

NWX-DOC/NOAA/CONFERENCING (US)

Moderator: Jaime Frungillo
November 29, 2017
1:00pm CT

Coordinator: Welcome and thank you for standing by. At this time, all participants are in listen-only mode. During the question and answer session you may press star 1 on your touchtone phone if you would like to ask a question.

Today's conference is being recorded. If you have any objections, you may disconnect at this time.

Now I would like to turn the meeting over to Carrie McDougall.

Carrie McDougall: Thank you. Welcome to the November 29, 2017 informational teleconference for NOAA's 2018 Environmental Literacy Grants Program. As you heard, I am Carrie McDougall, one of the federal program officers for this opportunity. And I'm joined by Sarah.

Sarah Schoedinger: Hi. I'm Sarah Schoedinger, also a federal program officer with this funding opportunity.

Carrie McDougall: And also part of our team who you may hear chime in today during the Q&A are John McLaughlin, Christopher Nelson, Jaime Frungillo, and Maggie Allen.

As you heard the Operator state, this teleconference is being transcribed. And we will post the transcription to our Frequently Asked Questions website by December 1. If you're interested, the teleconference that we held two weeks ago - last week, sorry...

Sarah Schoedinger: The 21st.

Carrie McDougall: ...is already posted on our FAQ. So if you want to look at the transcript from the previous telecon, it's available. These teleconferences are identical in terms of the information we're presenting in the first portion of the call. The difference would be in the Q&A section where different people are asking different questions. So there may be a little difference between the transcripts on the two dates in the Q&A section.

So what we'll be doing today is beginning with an overview of the funding opportunity for the 2018 Environmental Literacy Grants competition, and then we'll take your questions. So if any questions occur to you while we're reviewing the funding opportunity, please note them and you'll have an opportunity at the end to ask those questions.

You're on mute, as the Operator indicated, and then we'll turn it over to you and you'll light up in a virtual queue to ask your question when we get to that portion.

So what I'd like to make sure you all have in front of you right now is a copy of the funding opportunity titled Building the Environmental Literacy of K-12 Students and the Public for Community Resilience. This is what we will be reviewing in fine detail today. So it'd be great if you had a copy of that either on your computer or printed in front of you. If you don't have a copy, it's worthwhile taking the time to get one.

So the way you get a copy of the funding opportunity is you go to an internet browser. Go to www.grants.gov and in the upper right corner you're going to see a Search Grants tab - sorry, in the upper left corner. And then there are three basic search criteria on the Search Grants tab. You can use any of these criteria to find the current opportunity.

For example, you can type Environmental Literacy into the keyword area. Or you can type 11.008 into the CFDA number. Or you can click on the funding opportunity number and type a very long set of characters into that field, which is NOAA – S as in Sam E C as in cat – OED as in David – 2018 - 2 0 0 5 4 5 5.

Once you click on the funding opportunity, you will be led to a page called View Grant Opportunity. And here you can see all the nitty gritty details. You can get the application package for the grant opportunity and you can see the funding opportunity.

To get the funding opportunity, you want to click on the tab called Related Documents. And this will lead to a table with a couple of links. You click on Full Announcement and then down below you'll see a PDF and that's the full funding opportunity. That's the PDF you want to have open and what we'll be reviewing today.

Now, please note if we do have to make any modifications to the funding opportunity, this document I've just referenced, or if we need to change the deadline, if something happens that makes us need to extend the deadline, we will post those updates to grants.gov. And so what we recommend is you sign up for updates associated with this funding opportunity so that you will

automatically get an email from grants.gov if anything gets posted to this site in terms of an updated funding opportunity or a change in deadline.

It's unusual and we don't anticipate posting anything, but just in case it's a good idea to sign up for those emails.

So you should have the announcement of federal funding opportunity. We call it the FFO for short. That's the document you want to have in front of you. And we're going to go through about a third or maybe even half of the document today. It's a long document -- 38 pages. We're not going to go over everything today, but you need to. You need to read every page of the funding opportunity. If you're going to apply even only to the pre-app section or the pre-app phase, you need to read the whole funding opportunity.

So please make sure you do that. Don't just take the review that we're doing today. You need to go back and read it.

Also I want to bring to your attention that this competition we anticipate having quite a lot of interest. We've already run one of these teleconferences and we had nearly 200 people on the call. We probably have about that number on the call today.

The last time we ran this competition in 2016, we received 170 applications and we funded seven awards. So, you know, a 4% fund rate. So we're talking very, very competitive here. So just keep that in mind. If you feel like your project is maybe on the cusp, you know, it may not be worth your while to apply. You really want to make sure your project is well aligned with the goal of this funding opportunity and the details that we're going to get into today.

Okay. So looking at the federal funding opportunity, on page one you see a table of contents that gives you a sense of what the document comprises. And then the next few pages are basically an abstract or an executive summary of the entire funding opportunity. So I'm going to skip through that, because it's just summarizing what we're going to get into in more detail.

And I'm going to page five. The top of the page says Full Announcement Text. So this is where we really start digging into the funding opportunity. So the first section is called the funding opportunity description and the program objective.

So the first paragraph here talks about our program in general -- the environmental literacy grants program. And it talks about how we're aligned with NOAA's mission. Our education grant supports NOAA's mission of client services stewardship and how a lot of what NOAA does is focused on helping people prepare and respond appropriately to extreme weather and climate change. And that's what these grants are really about is the education that supports that.

Since 2015, we've been focused on specifically resilience education, which you will hopefully get a sense of that what means as we go through the funding opportunity today.

And the next paragraph on page five starts to set out how what it is that we're facing as a nation in terms of the environmental hazards we're looking at. What does it mean to be resilient? What does it mean to be resilient at a community level? And how education can begin to support those.

On page six, the top paragraph talks about some of the level of natural disasters that our country has been facing. I think 2017 really highlighted the

need for this type of support. We saw significant hurricanes, flooding, fires in the west, major heat waves throughout the United States. It just - we continue to sense the urgency of becoming resilient as a community here.

So the top paragraph here lays out some of the stats that show how these types of billion-dollar disasters have been increasing in the last 20 years and even more dramatically in the last five years.

So these types of events really are putting a lot of stress on our infrastructure, our ecological systems, and us humans who live in these places that are being impacted. So it's important for us to become resilient as individuals and as communities, and education can help us all achieve that resilience.

So the goal of this funding opportunity -- which is sort of at the bottom of page six -- is to support the education of K-12 students and the public so they are knowledgeable of the ways in which their community can become more resilient to extreme weather events and or other environmental hazards and become involved in achieving that resilience.

So that's a really central sentence. That's probably the most important sentence in this entire publication. If you're thinking of submitting a project that isn't described by that goal, probably not worth your time submitting it because we're really only going to be selecting projects that are really working toward achieving that goal.

The next section that begins on the bottom of page six is called Description of Project Activities. This section of the funding opportunity -- which spans about three pages -- is really, really important. It lays out the kinds of projects we are interested in funding. So you really want to make sure you read this and read it multiple times so that you make sure you're understanding what it

says here. So we're going to spend a bit of time going through the details of this section because it's so important.

So somewhat a restating of the goals -- projects should build the environmental literacy necessary for communities to become more resilient to extreme weather and other environmental hazards they face. So note the other environmental factors. It's not just extreme weather. It's other types of hazards. For example, drought or sea level rise, which wouldn't really be considered weather phenomenon. Those would be appropriate hazards to consider.

In order for communities to become more resilient, their members must have the ability to reason about the ways that human and natural systems function and interact, to understand the scientific process and uncertainty, to reason about the ways that people and places are connected to each other across time and space, and to weigh the potential impacts of their decisions systematically.

So what you might notice in that long sentence is that we're really expecting these projects to draw on multiple disciplines. You can hear a reference to geography here, social sciences, ecological and physical sciences, engineering, and economics.

So there are really meant to be fairly holistic projects. So not sort of the traditional earth systems science types of projects that we have funded prior to 2015. These really need to incorporate those other disciplines.

Projects should leverage and incorporate relevant state and local hazard mitigation and or adaptation plans and collaborate with institutions that are involved in efforts to develop or implement those plans.

And we have provided a link here to give you a sense of, to help you in finding out if where you live has existing plans, and if you can't tell how you might go about finding out if there are any hazard mitigation or climate adaptation plans that exist for your area.

So this is a really important part of this funding opportunity. You need to be telling us if you submit a pre-application that you've done your homework -- you've looked. You know if there are any hazard mitigation or climate adaptation plans that address either your neighborhood, your city, your county, or your state.

