

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 the Superintendent of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuaries and 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 the cost share contribution 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 proposals will be selected for funding. A written justification will be prepared for any recommendations for funding that fall outside the ranking order. The exact amount of funds awarded to each project will be determined in pre-award negotiations among the applicant, the Grants Office, and the Program 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 rate approved by an oversight or cognizant Federal agency and current at the time the cost was incurred, provided the rate is approved on or before the award end date. However, the Federal share of the indirect costs may not exceed 25 percent of the total proposed direct costs for this Program. Applicants with indirect costs above 25 percent may use the amount above the 25 percent level as cost sharing. If the applicant does not have a current negotiated rate and plans to seek reimbursement for indirect costs, documentation necessary to establish a rate must be submitted within 90 days of receiving an award.

#### C. Allowable Costs

Funds awarded cannot necessarily pay for all the costs that the recipient might incur in the course of carrying out the project. Allowable costs are determined by reference to the Office of Management and Budget Circulars A-122, "Cost Principles for Nonprofit Organizations"; A-21, "Cost Principles for Education Institutions"; and A-87, "Cost Principles for State, Local and Indian Tribal Governments." Generally, costs that are allowable include salaries, equipment, supplies, and training, as long as these are "necessary and reasonable."

#### Classification

This action has been determined to be "not significant" for purposes of Executive Order 12866. Applications under this program are subject to Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs."

Under section 553 (a)(2) of the Administrative Procedure Act, prior notice and an opportunity for public comment are not required for this notice concerning grants, benefits, and contracts. Therefore, a regulatory flexibility analysis is not required for the purposes of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

This notice contains collection-of-information requirements subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act. The use of Standard Forms 424, 424A, 424B, and CD-346 has been approved by OMB under the respective control numbers 0348-0044, 0348-0044, 0348-0040, and 0605-0001.

Notwithstanding any other provision of the law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall any person be

subject to a penalty for failure to comply with a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act unless that collection displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Dated: May 7, 2003.

**John Oliver,**

*Deputy Administrative Assistant for Operations for Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.*

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### DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

#### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[Docket No.021127290-3113-02; I.D. 033103C]

RIN 0648-ZB44

#### Financial Assistance for Research and Development Projects in the Gulf of Mexico and Off the U.S. South Atlantic Coastal States; Marine Fisheries Initiative (MARFIN)

**AGENCY:** National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notice of solicitation for applications.

**SUMMARY:** The MARFIN program provides financial assistance for research and development projects that optimize the use of fisheries in the Gulf of Mexico and off the South Atlantic States of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida involving the U.S. fishing industry (recreational and commercial), including fishery biology, resource assessment, socio-economic assessment, management and conservation, selected harvesting methods, and fish handling and processing.

**DATES:** We must receive your application by close of business (5 p.m. eastern standard time on June 27, 2003. Applications received after that time will not be considered for funding. The earliest start date of awards is about 200 days after the date of publication of this notice. Applicants should consider this processing time in developing requested start dates for their applications.

**ADDRESSES:** You can obtain an application package from, and send your completed applications(s) to: National Marine Fisheries Service, State/Federal Liaison office, 9721 Executive Center Drive N., St. Petersburg, FL 33702. You may also obtain the application package from the