

Earth System Prediction Capability (ESPC) Project Internal NOAA Announcement of Opportunity

Summary: OAR Headquarters is soliciting proposals under the ESPC Project for FY 2014. In recognition of the national initiative to foster a seamless global coupled air-ocean-land-ice physical earth system prediction capability across time scales from synoptic to decadal and the need to leverage progress across agencies, this project has two complementary goals.

(1) The project seeks to support research aligned with the five established ESPC Focus Projects:

- Predictability of Blocking Events and High Impact Weather at Lead Times of One to Six Weeks (Stan Benjamin, ESRL, stan.benjamin@noaa.gov)
- Seasonal Tropical Cyclone Threat: Predictability of Tropical Cyclone Likelihood, Mean Track, and Intensity from Weekly to Seasonal Timescales (Melinda Peng, NRL MRY, melinda.peng@nrlmry.navy.mil)
- Arctic Sea Ice Extent and Seasonal Ice Free Dates: Predictability from Weekly to Seasonal Timescales (Phil Jones, LANL, pwjones@lanl.gov)
- Coastal Seas: Predictability of Circulation, Hypoxia, and Harmful Algal Blooms at lead Times of One to Six Weeks (Gregg Jacobs, NRL SSC, gregg.jacobs@nrlssc.navy.mil)
- Open Ocean: Predictability of the Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation (AMOC) from Monthly to Decadal Timescales (Jim Richman, NRL SSC, james.richman@nrlssc.navy.mil).

More extensive descriptions of the Focus Projects can be found at <http://espc.oar.noaa.gov>. Projects that align with the ESPC Focus Projects are asked to inform the ESPC Focus Project leaders about proposed work, and are encouraged to leverage existing capabilities and datasets where appropriate.

(2) This project also seeks proposals that extend forecast capabilities through the 0 to 100 day time frame. 0 to 100 day projects are not required to coordinate with the ESPC Focus Project leaders, but their awareness might be beneficial.

For this funding, DOC provided specific direction to increase funding levels for CIs. OAR expects that a significant portion of project funds will support CI partners. Labs should be prepared to report on funding allocations to CI partners as requested throughout the year. Awarded funds must be obligated in FY 2014. OAR laboratories should expect to receive funding around June 1. Where appropriate, labs are encouraged to leverage work done at other agencies.

Eligibility: **Any OAR laboratory federal employee may submit one proposal.**

Deadline: **Proposals should be submitted via email to Jessie Carman (jessie.carman@noaa.gov) by 5 p.m. EDT May 2, 2014.** Late proposals will not be considered.

Funding Availability: OAR/ESPC anticipates that at least two to three projects up to \$400K each will be funded.

Project Period: The panel will accept proposals for project periods up to three years; for multi-year projects, annual budgets and work plans should be submitted. Funding past the first year is contingent on both work performance and appropriations.

Submission Requirements for Proposals: To facilitate expedient and quality review, the requirements for preparation of proposals provided below are mandatory (except where otherwise noted). Failure to adhere to these requirements will result in proposals being returned without review.

- A. A brief abstract containing a summary of the work to be completed and its alignment with ESPC goals.
- B. A Statement of Work that includes:
 - (1) The name of the PI and any co-investigators, including affiliations
 - (2) The proposed duration of the project (up to three years)
 - (3) A description of the research or development and its coordination with existing projects
 - (4) A work plan and schedule for the research, including a timeline with key milestones (at least two annually)
 - (5) An explanation of why this work will have a significant scientific impact
 - (6) For Focus Project Proposals: Identify the ESPC Focus Project to which the project has the potential to contribute and how. An informal acknowledgement of coordination could be included (email, letter) and will not count against page limits.
- C. Applicants must submit a budget including any scientific and technical support staff salaries, grants, contracts, computing, equipment (provide justification), indirect charges, and travel. Include cost of other resources not charged to the project (leveraging).
- D. The proposal shall not exceed 5 pages, including figures, using 12-point font and 1-inch margins.

Evaluation Criteria: The proposals will be evaluated by the panel based on the following criteria (with their relative weights):

- A. Importance/relevance of Proposal to the goals of this solicitation. This criterion ascertains whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and relevance to NOAA's mission and the potential for impact to the national ESPC (30%).
- B. Scientific/Technical merit. This criterion assesses whether the proposed approaches in the work plan are technically sound and/or innovative and if the methods are appropriate (30%).
- C. Overall Qualification of Applicants and Partners. This criterion ascertains the overall scientific/technical experience and qualifications of the project team (20%).
- D. Project Costs. This criterion evaluates the budget to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time-frame. In order to maximize the

number of these projects, higher scores will be given to smaller funding requests and/or those with the most leveraging (20%). For proposals with scores that are extremely close in value, the panel will additionally consider programmatic balance.

Selection Procedures: Proposals will be evaluated and ranked by reviewers selected by OAR Headquarters who are unconflicted and not involved with any of the submitted proposals and who are familiar with global coupled physical earth system modeling across time and space scales. Following review, the proposals will be presented to the OAR Deputy Assistant Administrator for Laboratories and Cooperative Institutes for selection. OAR will endeavor to make selections by May 21, 2014. The ESPC Office will facilitate the review and selection process.

Annual Project Review: All funded proposals will submit semi-annual progress reports to the ESPC Office for review by the ESPC Office and the DAA-LCI. A final report shall be submitted to the DAA-LCI and ESPC Office at the end of the project documenting results and potential next steps.