We want to see - you want to tell us that you've done that analysis and then if so, which ones you think are most relevant to your particular project. That's a really important aspect of whatever you're going to be submitting to us. Okay.

Projects may focus on a single type of environmental hazard or a range of hazards that may impact a community or communities. So for example, a project could focus on St. Louis, Missouri and the threats and vulnerabilities posed by flooding and heat waves -- so that would be two vulnerabilities in a single place. Or a project could focus on multiple communities and how they are all dealing with flooding, for example.

So we are not specifying the number of hazards you need to address or the number of communities that need to be focused on. That's up to you to tell us your rationale for deciding. But we just want to point out that you can do whatever scale you think is appropriate.

Projects will be based on the established scientific evidence about current and future natural hazards and stresses facing communities and should consider

relevant socioeconomic and ecological factors in the targeted geographic areas. So again, we're seeking projects that have an appropriate mix of a very strong science background with an equally strong pedagogical approach.

So if you're on the phone right now and you're more of a science organization and you don't have very knowledgeable educators or people who know how to do education, so might want to seek partners in the education community to come onboard with you.

And then vice versa -- if you're on the phone right now and you're a very strong education group but you maybe don't have the deep science in resilience in climate adaptation, you want to seek partners who will help fill that out for you. We're really looking for that mix of those two things coming together for the best types of projects here.

Projects should engage participants in active learning activities. So some of you may not be familiar with what active learning means, and we have a definition of active learning in the definition section of the funding opportunity a few pages later. I'll just go ahead and just to that right now and read that to you.

Active learning is a process whereby learners engage in activities such as reading, writing, discussion, or problem solving that promote analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of information. Cooperative learning, problem-based learning, the use of case methods and simulations are some approaches that promote active learning.

Other examples of active learning include having interactive discussions, deliberations, or investigations about an issue where participation and simulations for different scenarios and solutions are explored.

So you hopefully are getting the sense of what we mean by active learning here. So for example, what wouldn't be a good example of active learning would be if you're thinking about a project that might be primarily about creating a museum exhibit where people are more passively learning about resilience.

If there isn't an active learning component as the major component of that project, that project probably wouldn't be very competitive. Or if you're thinking about a project that's primarily going to produce something like a movie about resilience, again if there wasn't an active learning component, that would not do as well. So keep that in mind in terms of the ways you're thinking about engaging your target audience, just thinking about if your project is well aligned with the funding opportunity or not.

In addition, projects must utilize NOAA's scientific data, data access tools, data visualizations, and or other physical and intellectual assets available on these topics. So notice the use of the word must utilize here. This is NOAA's funding opportunity and we want to make sure NOAA's excellent resources that are available about predicting future change and dealing with future change are utilized by our grantees.

So make sure you analyze the assets that we've made available on our website and consider how you will use them. And then tell us in your pre-application how you plan to use them.

In order to facilitate the use of NOAA's assets, projects are strongly urged to partner with relevant NOAA entities, offices, programs, et cetera and or NOAA employees and affiliates. And again, we've provided some websites to

help you find partners and individuals if you would like to see about partnerships.

So NOAA's education website is one resource. You might find some assets and other products that might be useful.

And then we have created a specific resilience assets webpage, which we're referencing here. You can take a look at that. That has some NOAA related resources as well as non-NOAA resources that might give you a sense of what resilience is about if you're unfamiliar as well as provide some links to NOAA data sets and things that are specific to resilience.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to review the resilience education projects that were funded by this program since 2015. There are 13 projects that we have funded since 2015. Proposed projects should be informed by the lessons learned by these current grantees. These lessons, as well as information on existing projects, can be found in a recent grantee workshop that we held. We published a report associated with it.

And there's a link here to that workshop report. And you can see what sorts of lessons learned we've been able to cull from the emerging work of our 13 grantees so far.

All right. I'm on the next paragraph sort of three quarters of the way down on page seven. Project topics must relate to NOAA's mission in at least one of the areas of ocean, coastal, great lakes, weather, and climate sciences and stewardship. And should focus on one or more of the goals of NOAA's next generation strategic plan, which are healthy oceans, weather ready nation, climate adaptation and mitigation, and resilient coastal communities and economies.

Our funding opportunity is not restricted to coastal communities. So if you don't live in a coastal community or you're not planning to work in coastal community, that's fine. This funding opportunity is nationwide, and you can work with any community in the United States.

Projects must be implemented in the United States and its territories. So if you're thinking about a project that maybe will be half in Mexico and half in the United States, that project may not do so well relative to projects that are wholly focused in the United States. So keep that in mind. We're not saying you can't work in non-US places, but we're really looking for projects that the vast majority of the impacts will occur within the United States and its territories.

The project descriptions should include a justification of the proposed geographic scale of a project and discussion of the project components that might be applicable to projects in other places. So again, we're not going to tell you the geographic scale at which you should be working. You need to decide what you think is appropriate and tell us what your rationale is for selecting the scale at which you will work. And then you need to do some analysis of how much they think the approach you'll be using might work in other places.

I mean, sure we're interested in doing very locally focused types of projects, but we're also interested in understanding what approaches might work other places. And so we're really seeking to fund models that might be applicable elsewhere. So please make sure you do both in your description of your project. As I said, the scale of the implementation will likely be at the local level, but projects may be implemented in more than one locality.

Applicants are encouraged to review the locations of the projects that are currently underway and the approaches that are being taken by those projects. So there's a link here that will lead you to a list of all of our 13 grantees, so you can get a sense of who they are, what they're doing, and where they're working.

So we are interested in receiving applications from projects that have previously been funded. So if you're wanting to propose an expansion or an enhancement of a previously funded project, we will receive those. Obviously, the requirements of this funding opportunity still apply. And the applicants must explicitly demonstrate the accomplishments of the previously funded award and how the proposed project will significantly improve and or build on the previous award.

I'm on page eight, by the way.

Community foundations are not only good sources of funds, but they also may help partner with you and often serve as conveners for stakeholders to be brought together. So please consider community foundations as partners in your work. And we've provided a link here to help you find community foundations if you're unfamiliar with ones that may be operating in your area.

NOAA also has some other funding opportunities you may not be aware of and we want to help you find the most appropriate funding for your project. So one project is called the Coastal Resilience Grants Program. I don't believe they're going to be offering a competition this year, but they most likely will be next year.

But they offer a similar type of funding. It is only available for coastal communities. And it tends to focus more on capacity building and

professionals who are working in the field of resilience. So if you're looking at a project that's really more about training decision makers, engaging decision makers or emergency managers, that's not appropriate for this funding opportunity but that Coastal Resilience Grants Program, that would be an appropriate project for that program.

Another program if you're more on the education side is B-WET, the Bay Watershed Education and Training Program. That is a program that exists in again coastal regions in the United States. And that program funds locally relevant, authentic experiences, sorry, authentic experiential learning for K-12 audiences through meaningful watershed educational experiences.

So take a look at those programs and see if any of your projects might be better suited to go into those funding opportunities. B-WET has several open solicitations currently.

Okay. Also, another part of NOAA's portfolio that you may want to consider partnering with if you're working in areas that are served by NOAA's Sea Grant College Programs or the National Estuarine Research Reserve or the Coastal Zone Management Program. Those are excellent resources. They may serve as science advisors. They may come onboard as education partners. Please consider them. They're great assets to consider working with on these types of projects.

Finally, another program that is supported by NOAA is called NOAA's Regional Integrated Sciences and Assessment Teams or RISA. These are typically more university based groups and doing a lot of great academic research. But many of these folks are doing research that is squarely related to how we can adapt to climate change and become more resilient.

So please look at that link we have at the bottom of page eight to consider finding additional partners or looking at the recourses that that group makes available through their research. They have some excellent and totally appropriate resources for you to consider.

Okay. I'm on the top of page nine -- target audiences. So the target audiences for this funding opportunity are the public, K-12 students, and they also include informal educators such as interpreters, docents, other museum and aquarium staff or other non-profit staff, and formal educators pre- or in service including school administrators.

Higher education -- so anything above 12th grade students are not a target audience. We are not interested in funding undergraduate, college level with the exception of pre-service teachers.

We are also not interested in funding professionals working in the area of community resilience. And this is always an area where we get a lot of questions, because people - there's inevitably groups that are sort of on the cusp of a couple of these target audience groups and so it's not clear whether would you consider this group a yes or a no in terms of target audience.

