

example, evaluation tools, observation, or outside consultation.

f. *Total project costs:* Total project costs are the amount of funds required to accomplish what is proposed in the Project Description and include contributions and donations.

Explain the calculations and provide a narrative to support specific items or activities, such as personnel/salaries, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, contract costs, and indirect costs. The budget detail and narrative submitted with the application should match the dollar amounts on all required forms. Additional cost detail may be required prior to a final analysis of overall cost allowability, allocability, and reasonableness. Please Note the following funding restrictions:

-The budget may include an amount for indirect costs if the applicant has an established indirect cost rate with the Federal government, see Administrative Requirements, Section VI, B.

-Funds for salaries and fringe benefits may be requested only for those personnel who are directly involved in implementing the proposed project and whose salaries and fringe benefits are directly related to specific products or outcomes of the proposed project. NOAA strongly encourages applicants to request reasonable amounts of funding for salaries and fringe benefits to ensure that your proposal is competitive.

g. *Letters of support from partners:* Letters of support should be included for partners that are making a significant contribution to the project, if applicable.

Federal forms: Applicants may obtain required Federal forms from the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office Web site (see ADDRESSES) or from the NOAA Grants Web site: <http://www.rdc.noaa.gov/grants/index.html>.

1. *Cover sheet:* All applicants must use Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Standard Form 424 (revised 7/97) as the cover sheet for each project.

2. *Budget form:* All applicants must use a Standard Budget Form (SF-424A) required for all Federal grants.

3. *Form CD-511:* All applicants must submit a CD-511, "Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; Drug-Free Workplace Requirements and Lobbying".

4. *SF-424B:* All applicants must submit a SF-424B, "Assurances of Non-Construction Programs".

5. *CD-346 "Applicant for Funding Assistance":* Required for the following individuals- Sole Proprietorship, Partnerships, Corporations, Joint Venture, Non-profit Organizations.

D. Evaluation Criteria

1. *Project Design/Conceptual Approach:* Projects will be evaluated on your conceptual approach and how you have integrated this into the project design. In particular, the extent to which you have addressed the project elements and activities under Sections II.A, 1-4 and/or II.B, 1-2, and have complied with the instructions in IV.C.1.b. Project description, c. Need for government financial assistance, and d. Benefits or results expected will be evaluated under this criterion. (50 points)

2. *Project evaluation:* Projects will be evaluated based on your explanation of how you will ensure that you are meeting the goals and objectives of your project, as required in Section IV.C.1.e, so that results may be reported in performance reports. (15 points)

3. *Projects demonstrate partnerships:* Project proposals will be evaluated based on the degree to which they include partners involving any of the eligible applicants, as provided in Sections II.A.5 or II.B.3, and whether letters of support from partners have been included, as required in Section IV.C.1.g. Partnerships refers to the forming of a collaborative working relationship between two or more organizations. The B-WET Program strongly encourages applicants to partner with schools and/or school systems. All partners should be actively involved in the project, not just supply equipment or curricula. (15 points)

4. *Justification and allocation of the proposed budget:* Proposals will be evaluated on the reasonableness, allowability, and allocability of the proposed budget, as set forth in Section IV.C.1.f. (20 points)

V. Selection Procedures

A. Initial Evaluation of the Applications

NOAA will review all applications to assure that they meet all the requirements of this announcement, including eligibility and relevance to the Bay Watershed Education and Training (B-WET) Program.

B. Technical Review

Applications meeting the requirements of this solicitation will undergo an external technical review. This review will normally involve individuals in the field of environmental education from both NOAA and non-NOAA organizations. Proposals will be scored based on the evaluation criteria as defined in Section IV.D. Reviewers will be asked to review independently and to provide a score and comments on each proposal. No

consensus advice will be given by the technical reviewers.

C. Funding Decision

Scores for each proposal will then be averaged and the proposals will be ranked numerically for funding based upon the technical review scores. After the proposals have been ranked, the Chief of the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office, in consultation with Program staff, will determine which projects will be recommended for funding.

Numerical ranking will be the primary consideration for deciding which of the proposals will be selected for funding. However, duplication with other projects, geographic diversity, program goals, and matching leverage, may also be taken into consideration in making the final selections. Priority selection will be given to proposals that contribute cash rather than in-kind funding to their projects. Accordingly, numerical ranking is not the sole factor in deciding which new proposals will be selected for funding. A written justification will be prepared for any recommendations for funding that fall outside the ranking order, or any cost adjustments. The exact amount of funds awarded to each project will be determined in pre-award negotiations among the applicant, the Grants Office, and the NCBO staff. Potential grantees should not initiate projects in expectation of Federal funding until an award document signed by an authorized NOAA official has been received.

Unsuccessful applications will be kept on file in the Program office for a period of at least 12 months, then destroyed.

VI. Administrative Requirements

A. Pre-award Notification Requirements

The Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification of Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements contained in the **Federal Register** Notice of October 1, 2001 (66 FR 49917), as amended by the **Federal Register** Notice published October 30, 2002 (67 FR 66109), is applicable to this solicitation.

B. Indirect Cost Rates

Regardless of any approved indirect cost rate applicable to the award, the maximum dollar amount of allocable indirect costs for which the Department of Commerce will reimburse the recipient shall be the lesser of the line item amount for the Federal share of indirect costs contained in the approved budget of the award, or the Federal share of the total allocable indirect costs of the award based on the indirect cost