volume of data to be collected; and prior experience in making such data accessible. The costs of data preparation, accessibility, or archiving may be included in the proposal budget unless otherwise stated in the Guidance. Accepted submission of data to the NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI) is one way to satisfy data sharing requirements; however, NCEI is not obligated to accept all submissions and may charge a fee, particularly for large or unusual datasets.

c. NOAA may, at its own discretion, make publicly visible the Data Management Plan from funded proposals, or use information from the Data Management Plan to produce a formal metadata record and include that metadata in a Catalog to indicate the pending availability of new data.

d. Proposal submitters are hereby advised that the final pre-publication manuscripts of scholarly articles produced entirely or primarily with NOAA funding will be required to be submitted to NOAA Institutional Repository after acceptance, and no later than upon publication. Such manuscripts shall be made publicly available by NOAA one year after publication by the journal.

C. Reporting

1. Recipients will be required to submit the following performance (technical) reports. These reports are to be submitted electronically unless the recipient does not have Internet access, in which case hard copy submissions will be accepted.

2. Performance or progress reports are required to be submitted to the NOAA Program Officer semi-annually. These reports will be due no later than 30 days following the end of each 6-month period from the start date of an award. The final report is due no later than 90 days after the award expiration. The format of the final report may vary, but the report must contain:

- a. A brief summary of the completion report (200-word or less abstract);
- b. A description of the issue/problem that was addressed;
- c. A detailed description of methods of data collection and analyses;
- d. A discussion of results and any relevant conclusions presented in a format that is understandable to a non-technical audience. This should include benefits and/or contributions to management decision-making;

- e. A list of entities, firms, or organizations that actually performed the work, and a description of how the work was accomplished;
- f. A detailed accounting of all fish caught during research activities (including catch by vessels operating under a Letter of Acknowledgment), including weight by species, and disposition of catch;
- g. A detailed accounting for compensation fishing activities with each progress report and the final report. Compensation fishing reports should be provided in an electronic spreadsheet, and should include the following information: Vessel name, vessel permit number, dates of RSA compensating fishing trips, RSA DAS used, RSA monkfish pounds landed, funds provided to grant recipient. In addition, for the final report, the grant recipient must provide a final accounting of all funds derived from compensation fishing or the sale of RSA DAS, and address the following questions:
1. If more funds were generated than the total amount of funds identified in the proposed budget, provide a detailed description for how those funds were used, or will be used, or
 2. If fewer funds were generated than the total amount of funds identified in the proposed budget, describe why the shortfall occurred, and if it affected project proposed goals and objectives;
- h. Principal investigators should, when possible, make any report or publication that details research findings accessible to the general public. Where appropriate, data generated from the research must be formatted in a manner consistent with NMFS and ACCSP databases. A copy of this format is available from NMFS.
- i. Principal Investigators should anticipate being requested to provide an oral presentation to the Council's Monkfish Committee, Advisory Panel, or Plan Development Team on the results of their research.
- j. Data from research projects must be submitted in electronic format with appropriate documentation to NMFS, as requested.
3. Vessels operating under an Exempted Fishing Permit or conducting compensation fishing must report each trip in accordance with the instructions provided by NMFS. Reports may be required via vessel monitoring system trip reports, electronic vessel trip reports, web-based trip reports, and/or telephone-based trip reports. NMFS may require that vessels use

technologies not currently mandated in the monkfish fishery, such as electronic vessel trip reports. If a vessel is unable to meet the reporting requirements, it will be ineligible to participate in compensation fishing. Non-compliance with reporting requirements is a cause for revoking compensation fishing privileges, and not awarding future NOAA projects.

VII. Agency Contacts

Information may be obtained from Thomas Nies, New England Fishery Management Council, Executive Director by phone (978)465-0492 (ext. 113), or by email at tries@nefmc.org; or from Cheryl Corbett, NMFS, Northeast Fisheries Science Center, phone (508) 495-2070, fax (508) 495-2004, or email cheryl.corbett@noaa.gov for grant related questions; or from Ryan Silva, NMFS, Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office, Cooperative Research Liaison, phone (978) 281-9326, fax (978) 281-9326, email ryan.silva@noaa.gov for compensation fishing/regulatory questions.

VIII. Other Information

1. **Limitation of Liability.** In no event will NOAA or the Department of Commerce be responsible for proposal preparation costs. Publication of this announcement does not oblige NOAA to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds.
2. **Indirect Cost Rate.** An applicant with a current Federally-approved indirect cost rate that is proposing indirect costs in its budget should include a copy of the approved rate with its application. If an applicant has not previously 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 Modified Total Direct Costs (as allowable under 2 C.F.R. §200.414). The negotiation and approval of a rate is subject to the procedures required by NOAA and the Department of Commerce Standard Terms and Conditions. The NOAA contact for indirect or facilities and administrative costs is: Lamar Revis, Grants Officer, NOAA Grants Management Division, 1325 East West Highway, 9th Floor, Silver Spring, MD 20910, or lamar.revis@noaa.gov.
3. **Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).** In the event that an application contains information or data that you do not want disclosed prior to award for purposes other than the evaluation of the application, mark each page containing such information or data with the words "Privileged, Confidential, Commercial, or Financial Information - Limited Use" at the top of the page to assist NOAA in making disclosure determinations. DOC regulations implementing the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C 552, are found at 15 C.F.R. Part 4, which sets forth rules for DOC to make requested materials, information, and records

publicly available under FOIA. The contents of funded applications may be subject to requests for release under the FOIA. Based on the information provided by the applicant, the confidentiality of the content of funded applications will be maintained to the maximum extent permitted by law.

4. Unpaid Tax Liability. In accordance with Section 523 of Division B and Sections 744 and 745 of Division E of the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015 (Pub. L. 113-235) or a future public law, an authorized representative of the selected applicant(s) will be required to provide certain pre-award representations regarding federal felony and federal criminal tax convictions, unpaid federal tax assessments, and delinquent federal tax returns. The form must be completed and submitted with grant applications for: (a) all for-profit and non-profit organization applicants (Part I, and if required, Part II); and (b) all non-Federal entity applicants anticipating receipt of \$5 million or more in the current Federal Fiscal Year appropriated funding (Part II only). The form can be found at <http://www.ago.noaa.gov/grants/forms.html>.