And sometimes these cases are better handled one on one. But in general, if you're thinking about working with an audience that is in some way involved in implementing resilience as part of their job, that is probably what we would consider a professional working in the area of community resilience.

If there are volunteers, that's getting into really a gray area. So we should probably talk to you one on one about that. But this funding is really meant to fund the general public and K-12 students to build their awareness and ability

to engage in resilience. We're not really interested in educating people who are professionals working in that field already.

There is an interest in projects that reach groups from underserved communities, which are often the most vulnerable to risks associated with extreme weather events and other environmental hazards. You'll notice we don't have a definition. We leave that to you to tell us who is underserved in the community in which you will be working. It may be different for each community. It may be different depending on the hazards you're going to be addressing.

So we don't provide a definition, and that's deliberate. We expect you to tell us this group is underserved and here's why.

There is also an interest in projects that engage children and youth, as their involvement not only benefits them but also their communities. And then we have a paragraph here about why we're interested in children and youth. And you'll see a lot of our existing programs are focused on that already. So make sure you read through that. I'm not going to get into it now so we have more time for your questions.

Bottom of page nine we have a section on project evaluation. All projects should include an evaluation component. However, we don't expect you to flesh that out until if you are invited to the full application phase. So in a pre-application you can put a sentence or two in there about a project evaluation you're planning -- or more if you already know a lot about it -- but we don't really expect to see this section of your project really fleshed out until the full application phase if you make it to that phase.

So this is a section you should still read through it when you're submitting a pre-app so you understand what you're getting into. But I'm not going to get into the details there now.

I'm on the bottom of page ten, award dates and mission goal. So we anticipate making some awards this fiscal year. Our fiscal year ends on September 30, 2018. Projects funded in that fiscal year will have a start date no earlier than October 1, 2018. Sometimes you can propose a start date later than that, though. That would be okay.

And then on Page 11 you'll see the definitions section. You might want to take a look at that because there are certain words that we may be using in a special way different from the way the rest of the world uses them. And this is where you'll go to see what we mean when we say for example environmental data. Okay.

Page 12 has some references. Any articles that we referenced earlier in the publication or anywhere in the publication, this is the section for references. Some of these references -- not to toot our own horn -- but these are really great reports. And if you're really unfamiliar with this field, I highly recommend you read some of these reports that really lay the groundwork for what is resilience and why is it needed.

So that references page section spans pages 12 and 13. And now I'm going to turn it over to my partner Sarah to walk you through the rest.

Sarah Schoedinger: Okay. Thanks, Carrie. So now we're at the top of page 14 in the FFO looking at award information regarding funding availability.

So this fiscal year we anticipate having about \$2 million to make about four to six awards. We do not anticipate running a competition in the next fiscal year. And that's because we anticipate having no increase in funding and hopefully level funding in fiscal year 2019. So because that's all up in the air, we're looking at about \$2 million this year and four to six awards this fiscal year. And hopefully more to come next fiscal year.

The second paragraph talks about how we're expecting applications that are between two and five years in duration. And your funding request -- that would be the federal amount request to NOAA -- must be no less than \$250,000 and no more than \$500,000 for all years of the project. And that amount needs to include both the direct costs as well as the indirect costs for your project.

So what that means is that's a minimum requirement. And we will not entertain or send for review any applications that are requesting less than 250 or more than \$500,000.

We anticipate making our announcement no later than September 30th this fiscal year, so September 30, 2018. And projects under this announcement will have a start date no earlier than the first of October 2018.

As I indicated, our funding is contingent upon final appropriations and final budgetary decisions. And we do not have our budget yet for the fiscal year. Congress hasn't made the final decision on that. So we're still waiting to hear on the final numbers. And that's why everything says that it's anticipated. But based on previous years, we feel it's a pretty good bet.

Onto project and award periods. So two to five years is the required minimum and maximum time for your project so it can be proposed. Start date as I said can start 1 October or later and you may be asked when we get to a

negotiations stage for an award to adjust your start date. This typically occurs when we've had to hold over applications from this year to next fiscal year.

But you do also have the flexibility - you don't have to request a start date of 1 October 2018. We just don't want to see any applications with ones earlier than that because we won't be able to get them awarded in time for the start of the project.

So now I'm at the top of page 15 under type of funding instruments. So please be aware that any award coming out of this competition will be a cooperative agreement. They'll be cooperative agreements because we expect to have substantial involvement from NOAA in the project. And we encourage this because there are so many resilience related tools, data, educational resources, other informational resources that NOAA produces. And we also have a lot of subject matter expertise in this area, as Carrie indicated moments ago.

So we really have found that it works best, projects are most successful when they're not only using the NOAA assets as they must do to receive funding, but they also have a NOAA partner involved i.e. person. So that's the reason for the cooperative agreement and that's what you can expect if your full application ends up being an award.

So now let me talk a little bit about eligibility. Eligible applicants for this funding opportunity are limited to institutions of higher education, K-12 public and independent schools and school systems, and other non-profit organizations. These non-profit organizations may include informal education institutions like museums and aquariums and zoos, but it is not restricted to those three types of informal science education institutions.

We will also entertain applications from state and local government agencies and from Indian tribal governments within the United States and its territories. So the only organizations that are excluded or are not eligible to be applicants and then primary recipients of funding are for-profit organizations, foreign-based institutions, and individuals. But those three types may participate as a project partner; they just can't be the applicant in the lead organization.

Similarly, federal agencies are not eligible to receive federal assistance under this announcement, but they may be project partners as well.

And then the last paragraph in this section I want to draw your attention to it. We strongly encourage that individuals be a PI on only one application. But we understand that and encourage partnering, and so people may be a co-PI or some other kind of advisor or other project personnel on other projects. So we ask that you limit your applications to one person as a PI per application.

We also understand that institutions may submit more than one application. So just because you're at, I don't know, the University of California Los Angeles, we're not expecting that we're going to limit only one application from that institution. Multiple applications can come in.

And then lastly, federal employees may not serve as PIs or co-PIs on any application -- even if they're not seeking funding for their support. But they can be included as key personnel. So keep that in mind as you're thinking about your project idea and who you would want to have on your project team.

Okay. So there is no cost sharing or matching requirements for this funding opportunity. And I'm now going to move on to the top of page 16, which has to do with application submission information.

So first off, we do not accept or handle paper applications anymore. So to find and submit a pre-application and if you're invited a full application, you will need to go to grants.gov. And that address is provided in section 4A under address to request an application package.

Please be aware -- especially if you've never submitted an application to grants.gov before -- that it takes some time to get registered for the site. It's not something that you can do in a day or even a couple days, particularly if you aren't already in the government-wide System for Award Management or SAM. You need to take care of that registration first. That will give you your credentials that then allow you to sign up for an account within grants.gov. And as I understand, it can take several days to establish the grants.gov account.

So please plan accordingly. Even if you are just thinking about sending a pre-application to this funding opportunity, get started on it right away.

And also one thing I will just note in terms of submission, there is usually a two-day turnaround on an application. So once we get close to the deadline, you want to try not to leave it until the last minute because you can always check with us to find out if your application came through, but sometimes it can take up to two days for grants.gov to transfer it to us.

And once you've - if you haven't submitted by the deadline -- which I'll talk about in a moment -- you're kind of out of luck because we have no way of receiving your application if it's late.

I'll just also call your attention to some of the URLs that are in this section. And there's a support email address and phone number. So please understand

that NOAA does not operate grants.gov. That is a government wide system. We don't own it. We don't manage it. And so we're not going to be any help if you have technical issues related to getting registered or submitting an application through grants.gov.

I'm now at the top of page 17. Please note that you need to submit a pre-application and a full application by the deadline -- which we'll talk about in a second if I haven't mentioned it yet -- in order for it to be merit reviewed. We have no way of receiving an application any other way. We will not accept emailed applications. We will not accept paper copies of your grants.gov applications.

It has to come through via grants.gov. It gets the time and a date stamp. The credentials are verified. And that's how we know we have a legitimate application for moving forward.

If you have any additional questions regarding preparing your application, there's a URL here. It's our FAQ page. I would recommend that you bookmark that page and become familiar with it. Right now it's set up to be specific to the pre-application process and it will be updated once that deadline has passed for information about full applications.

One other thing I want to mention, particularly for those of you who may be familiar with competitions we've run in previous years starting back in 2013 and before, we will not be having collaborative applications through this competition. So what that means is projects will be supported through a single award to an institution. And that award may have several sub awards or sub contracts to support the project partners, but we won't have multiple awards supporting a single project.

