

research effort to produce the best possible forecasts of climate variability and change and to aid in the development of forecast guidance products that are socially and economically useful to decision makers. The Institute will promote research efforts designed to (1) develop coupled models of the global atmosphere, ocean, and land surface to serve as a basis for improved climate variability and change simulations and forecasts, (2) produce and analyze modern and paleoclimatic data that will be required for the verification of the simulations and forecasts, and (3) explore and develop methods that will facilitate the effective dissemination of the forecasts to decision makers.

III. Eligibility

Extramural eligibility is limited to U.S. institutions. Universities, non-profit organizations, for-profit organizations, State and local governments, and Indian Tribes, are included among entities eligible for funding under this announcement.

IV. Evaluation Criteria

Consideration for financial assistance will be given to those proposals that address the Program Priorities listed above and meets the following evaluation criteria. Equal weight is assigned to each of the criteria.

a. *Scientific Merit*: Intrinsic scientific value of the proposed research.

b. *Program Relevance*: Applicability to the OAR Joint and Cooperative Institute Program as described in Section II, Program Description.

V. Submission Requirements

The guidelines for proposal preparation provided below are mandatory. Failure to heed these guidelines will result in proposals being returned without review.

a. *Letters of Intent*: (1) Letters of Intent (LOI) are required prior to submission of a full proposal. (2) The LOI should be no more than ten pages in length and should include the name and institution of the principal investigator. (3) The LOI should provide a concise description of the proposed work. (4) The LOI should also provide a detailed description of the resources and capabilities of the host institution, specifically scientific expertise, specialized facilities, ongoing research activities, and educational and training programs. (5) Evaluation will be by OAR program management, according to the evaluation criteria for full proposals described above. (6) Institutions with an LOI deemed unresponsive will not be encouraged to submit full proposals, however they will

not be precluded from submitting a full proposal.

b. *Full Proposals*: All proposals should include the following elements:

(1) *Signed title page*: The title page should be signed by the Principal Investigator (PI) and the institutional representative. The PI and institutional representative should be identified by full name, title, organization, telephone number, and address.

(2) *Abstract*: A one page abstract must be included and should contain a brief summary of the work to be completed. The abstract should appear on a separate page, headed with the proposal title, institution(s) investigator(s), total proposed cost and budget period.

(3) *Statements of work*: All proposals should provide detailed five-year plans for climate variability and change modeling and prediction research, modern and paleoclimatic observations, and climate forecast applications which build upon the program outlined in the LOI. The following areas must be addressed in the proposal: Proposed mechanisms for the development and implementation of climate model improvements; creation and maintenance of a modern and paleoclimatic data base; strategy for generating experimental forecasts guidance products and their effective dissemination to decision makers. The proposed work should be described, including identification of the problems, scientific objectives, proposed methodology, and relevance to the program priorities listed above. Factors, such as readiness of needed infrastructure, ease of interaction with scientists at GFDL, amount and type of NOAA support presently received, benefits of the proposed work to the general public, the scientific community, and decision makers, should be described. Results from related projects previously and presently supported by NOAA should be included.

(4) *Budget*: Applicants must submit a budget using the Standard Form 424a(4-92), Budget Information—Non-Construction Programs. The form is included in the standard NOAA application kit.

(5) *Vita*: An abbreviated Curriculum Vita for the PI should be included. Reference lists should be limited to all publications in the last three years with up to five other relevant papers.

(6) *Current and pending Federal support*: Each investigator should submit a list that includes project title, supporting agency with grant number, investigator months, dollar value and duration. Requested values should be listed for pending federal support.

VI. Selection Procedures

All proposals will be evaluated in accordance with the above evaluation criteria by an independent peer review panel consisting of both NOAA and non-NOAA Federal experts. The panel will review and discuss each proposal and, based on the above evaluation criteria, make a consensus recommendation of the most meritorious and relevant proposal to the Selecting Official.

The Selecting Official may either accept the recommendation or select another proposal based on the following program policy factor: geographic diversity within the existing Joint Institute program. The selected proposal will be forwarded to the Grants Officer for action and the successful applicant notified.

VII. Other Requirements

(1) Applications under this program are not subject to Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs."

(2) In accordance with Federal statutes and regulations, no person on grounds of race, color, age, sex, national origin, or disability shall be excluded from participation in, denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving financial assistance. The NOAA Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research does not have direct Telephone Device for the Deaf (TDD) capabilities, but can be reached through the State of Maryland-supplied TDD contact number, 800-735-2258, between the hours of 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

(3) 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 on October 30, 2002 (67 FR 66109), is applicable to this solicitation.

VIII. Classification

This notice has been determined to be not significant for purposes of Executive Order 12866. This notice contains collection-of-information requirements subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act. The use of Standard Forms 424, 424A, and SF-LLL has been approved by OMB under the respective control numbers 0348-0043, 0348-0044, and 0348-0046. Notwithstanding any other provision of 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 Paperwork Reduction Act, unless that collection displays a currently valid OMB control number.