

foreign trade policies, macroeconomic conditions, energy policies/prices, insurance rates, foreign aid policies (e.g. World Bank, IMF, OECD, etc.), and coastal economic development (including both land use and water use, with a particular focus on pollution generating activities and gentrification).

19. A comparative analysis of management/regulation in the seafood industry relative to other food producing industries that operate under the USDA's control.

20. Development of methodologies to accurately assess the cumulative economic and social impacts of fishery management regulations on fishermen and fishing communities, and to separate such from the impacts of non-fishery management factors.

21. An empirically based assessment of how and to what extent "demand side" policies and programs are likely to affect the welfare of domestic fishermen and fishing communities, as well as domestic consumers. Analyses should specifically include estimation of supply and consumer demand elasticities by product form and type, explicitly taking the role of imports into account. Such policies and programs would include: product and quality standards (similar to those employed in the beef, pork, and poultry industries), eco-labeling, country of origin labeling, and marketing of domestically produced seafood (i.e. "Buy U.S."). This research should specifically address the magnitude and distribution of costs and benefits for providing additional product information to seafood consumers.

22. Development of point of sales materials (recipes, posters, etc. to be used in retail establishments) to promote sales of domestic wild harvested shrimp.

23. Evaluation of the economic effects of hypoxia on Gulf of Mexico fisheries.

II. Award Information

We are soliciting applications for Federal assistance pursuant to 15 U.S.C. 713c-3(d). This document describes how to apply for funding under the MARFIN Grant Program and how we will determine which applications we will fund.

Approximately \$2.2 million may be available in fiscal year (FY) 2004 for projects. This amount includes possible in-house projects and \$500,000 for 1-year projects for red snapper research. (See I. Funding Opportunities.) Publication of this notice does not obligate NMFS to fund an award or any parts of an award since funds will be contingent upon availability of funding.

Project proposals accepted for funding with a project period over 1 year do not have to compete for the additional years of funding. However, funding for the additional years, is contingent upon the availability of funds and satisfactory performance and is at the sole discretion of the agency.

This program is described in the "Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance" under program number 11.433, Marine Fisheries Initiative (MARFIN).

III. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible applicants include institutions of higher education, hospitals, other nonprofits, commercial organizations, and state, local and Indian tribal governments. Federal agencies or institutions are not eligible. Foreign governments, organizations under the jurisdiction of foreign governments, and international organizations are excluded for purposes of this solicitation since the objective of the MARFIN program is to optimize research and development benefits from U.S. marine fishery resources.

We are strongly committed to broadening the participation of Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic Serving Institutions, and Tribal Colleges and Universities in its educational and research programs. DOC/NOAA's goals are to achieve full participation by Minority Serving Institutions (MSI) in order to advance the development of human potential, to strengthen the nation's capacity to provide high-quality education, and to increase opportunities for MSIs to participate in and benefit from Federal financial assistance programs. DOC/NOAA encourages all applicants to include meaningful participation of MSIs.

2. Cost Sharing: Cost-sharing is not required for the MARFIN program. Applications must provide the total budget necessary to accomplish the project, including contributions and/or donations. Because 15 U.S.C. 713c-3(c)(4)(B) provides that the amount of Federal funding must be at least 50 percent of the estimated cost of the project, the total costs shown in the proposal will be evaluated for appropriateness according to the administrative rules, including 15 CFR 14.23 and 15 CFR 24.24, as appropriate. If an applicant chooses to cost-share, and if that application is selected for funding, the applicant is bound by the percentage of the cost share reflected in the grant or cooperative agreement award. Note: Costs incurred in either the development of a project or the financial assistance application, or time

expended in any subsequent discussions or negotiations prior to the award, are neither reimbursable nor recognizable as part of the recipient's cost share.

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. Address to Request Application Package: You can obtain an application package from, and send your completed applications(s) to: Ellie Francisco Roche, Chief, State/Federal Liaison Office, Southeast Regional Office, NMFS, 9721 Executive Center Drive, N., St. Petersburg, FL 33702. You may also obtain the application package from the MARFIN Home Page at: <http://caldera.sero.nmfs.gov/grants/grants.htm>.

You must submit one signed original and nine signed copies of the completed application (including supporting information). We will accept neither facsimile applications, nor electronically forwarded applications.

2. Content and Form of Application Submission - We will award grants or cooperative agreements for a maximum period of up to 3 years, consisting of one, two, or three budget periods. The award period depends upon the duration of funding requested in the application, the decision of the NMFS selecting official on the amount of funding, the results of post-selection negotiations between the applicant and NOAA officials, and pre-award review of the application by NOAA and Department of Commerce (DOC) officials. Normally, each project budget period is 12 months in duration.

The Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification 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 on October 30, 2002 (67 FR 55109), is applicable to this solicitation. The standard forms in a MARFIN application include the MARFIN Project Budget and the MARFIN Project Summary. Applicants should contact the NMFS Southeast Regional Office for a copies of this solicitation's MARFIN application forms (see **ADDRESSES**). You may also obtain the application package from the MARFIN Home Page at: <http://caldera.sero.nmfs.gov/grants/grants.htm>.

Project applications must identify the principal participants, and include copies of any agreements describing the specific tasks to be performed by participants. Project applications should give a clear presentation of the proposed work, the methods for carrying out the project, its relevance to managing and