And then last, I'll note that there is another URL you should bookmark if you haven't found it already. And that's what we call our apply page. And that has a lot of links that we've already talked about, Carrie covered in the front section earlier. You can find all of that on that apply page. So again, that's another URL that you will want to bookmark and be familiar with just like this URL.

Okay. So now I'm going to talk a little bit about the format requirements for pre-applications and full applications. And let me just say up front one of the things that's different this year from the past two years of this resilience education competition is that we will have a pre-application process.

Pre-applications are due December 19th at 11:59pm. And I'll reiterate that later. So that won't be the only time you hear that. But that's the first critical deadline. And that's for the pre-application.

And so in addition to meeting that deadline, it is important that you also meet the format and content requirements for the pre-applications and the full applications. So I'm going to talk a little bit about those. And then you will also want to go back and familiarize yourself with these sections as you're preparing your pre-application.

So, you know, please note under format requirements the, you know, we're looking for things on standard letter-size paper, you know, we need pages to be numbered. Please don't put anything smaller than 11 pt. font so our reviewers and ourselves can read it. And, you know, so adhere to those sort of spacing and font requirements.

The notice here under pre-application format requirements related to scanned documents or forms, we don't need to see any scanned documents or forms.

Your pre-application should consist of an SF 424 -- which is a required form and it's already loaded into grants.gov -- your title page -- which I'm going to describe in a second -- and your project description. And that's it. That's all we're looking for in the pre-application phase.

The reason we're doing this phase is to make it a little bit easier for all of you to, you know, put your ideas down on paper, have us look at it and provide some feedback, and then that feedback will also include whether you're authorized to submit a full application, rather than having people submit full applications and we only end up funding 4% of them.

So those three elements -- as I mentioned, the SF 424, the title page. You may use the template we provide to you as this URL that you'll see here, you know, toward the bottom of the page. You do not have to use the template, but if you choose to create your own title page, it must contain the information that you see listed here -- project title, the start and end date, the full amount that you're going to be requesting from NOAA, your PI, co-PIs, an executive summary, project partners list, and the list of NOAA assets.

So I recommend you use our title page template just because then you don't have to make sure you got all the information. If you completed that template successfully, you will have provided all the information you need.

And in addition to that, you will need to fill out the project description. There is a four-page limit on the project description. Please adhere to that. Any that come in that are longer than that will just be truncated and we won't be providing that information to the reviewers.

So this project description is the place where, you know, all of the information that Carrie talked about in the first part of this call with respect to audiences,

the activities that you're going to undertake, how this addresses NOAA's goals for this funding opportunity, our mission goals, and then your own project objectives, all of that needs to be described in here. And so please read this paragraph very carefully. You know, obviously you can only provide so much detail in four pages.

You will notice that we are not requesting you to provide budget details in these four pages. But we do want to have a sense of, you know, who you're working with, what you're doing, where you're going to be working, how, you know, you're going to be addressing items or parts of the plans, hazard mitigation plans for your area, and so forth.

One tip I'll offer you is I will reference the evaluation criteria later, but that is, you know, we have separate evaluation criteria for the pre-applications and the full applications and I recommend that, you know, as you're developing your project description here, you should be referencing those evaluation criteria and making sure that actually they're well-aligned because that's going to give you a good indication of, you know, how well you're actually addressing our needs as they're laid out in this funding opportunity.

Okay. So now I'm at the bottom of page 18. So similar kind of format requirements for the full application, should you be invited to submit one. However, I will note that you know, we have some additional guidance regarding color and high-resolution graphics. As with pre-applications, we do not expect you to submit scanned documents with the exception of letters of commitment.

So while we don't need to see letters of commitment on your pre-application - - and in fact we don't want to see anything other than the four pages in the SF

424 and your title page -- for your full application we do expect to see letters of commitment from your major partners.

Okay. So now I'm at the top of page 19. And I'm going to just touch on a few things over the next few pages. But these sections are important for you when you go to develop your full application. That said, I wouldn't ignore it completely while you're developing your pre-application. You should be aware at least, in a general sense of what we're going to be expecting in terms of a level of detail for a full application in case you're invited to do so.

So the application must include all elements little A through J in this section below. Element K and L are optional. Please note that failure to provide this information within prescribed page limits, where page limits are described for these subsections, will eliminate your application from further review. So it's important to pay attention to these details when you're developing your full application.

Because we know this is a complicated document to put together, we have developed a checklist for you all. You may certainly develop one of your own -- whatever makes sense for you. But we have provided one - I'm sorry, we will provide one at the URL for templates and models. Right now I don't believe there's anything up there because we just have pre-application information. So sometime after December 19th, you can start to look for that information.

And then there's additional recommendation here in the third paragraph about just how to bundle the pieces of your full application. So please pay attention to that.

Please note the required forms that will need to be filled out. I will - the SF 424, 424A, and 424B pretty much everybody has to fill those out. CD-511 and SF-LLL are as needed by your organization and there are additional instructions on the form and we also provide information on our FAQ about those forms and what's necessary.

These are all contained again in the grants.gov application packet for the full application. You'll need a title page. It'll be pretty much the same as the title page for your pre-application. You'll be given much more room for your project description. So instead of four pages, you now have 15.

And I'm now on page 20. So from page 20, you know, through 21 that's really where we lay out what we expect to see in terms of your project description. So you'll want to take a look at that.

In your full application, you will also need to provide a workplan or a milestone chart. We'll need to see resumes of your PI, co-PIs, and key personnel. We also need to see current and pending support for the PIs and co-PIs and that's so reviewers and our program staff can evaluate your capability to actually carry out the work that you're proposing to do -- not in terms of expertise, but in terms of your workload.

Your budget, this starts in the middle of page 22. This is another large section of the FFO that you'll need to pay close attention to. And again, within these sections we provide links to templates and models and other documents that will help you ensure that you provide the level of detail that we're looking for.

So now I'm on page 24. Please note we have new requirements now, or relatively new requirements, for data management plan. We don't - this is one of those sections where you have to state whether you will need a

management plan or not. Everybody should state that in their full application. But not everyone is going to need it.

And so, read through this, determine if what you're doing -- for instance, if you have a citizen science project where you're collecting environmental data as part of a research project for an ongoing citizen science monitoring project -- that may be subject to a data management plan. So take a look at that. But in most cases, we don't anticipate projects requiring one.

And now I'm at the top of page 25. So this is also new this year. And that's the logic model. So this is a required element of the full application. We found that it is helpful for people to provide these because it helps explain how all the pieces of your project hang together or don't. So please be aware that that is a requirement, especially if you've applied in the past. You may not be aware of that.

And then any references cited, those don't count toward the 15-page project description, but they should be included. And then letters of commitment for any key partners.

So that's pretty much it for the application package. I'm now going to move to the top of page 26. As I've alluded to, the submission dates and times for this competition there are two different ones. The first one you need to be concerned about is coming up in a few weeks. And that's on December 19th, 11:59pm Eastern Standard Time you need to have submitted that application or pre-application, excuse me, through grants.gov.

There's no way -- again, let me say again -- there is no way for us to receive an application after that deadline. So if you run into any problems with submission, short of there being a demonstrated, you know, system-wide

outage or something that was completely the government's fault, you're out of luck for getting an application to us. And I hate getting those phone calls.

So please don't make me have that phone call. Please try and submit your application ahead of time -- well ahead of time if you can -- because it's a free application. It's relatively short. Get it in because there's not much we can do if you don't get it in by that deadline.

Also, please note that our staff can only guarantee they will be around until 5:00 Eastern Time on the closing dates of the pre-application and full application. Okay. I think I've belabored that enough.

There's additional information again on what you can expect once you submit an application to grants.gov. You know, there are automated receipts and so forth that come to you. So please read through that paragraph.

And then now go to page 27. So this is where we start to describe the evaluation criteria. Again, there are two sets of criteria for this competition. There's one set for the pre-application and there's one set for the full application. Be mindful of these criteria as you develop your written description of your project.

And so, you know, you can see there in the pre-application we're keeping it really simple. You know, there's three points assigned to importance and relevance of the proposed project to our program goal, and then that is what we mean by that is broken down in the sub bullets under that. So there's three points assigned to that whole criterion. And then under technical and scientific merit, there's three points assigned to that.

And, you know, what we're expecting to have the reviewers look at for technical and scientific merit of the pre-application project description project plan is outlined there.

I'm now at the top of page 28. So full application evaluation criteria, and we have five for the full application. They total 100 points. And I will just call your attention to the fact that, you know, we have 50 points on technical and scientific merit -- which is the second criterion -- and 20 on importance and relevance.

And that's because we anticipate, since we've done this winnowing process through the pre-application phase that we really shouldn't have any applications coming in that aren't addressing the importance and relevance of our program goals well. But we still want to have it looked at in this phase.

So we're putting the bulk of our evaluation review on technical and scientific merit. And then you can see that these sub-bullets, the sub-criteria, have points assigned to them. So pay attention to that as well because that tells you sort of the relative weight we're giving to each statement that we're going to be asking the reviewers to think about in relation to your full application.

We've got overall qualification of applicants, project costs, and then outreach and education. So those are the five criteria. Again, take a look at them. At this phase for pre-application, even though you're not going to be reviewed against this criterion, you probably want to just glance at them and become familiar with them as you're thinking about your project idea just so you don't have any unpleasant surprises should you be fortunate enough to get an invitation to submit a full application.

So now I'm at the top of page 30 and I want to talk a little bit about what our review and selection process will be.

So when we get the pre-application and full application, we do our own administrative review within our office. For the pre-app, we'll look to see if you're an eligible applicant. We'll only be looking at applications we receive through grants.gov so they will by definition be on time. And we will be looking at what you state your budget request will be for the duration of your project. So it's got to be no more than 500,000 and no less than 250,000 for all years of the project.

In a similar way, we'll be doing a similar minimum requirements review of the full application, but I will note that in addition to eligibility and an application being received on time as well as your federal request for funding being within the prescribed limits.

We will also be checking to make sure that your project duration is within two to five years. And we will also be looking to see if you are authorized to submit a full application by us.

So how we're going to reach that decision will occur through the review of the pre-application, they will be sent out and evaluated and scored by a group of independent reviewers. Those reviewers may be federal or non-federal experts. And they will have expertise across the range of areas that are required for this funding opportunity.

This will all be done by mail review. And each application will get at least three reviews pre-application will get at least three reviews, although we're aiming to get four to five if we can for each application.

And then once we have a rank order from the average of those scores, we look for natural breaks around roughly 40 applications. And we may have to apply selection factors to determine the final composition of who is authorized to submit a full application.

But basically, we'll look initially based on those scores and we'll make our recommendation to the selecting official who is the Director of Education, Louisa Koch. And applicants will be notified if they've been authorized or if they are declined submitting a full application.

So now I'm on page 31. Full applications in a similar way -- we will be assigning the 40 or so full applications that have been authorized. We will be assigning those to a panel of independent reviewers. Those may be federal or non-federal experts. And they will again have relevant expertise given the proposals we've received.

They will read, score, and write comments on the full applications based on those evaluation criteria that I talked about moments ago. And then they will meet to discuss those applications. They will be allowed to rescore if they need to based on the conversations they have had with the other panelists.

And at the end of that panel meeting, we will have a rank order. And that rank order will be the initial basis for our recommendations for funding to the selecting official. We may also select applications out of rank order. And the selection factors, if you want to see where those are, that start at the bottom of page 31.

Sometimes we have to do this because for instance, we have a bunch of top-ranked applications but they're all in the state of Utah or something. And we're not going to fund, you know, four applications in Utah all out of the

same (unintelligible). Or they may all be from the same type of institution and we want to balance and distribute the funds across different types of institutions.

So this is just another way of saying that, you know, we don't always make awards to all the highest rank applications because there are these other factors that have to come into play in our decision making.

I'm now at page 32 and I swear I'm almost wrapping up here. So you may be asked, if your application is recommended for funding, we may come to you and ask you to modify objectives or project plans or timelines, your budget, you may be required to provide additional information. And a lot of that will be based on the reviews of both the individual reviews we got of the full applications as well as the panel discussion. So please be aware and anticipate that.

And then we anticipate that we'll be doing the review of the full application starting from the deadline, which is April 6th through June 2018. And we try to make announcements as early as we can, but the latest we would be making them would be September 30, 2018. And those would be the public announcements. If you're recommended for funding, we'll be in touch with you in June sometime.

Okay. I'm not going to go over the award notices that start at the bottom of page 32. You should be aware of those and read through them. But I'm not going to cover those now to save time.

Reporting, similar kind of thing. Please take a look at that. The reporting comes into effect when you actually receive an award. Please note on the

bottom of page 37 the ways you can contact our office to get more information. Probably already know that from our announcements, however.

And then again, the last URL on page 38 is your go-to spot for information related to this FFO.

So at this point I'm going to stop talking at you and Operator, we can open up the lines to take questions.

Coordinator: At this time we will begin our question and answer session. If you would like to ask a question, please press star 1 from your phone and unmute your line and record your name clearly when prompted. If you would like to withdraw your question, please press star 2. One moment as we wait for the first question.

First question comes from (Danny Landon). Your line is now open.

(Jenny Landon): Thank you. This is (Jenny Landon) and I have a point of clarification that I need and a couple of related questions to the evaluation.

Sarah Schoedinger: Okay.

(Jenny Landon): I think what I heard you all say is that in the pre-application that we should only have several sentences that refer to evaluation, correct?

Carrie McDougall: That is what I said and I was just reviewing the project description area for pre-app while Sarah was reviewing it. In the project description section for pre-applications, we state that you should tell us the anticipated outcomes and outputs of your project. And we don't even mention evaluation in the pre-application project description. So it's really an optional area. If you, but feel

free to provide a little bit of flavor of what kind of an evaluation you're anticipating doing.

Woman: Okay, so I think that helps with my second question because when you all were describing the project description section for the pre-app, which has a four-page limit, I thought I heard you all talk about mentioning evaluation criteria at that time.

Sarah Schoedinger: No, sorry, that was my mistake. The evaluation criteria I'm talking about in that reference is in section, Roman numeral V-A of the funding opportunity announcement. So sorry, it's a little mixed up only because within the FFO we refer to evaluation criteria to evaluate the merits of your pre-application and full application.

Woman: Okay, all right, thank you. And then my final question related to that, and I'm trying to find the page number. Ed, do you have it? On page 27, you talk about the pre-app application evaluation criteria. One of the bullet points there is, it does say that the project, if the project is based on an existing front-end evaluation/needs assessment, can you clarify what you mean by that?

Sarah Schoedinger: Well, if in some cases we know that, you know, people are proposing project ideas and they hopefully have done some kind of needs assessment, so they can articulate what the need is in the area. It doesn't mean that you're providing us the details of that needs assessment, but you should be, or you know, yeah, I mean you're not providing the details but you are providing some indication of, for instance, you know, in some areas if you know somebody's done some kind of polling or something like that and they understand like what the level of lack of awareness of a particular issue is regarding an environmental hazard, they can use that information.

It may be specific to their location, it may be, I mean it should be, ideally. But that's what it, for us a needs assessment, it's not like there's just one format or combination of things, and we're not expecting that, or at least I don't think we're expecting that you're going to be talking in great detail about what that needs assessment was, or how it was conducted, I should say. More about what you found out. You've got to justify what you're doing and where you're working, you know, to some degree. We realize in four pages you're not going to be able to do it to an extensive degree.

Woman: Thank you.

Sarah Schoedinger: Not sure that, did that answer your question?

Woman: Yes, it did. It cleared that up for me, thank you.

Sarah Schoedinger: Okay.

Coordinator: And our next question comes from (Stephanie Ober), your line is now open.

(Stephanie Ober): Hi, I just wanted to follow up and have a question about eligibility and if you are currently a partner on a funded (unintelligible) grant, if that would affect eligibility at all.

Sarah Schoedinger: No, it should have no effect on it, whatsoever.

(Stephanie Ober): Great, thank you.

Coordinator: And are we ready for the next question?

Sarah Schoedinger: Sure.

Operator All right, it comes from (Kristen Hackin), your line is now open.

(Kristen Hackin): Hello. I had a question regarding the formatting of the project description and how you deal with references. Are those references included in the four pages, and if they're not included, are they attached as a separate document?

Sarah Schoedinger: The references would have to be included in the four pages.

(Kristen Hackin): Okay, that makes that easy.

Coordinator: And our next question comes from Miss (Stone), your line is now open.

Miss (Stone): Hello, can you hear me?

Sarah Schoedinger: Yes.

Miss (Stone): Oh, okay thank you so much. My question was as a PI, as a principle investigator, we're very new to this and I just wanted to make sure, does the principle investigator have to be a scientist with an organization? Would it be a scientist outside of the realm of our school district, somebody who is a partner with us, with let's say an organization like Nature Conservancy or other organizations.

Carrie McDougall: The principle investigator should be the person who has the highest level of responsibility for the overall project. That is up to the project to determine who that is. They also should work at the institution that will be the applicant and the entity that is managing the project from a financial standpoint.

It doesn't necessarily mean that the principle investigator needs to be the financially responsible individual for that organization, but they need to be able to control the funds.

Miss (Stone): Okay, so it is a person, I just want to make sure because when, you know, traditionally when I see principle investigator, I'm thinking somebody at a major organization or somebody who is at a university level, and is the person with the highest level who is going to be running the funds of the project and of the organization where the grant is being written, you know, of whom is writing the grant, is that correct?

Carrie McDougall: Right, who is the institution that is applying for the grant, that is the institution that should employ the principle investigator.

Miss (Stone): Thank you so much for clarifying that.

Coordinator: Our next question comes from (Colin). Your line is now open.

(Colin): Hello, I have a question about the, what from an NFS perspective because that's what I'm more familiar with, might be a question about the intellectual merit. And I apologize if this question was asked already, the line broke up for a little while.

But I'm curious to what extent the education research part of the proposal and the project should be again from what NSF tends to prize, cutting-edge science of learning, research, versus perhaps techniques and approaches in teaching and learning that are pretty well accepted but simply applied in this case to the coastal resilience topic. It's a subtle distinction and I'm curious what your thoughts are about that.

Carrie McDougall: So in NOAA, in Office of Education, which is where we sit and offer this funding opportunity, we are quite distinct from the kinds of things that NSF funds, educationally, in that we do not fund education research. So we really wouldn't expect to see an education research project coming in to this funding opportunity, that's not something we are interested in seeing.

We are interested in seeing education projects that are being fully implemented that are based on research, so best practices, appropriate approaches given, you know, depending on whatever you're going to be doing, we certainly would hope that you cite research that shows that these are effective practices. But we don't expect for you to be applying for funds to actually conduct the research for this solicitation.

And the other thing I want to just clarify because you said something else in your question, you mentioned coastal resilience. This is not an exclusive coastal resilience funding opportunity. You can work, as I mentioned earlier, my example of St. Louis, Missouri, not a coastal community, that's totally appropriate. This is not restricted to coastal communities. Okay?

(Colin): Thank you.

Coordinator: And our next question comes from (Douglas), your line is now open.

(Douglas): Hello and thanks for this opportunity today. My question is about sustainability of the funded project. You state that the grant requires a two- to five-year project requirement or length. Are you concerned with sustainability beyond that five-year project life?

Sarah Schoedinger: Well, we certainly always hope that there will be some sustainability of the project beyond the lifetime of the award. Given the size and the scope of

the activities and the funding that's available, we, you know we hope that we're funding development of models and you know, pulling partners together who can continue working after the grant, and we, but we don't have a heavy emphasis on what you're going to do after the award. You won't see that in our evaluation criteria.

For instance, you'll see some reference to having some thought to, you know, what you're developing and how it would be applicable in other locations, because we know that these projects will occur in, they have to be focused on very specific locations. They can be focused on multiple locations but they're very specific, you know, the threats and hazards that you're exploring and helping educate people about are going to be very specific to whatever locale you choose.

So we're looking, in terms of sustainability, we're looking for applicability beyond the two to five years for the project, but there's a limit to what we can expect, quite frankly, given the size of the awards that we're making. (Carrie), I don't know if you want to add anything to that.

Carrie McDougall: Well, one aspect I do want to add is when thinking back to other review panels that we've had, this issue sometimes comes up in the budget review. So this is more appropriate for a full application when we're actually digging into the details of the budget. But it might be worth keeping in mind now. So for example if a project comes in and there's a requesting, you know, more than half of the request to NOAA is funding personnel and many of which are being funded at, you know, 100% time or greater than 50% time. That sometimes raises the sustainability issue for reviewers.

They'll ask questions like "Well, you know, this organization doesn't appear to have capacity to do this to begin with, and then they don't appear to, you

know, how will they have any capacity when the grant is over if this grant is paying for all of the people who are doing it?” So that is one way that sustainability comes up in the review of projects.

(Douglas): I see, very good, thank you.

Coordinator: Our next question comes from (Joyce), your line is now open.

(Joyce): Yes, I wanted to know how much flexibility do we have on the budget, and the number of years we’re proposing in between the time we submit the pre-app, and if we are selected to submit a full application.

For instance, if we propose one budget amount in the pre-app and we think about it and we say “Well, no, we need more money and we want to extend the project from three to five years.” Is that allowed? Hello?

Carrie McDougall: Yes, sorry. It is allowed, so we, the, we’re not going to hold you to those elements of your application between the pre-application phase and the full application phase. So we expect, I mean we’re basically asking you to put a rough estimate of your budget on the pre-application, we will not hold you to that number other than we will expect you to come in with a budget request between \$250,000 and \$500,000. Those we will hold you to, but the specific number we will not hold you to.

In terms of number of years, we won’t hold you to that either although I will note that, you know, if you’re describing one type of, say you are describing in the pre-application phase a two-year project for \$250,000, and then you turn around and submit a five-year project for \$500,000, you know that project might look really different from what you originally proposed. So

there is, obviously within limits, right, but we won't hold you to the specific numbers.

(Joyce): Okay thank you.

Coordinator: And as a reminder, if you will like to ask a question, please press star-1 from your phone. Our last question comes from (Kuhn), your line is now open

(Kuhn): Hi, I wanted to know if in the proposals we can use the word climate change. I noticed that throughout the proposal there's talk about climates, weather extremes, extreme events but not specifically the phrase climate change, I just wanted to know if that's terminology that we should stay away from, even though we're talking about resilience to climate extremes, not to mention climate change.

Sarah Schoedinger: Yes, you certainly, if your project is focused on impacts of climate change, you are free to talk about it in that way. Just keep in mind, we are really focused on resilience related to those impacts and not just general education about climate change.

(Kuhn): Yeah, thank you very much.

Coordinator: Our next question comes from (Chris), your line is now open.

(Chris): Hi, my question regards in the pre-app, what extent does the number of partners need to be complete, I mean if we have identified a few and realize in the full app will extend to many more, you know, is that expected of a change, you know, how much to flesh out the partnership in the pre-app.

Sarah Schoedinger: I would say that, you know, we know that there's not a lot of time to develop your pre-app, so you should give as good an indication of the partners you have already discussed working with, you know, certainly we would hope that you would not be surprising them with the submission and have somebody who you know, hasn't already had a conversation with you. But we also know that you can take time to fully flesh out all the partners who might be important on a project.

So it's not like if you submit a pre-app and you have your list of partners and then you're recommended to, you're authorized to submit an application, and you determine, well, you know, we really need to add these other people because of the expertise they bring to the table, that's fine, you're not, like in a similar way, you know, with the budget and years as (Carrie) indicated, you're not like, you know, it's not iron-clad that you have to stick with that.

But I would say it could affect the competitiveness of your pre-application if you're missing key partners, right? Or you are missing partners that might help with your project implementation.

So it's you know, again, we're not going to, and also you don't want to radically change what you propose between the pre-application and the full application so it doesn't even look like the same project to us because that's going to be a red flag.

(Chris): Great, that helps.

Carrie McDougall: Yeah, and if I could just add, since we've had a few questions that have been asking about how much change there can be between the pre-app phase and the full app phase. You don't have a ton of time even after, if you are one of the lucky few that get invited to submit a full app, although maybe you

won't consider yourself lucky, but there's not a whole lot of time in that phase of the overall competition.

So it's not like you find out you are going to be able to submit a full application and then you have months to figure out all these issues. You don't really have a lot of time, so you want to try to really figure out as much as you can in this pre-app phase so that you then have time to flesh out all the, like really nitty-gritty details in the full app phase.

Coordinator: All right and our next question comes from (Paul), your line is now open.

(Paul): Thank you. I had a question about indirect cost rates. I read in the solicitation that approved indirect cost rates are allowed. I wondered if you could speak towards the competitiveness in constructing your budget in terms of passive awards, have prior awardees taken full indirect cost rates? I noticed there were not any universities, which tend to have some higher indirect cost rates. So is that a factor we should consider in the construction of our budget? Or I just wondered if you'd comment on the overall competitive factor associated with that.

Sarah Schoedinger: We're actually, the indirect cost rate does not get evaluated by our reviewers. It does not, it is not something we're actually allowed to evaluate. So, and the fact that we don't have any universities as the leads for the previous set of awards that were referenced, they're definitely partners on them, so that had no bearing on the indirect costs, high indirect cost rates that can sometimes happen with universities did not have a bearing on whether they got funding or not. So that really is not a factor that we take into consideration making, or a funding decision.

(Paul): Okay, and ...

Carrie McDougall: And just to, sorry, let me jump in really quickly, just to clarify. If you have an indirect cost rate agreement, you do have to charge that rate, and you have to provide a copy of the rate agreement in with your, that would be the full application.

(Paul): Oh, so you're automatically, you're required to charge that full rate?

Carrie McDougall: You are unless your institution elects to take a lower amount, but we cannot tell you to take a lower amount. It cannot factor into our decision-making.

(Paul): Okay. Thank you.

Coordinator: And our next question comes from (Carama), your line is now open.

(Carama): Hi, earlier someone referenced the four-page limit that should include all the references, am I correct?

Sarah Schoedinger: Yes, that's correct We're not expecting a separate document for the pre-application. We're not expecting extensive references in the pre-application, so, because it is only four pages.

(Carama): Okay, so references are required but not extensive.

Sarah Schoedinger: Actually I don't believe that references are required in the pre-application. They're required in the full application, and if you don't have any then you need to say that you don't have any.

(Carama): Okay, well chances are there'll be references but there may not be room to improve the references, so that's okay.

Sarah Schoedinger: Yes, I would say, you know, you have to make the judgment call. If you're going to make a reference to some document, you should include a reference to it. But I don't anticipate that you would need to do that extensively in a pre-application.

(Carama): Okay, so another question is that if, could this application be partnering with an existing grantee under the similar program?

Sarah Schoedinger: Potentially it could be as long as the partnership is not doing more of the same of what we already funded, as (Carrie) alluded to in the program objective section of the FFO. We definitely will entertain applications and entry applications that involve previously funded projects, but it must be building, if they are involving it must be building on them, not just doing more of the same.

(Carama): Okay, so it's possible that the proposed project is larger than what the partners, the existing funded partners would be doing, but in the same time the proposed project could expand on what existing partner has been doing. So that would be acceptable.

Sarah Schoedinger: Yes, I think that that, again the devil's always in the details. So without knowing specifically what you're going to be proposing or who you're working with, or what you're leveraging, but theoretically yes, you should be able to build off of an existing project, expand on it, and you know, a new location, applying, you know, new methods or reaching new audiences. What we don't want to see is just replicating, I shouldn't say replicating, we don't

want to see just a repeat of what we've already funded, in the same place, doing the same thing, you know, that's what we're trying to avoid.

(Carama): Okay, I'm sorry, I have another off the wall question here. Is there any chance that the pre-application deadline could be extended or...

Sarah Schoedinger: No, unfortunately, we have a hard deadline. We have to meet internally for our grants management division to get the awards out the door and funded by that 1 October date, and we back it all the way up from there, so that's why it is when it is.

(Carama): All right, thank you.

Coordinator: At this time there are no further questions in the queue.

Sarah Schoedinger: All right, well we can hang out here for a couple more minutes and if there are no further questions then we will give it maybe just a couple more minutes, and then I'll wrap up with some concluding remarks. Sound good?

Carrie McDougall: Sounds good to me.

Sarah Schoedinger: All right.

Coordinator: And as a reminder, if you would like to ask a question, please press star-1 from your phone. One moment as we wait for additional questions.

Sarah Schoedinger: Okay.

Coordinator: And our next question comes from (Jennifer). Your line is now open..

(Jennifer): Hello. I am wondering about the cost match requirement and if there is one, I haven't seen anything in the proposal or the RFP. So I just wanted to double-check.

Sarah Schoedinger: Yeah, sorry, it's always good to ask that. It's on page 15 of the FFO, it's on the announcement, and there is no cost-sharing requirement.

(Jennifer): Okay is there an advantage to leveraging other funds or providing detail about other partnerships that may be formed as a result of this project that other people are bringing in their own funding to support the project?

Sarah Schoedinger: So we don't give bonus points or brownie points or anything like that for you providing voluntary match. You are free to do that, but then you're beholden to it. So if you're bringing additional resources to the table to leverage the request to NOAA, they ought to be pretty solid, number one. And you know you need to articulate how you're, you know, how that's going to help achieve our overall project goal or how, you know, the project, parts of the project we'd be funding would fit in with the, you know if this is a piece of a larger project or something like that.

So that's how we expect people to handle that. We're really not, kind of like the indirect cost rate thing, we're not allowed to do a whole lot with matching funds unless it's truly required.

(Jennifer): Okay.

Sarah Schoedinger: And if we choose not to require it then we're not like we don't evaluate it, kind of thing, other than like are you, you know, do you have a sound project design and, you know, are you working with the right partners and will you be bringing the relevant, all that, the whole package together.

(Jennifer): Okay, okay, excellent. I think that was my only question.

Sarah Schoedinger: All right.

(Jennifer): Great, thank you.

Sarah Schoedinger: Sure.

Coordinator: Sorry. And our next question comes from (Amy), your line is now open.

(Amy): Hi, I had a question as we're wrapping up, I am interested in looking at the transcript and wanted to make sure I knew how to find that on the website.

Sarah Schoedinger: Okay, well that website, which is referenced multiple times in our FFO is the one that ends with "apply" at the end of the URL, and you can actually find it at the bottom of page four of the FFO. And then on that page there are links to a lot of pieces of information and (Jamie)'s created a whole section on the teleconferences and I believe there's a link under there, right (Jamie)?

(Jamie): It's on the apply page as well as on the FAQ page.

Sarah Schoedinger: Thank you.

(Amy): Okay I am currently on the apply page.

(Jamie): Yeah, you scroll down to the bottom under Resources.

(Amy): And it would be under the frequently asked questions there, that was what I was missing.

(Jamie): Well you can see it under informational teleconference with officers and then the November 21st is underlined. You can click on the transcript from the 21st telecom and then once we get the transcript for this one, that November 29th date will become a hyperlink.

(Amy): Perfect, thank you.

Coordinator: And our next question comes from (Surin), your line is open.

(Surin): I just have one more question. You don't want to overlap any current grant that's being funded under NOAA. What if it's work being funded under another agency that we want to extend?

Carrie McDougall: Yeah, we certainly don't think that we've covered the whole territory out there, so anything that's being supported by another agency, we wouldn't rule that out. You know, and if you can talk about the work that has been supported by that other agency and how it might relate to whatever you're proposing to NOAA in terms of like maybe you're taking the next step or you're adding the education component to an existing resilience effort that's funded by another agency, that would totally be fine.

(Surin): Okay as long as it's accordance of course with NOAA's goals.

Carrie McDougall: Yes.

(Surin): Okay.

Carrie McDougall: Just to clarify a little bit the way you asked the question, we aren't, it's not that we're not interested in funding projects in areas where we've already funded exclusively. It's that you know, you just take that into consideration.

So there's certain areas where, you know, like New York, we already have several projects in New York because New York's got a lot of people and there's a lot of work that can be done there. So you know, you can see places where we've already funded multiple projects, so it's not that we won't fund multiple projects in a given location, but you know that's just another piece of information for you to consider when you're thinking about scoping a project. And also considering partners, right?

(Surin): Can you expound on partners?

Carrie McDougall: Well, looking at the currently funded projects might give you a sense first of all of the kinds of partners that they have on board, to give you a sense of what successful projects look like in terms of the natures of their partnerships and who they partner with.

(Surin): Okay.

Carrie McDougall: Also it might give you a sense of who you could partner with, if you're working in the same area or similar areas it might trigger some thoughts in terms of partners or like the previous caller asked about, you know, sounded like she's a partner on an existing funded, a currently funded project, and now she's thinking about submitting a project that's some sort of a spinoff maybe.

So you know those are other aspects that you could consider by looking at the currently funded portfolio.

(Surin): Okay, all right, that sounds great. Thanks.

Operator And our next question comes from (Joyce), your line is now open.

(Joyce): Yes, I wanted to know, is it an issue or maybe we just need to explain, if our community is re-evaluating our hazard or community resilience plan as you mentioned at the top of this conference call, 2017 has been a very active year in terms of extreme weather events. So I'm sure communities all around the country are trying to re-assess their plans. How should we couch that in our pre-apps?

Carrie McDougall: Just like you said. So, I mean just tell us honestly, you know, such-and-such community has this plan, it is currently undergoing review, you know given the such-and-such event that occurred, you know just lay it out for us. Explain to us and the reviewers, you know, show you've done your homework, first of all, that you've looked into these plans, that you've read the plans, that you understand them, that you've connected with the people who are involved in them. And if they're undergoing revision just tell us that.

And then you know it may be even more important for you to get as a partner one of the planning entities that's involved chiefly in that revision process, for example.

We recognize that there's all different kinds of plans out there, they're in different stages of development. Some are very, very robust and have been in existence for years and being fully implemented, and some are much more nascent. And we don't expect you to be responsible for how far along any of those plans are, but just show that you've done that analysis and that you understand, that you have plans and where they are in their development and how they might be utilized by an education project.

(Joyce): Okay thank you.

Coordinator: And our next question comes from (Keith), your line is now open.

(Keith): Hello, everybody, thank you. My question is about the age of students because our school educates students from infancy up to sixth grade. So I was wondering if there would be any impact on the competitiveness of our proposals, if there was like, say age-appropriate materials for preschoolers or pre-kindergartners, as well as, you know, K through sixth-grade students.

Sarah Schoedinger: Sure, you know, I mean honestly, I know we talk about K to 12 in our target audiences, that doesn't preclude you from including those younger audiences, particularly if they are part of your, you know, your school audience. So as long as you can make the case that they're going to be age-appropriate materials and you're fulfilling some kind of need within the community, you know, I think it should be okay. How competitive the reviewers will find that I can't be the judge but there's nothing that, you know, would make that impossible for consideration.

(Keith): Okay, thank you.

Sarah Schoedinger: Sure.

Coordinator: And our next question comes from (Chris), your line is now open.

(Chris): Hi, again. So my question deals with the group of young people with whom we would conduct this work, who would then relate the understandings to the broader public. That group currently consists somewhat of college students. So in writing the project description, should I eliminate that set of, it's a multi-

generational group of young people. So should I be eliminating those college students? They're not the target audience, they would be part of the quote, unquote educators themselves. Does that make sense? Do you understand what I'm saying?

Carrie McDougall: Yeah, I don't think that's a problem. We don't specify, yeah, we specify the target audience and you seem to grasp it, it's K-12 students and the public, but we don't specify who it is that's reaching them, and it sounds like that's what you're describing and so no, I mean those can be whoever they need to be. They can be scientists, they can be, you know, those can be professionals working in the field if they're your, you know, instructors or advisors or whatever. But as long as the target audience is the K-12 students and the public, then sounds like you're okay.

(Chris): Thank you.

Coordinator: And our next question comes from (Colin), your line is now open.

(Colin): Hello, on page 15 you talk about cooperative agreement and there's somewhere I think there as well reference to federal employees. I'm not clear if the, say NOAA personnel or other federal employees or even the for-profits and non-profits are (unintelligible) from receiving funding through the budget. Obviously they're ineligible to participate and in some, with the NOAA case encouraged, but it's unclear if they can be paid. Could you clarify it, please?

Sarah Schoedinger: So we, it's up to you all whether you request funds for them. So, but we're really, our preference is not that they are getting funds but we pretty much leave that up to the grantee and then if there are funds requested, we'll deal with that on the negotiations end of things.

Not sure that helps you but I would say it's not a hard, like, it's not a hard requirement that they can't seek funds. They certainly can't receive the grants, so we can't have like a federal (unintelligible) or somebody applying for the grant themselves, but we know that there are partners and there might be travel or some other sources, support might be needed. But that's going to have to be justified.

(Colin): Okay thank you.

Coordinator: And our next question comes from (Rebecca), your line is now open.

(Rebecca): Hello, thank you. My question is about the NOAA scientific data and tools that need to be integrated into the project. My question is about using resources from other agencies to sort of flesh out the type of materials we would use in developing active learning activities, such as data from NASA or the USGS.

Sarah Schoedinger: No, you're not precluded from using other sources of data. You don't have to exclusively use NOAA assets. We don't mean to imply that, but we do produce quite a few related to the topic of community resilience to extreme weather events and climate change-related impacts. So we expect to see that NOAA assets will be involved but you're certainly, you know if USGS or FEMA or somebody else has produced something that's useful in your project, it is certainly fine to bring that to bear on the project.

(Rebecca): Thank you.

Coordinator: And our next question comes from (Douglas), your line is now open.

(Douglas): Yes, this might be related to a question, two back, but would an indirect cost exclude the use of a contracted third party to help fulfill the project goals?

Sarah Schoedinger: I'm sorry can you say that again? Sorry.

(Douglas): Under the indirect cost topic, would the use of say a for-profit consultant to help reach the project goals, would that be exclusive in the indirect costs, or would that be something that kind of would be expected sometimes, to have a project be brought to life?

Sarah Schoedinger: Well I wouldn't expect a for-profit entity should be showing up under indirect costs. They can be partners on your project, so that's allowed. They just can't be the primary recipient of funds. So, but we certainly know that, you know, sometimes you might need technical assistance and as long as you can justify it, why it's there, it's a legitimate cost.

(Douglas): Okay that's great, thank you.

Coordinator: And our last question comes from (Jennifer), your line is now open.

(Jennifer): Hi, I just had a quick question about the letters of commitment needed for the pre-application.

Sarah Schoedinger: There are no letters of commitment needed for the pre-application.

(Jennifer): All right.

Sarah Schoedinger: Yes, they are needed for the full application. So there was one line in our FFO I wish we had struck, it's the one that relates to the scanned documents under the format of your pre-application. So you do not, we're not expecting

at this stage that you will have those letters, there's not enough time to get them. But if you're invited to submit a full application we would definitely want to see letters of commitment from your partners.

(Jennifer): Yeah, that makes sense, okay. Sorry if you answered that before.

Sarah Schoedinger: No, that's all right. Sorry if it wasn't clear.

(Jennifer): Appreciate it.

Sarah Schoedinger: Sure.

Coordinator: And there are no further questions in the queue at this time.

Sarah Schoedinger: Okay, well why don't we go ahead and wrap up and we'll end this just a little bit early. So you know, as you can see it's real important to pay attention to the details in the FFO. So please take a close look at this as you're developing your project ideas and putting together pre-proposals.

We also recommend as we have stated a few times on this call looking at the awards that have been funded over the past three years that are focused on resilience, and you know, these, as (Carrie)'s indicated in some of her earlier comments, these will give you a sense of the geographic scale and scope of the projects that we've funded, and we anticipate that we'll be funding projects on a similar scale this year.

So that's one reason to look at them, the other reason as I mentioned is they are potential project partners, and if you would like to look at, you know, those searching resilience-focused awards, you can find them on our awards tab under the environmental literacy grants section of the NOAA education

website, and there's an interactive map and searchable database of awards, and you can search the last two competitions we've run focused on resilience, one was in 2015 and one was in 2016, they're at the top of the list there.

As we indicated at the very beginning of this, I'm sorry this call, we do anticipate that this funding opportunity will be quite competitive. So you know, last year we received 170 full applications, we didn't have pre-apps, and 161 of those went out for merit review. And we were able to fund seven total over a two-year period. So that's about 4% of those reviewed. And so even though we don't have our final budget for the fiscal year, that \$2 million is what we're anticipating getting, so we anticipate a similar level of competitiveness. So just take that under advisement.

If you have additional questions after this teleconference please do look through the FFO first, look at our frequently asked questions page. But if you don't see an answer to your question there, please do contact us, OED.grants@NOAA.gov is the best way to reach us. Multiple people, the people you heard mentioned at the beginning of this call, they check that inbox, have access to it and so if you send it to (Carrie) or me, it might get lost in our inbox for days and might not get an answer.

The other caveat I would just say is because there is a high level of interest in this funding opportunity and we are getting a lot of questions and we will get I'm sure even more as we get closer to the December 19 deadline, please don't expect an immediate response but we do try to provide responses within one working day.

All right, so with that, thank you for your attention today and your interest in this funding opportunity. I do hope this was helpful to all of you and as (Carrie) mentioned, check out the transcript from last week and of course

we'll put the transcript from this call hopefully by this Friday and if not, early next week. So with that, we'll sign off now. Thank you.

Coordinator: Thank you for participating in today's conference. You may all disconnect at this time.

END