



# WEATHER PROGRAM OFFICE

## National Oceanic and Atmospheric Research

### **FY22 WPO Notice of Funding Opportunity At-a-Glance**

WPO is committed to facilitating an efficient, straightforward, and inclusive grants application process. Through surveys, in-person discussions, email, and more, we continually collect feedback about the process to incorporate in the development of a new competition schedule. WPO recognizes that the grants process can be difficult, time-intensive, and potentially confusing at times for all parties, including applicants, institutions, reviewers, and grants management teams. The Notice of Funding Opportunity for Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22 NOFO) was developed with this in mind. For more information, visit [wpo.noaa.gov/nofo](http://wpo.noaa.gov/nofo) or email us as [oar.wpo.competitions@noaa.gov](mailto:oar.wpo.competitions@noaa.gov).

#### Competitions

The FY22 WPO NOFO consists of the following six competitions. Additional details for each program may be found in Section I of the NOFO.

1. Fire Weather & Atmospheric Composition (FWAC)
2. Climate Testbed (CTB)
3. Joint Technology Transfer Initiative (JTTI)
4. Subseasonal to Seasonal (S2S)
5. Verification of the Origins of Rotation in Tornadoes in the U.S.A. (VORTEX-USA)
6. Weather Testbeds (including Hazardous Weather Testbed, HWT; Hydrometeorological Testbed, HMT; and Joint Hurricane Testbed, JHT)

#### Competition Deadlines

The competition dates and deadlines are consistent for each of the six WPO competitions:

LOI Deadline - September 14, 2021 (5:00 pm Eastern Time)

Proposal Deadline - November 17, 2021 (5:00 pm Eastern Time)

#### Submitting Multiple Proposals

Applicants are allowed to submit multiple proposals to multiple competitions, but they must be wholly different projects. Do not submit duplicate applications to different competitions; only the first one received will be eligible for review. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit proposals early, especially if submitting multiple proposals. Be aware that institutional grants services representatives may require additional time to process applications if a large number are submitted from the same institution.

#### Project Start Dates

If your proposal is selected for funding, the project is expected to begin between August 1 and September 1, 2022, depending on the program, and subject to appropriation of funds. Program-specific start dates can be found in Section II.B of the NOFO.

### Letters of Intent

Pre-application Letters of Intent (LOI) are strongly encouraged for all programs. Each LOI will be reviewed and returned to the potential applicant with recommendations to proceed with a full proposal, to not proceed with a full proposal, or adjust the project plans to ensure applications are aligned with program objectives. LOIs must be submitted by 5 p.m. ET on September 14, 2020, via email to [oar.wpo.competitions@noaa.gov](mailto:oar.wpo.competitions@noaa.gov).

### NOAA Testbed Information

Applicants are encouraged to evaluate their project output in a NOAA Testbed or Proving Ground if it is beneficial to their research, development, and eventual transition. In these cases, applicants are expected to identify and work with the appropriate Testbed Manager(s) beginning at an early stage to prepare the experiment. The full proposal should include a NOAA Collaborator Acknowledgement Form completed and signed by the relevant Testbed Manager to demonstrate adequate collaboration.

### NOAA Readiness Levels

NOAA uses Readiness Levels (RLs) to broadly classify the maturity of its projects. The numerical RL scale from 1 to 9 is designed to track project maturity across the progressive spectrum from research to development to demonstration to deployment. Applicants are expected to estimate their proposed project's RL at project start and identify its intended RL upon completion. Most commonly, WPO projects fall between RL4 and RL7 and may progress to RL8 (ready for transition to operations or applications). The project is considered at RL9 only once its output is adopted into 24/7 operations at NWS or applied elsewhere after project completion.

RLs are defined in the context of NOAA's overall process for transitioning funded research into operations, commercialization, or other applications in NOAA's Policy on Research and Development Transitions described in NOAA Administrative Order 216-105B and in Appendix A. Additional information can be found in the Procedural Handbook for NOAA's Policy on Research & Development Transitions at [https://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/ames/administrative\\_orders/chapter\\_216/Handbook\\_NAO216-105B\\_03-21-17.pdf](https://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/ames/administrative_orders/chapter_216/Handbook_NAO216-105B_03-21-17.pdf).

### Research Transition (R2X) Information

With some exceptions, most of the funding competitions in WPO's NOFO are focused on supporting applied research that will transition to operations or other applications. While WPO cannot directly fund research transition (R2X) activities (i.e., progressing from Readiness Level 8 to 9) involving the transition of research and development output to National Weather Service (NWS) or other operations, the funded projects may work with operational collaborators to plan for an eventual transition if an operational center agrees. Per NOAA policy, PIs will be expected to complete a written Research and Development Transition Plan in coordination with an assigned NWS or other Point-of-Contact after the project begins,

if the project is intended to surpass Readiness Level 4 and/or transition to NWS operations or another application after the award ends. More information on transition plan requirements will be provided after award selections are made, and on [WPO's website on research transitions](#). General information about NOAA research transition can be found at the website for [OAR's Office of Research, Transition, and Application \(ORTA\)](#).

### Proposal Scoring Criteria

A minimum of three independent peer reviewers per proposal will score each application based on the following criteria, for a total of 100 possible points. Additional information about the proposal selection process can be found in Section V of the NOFO.

1. Importance/Relevance and Applicability to Program Goals (30 points)
2. Technical/Scientific Merit (35 points)
3. Overall Qualifications of Applicants (15 points)
4. Project Costs (10 points)
5. Outreach and Education (5 points)
6. Diversity and Inclusion (5 points)

### Information for Federal Applicants

Federal employees and federal contractors directly performing work for a federal institution may not request funding for salary as part of this funding opportunity, but may serve as co-PIs, co-Is, or collaborators on a proposal led by an external, non-federal PI. Federal collaborators may request funding for infrastructure or project-critical travel (excluding conference and workshop travel). Federal collaborators (including NOAA laboratories or operational centers) housing Cooperative Institute or other employees may request funding to cover indirect costs at a pre-agreed upon rate; this will count against the total project cost. However, the sum of any other funding requested by federal collaborators must not exceed 20% of the total proposed project cost.

Any federal NOAA collaborator requesting funding must attach a letter outlining the request and associated cost breakdown. Federal collaborators not requesting funding should complete and sign the NOAA Collaborator Acknowledgement Form, to be submitted with the proposal, in lieu of a letter of support. However, a letter of support may also optionally be submitted.

A separate funding competition for federal, NOAA-internal institutions will also be held by the WPO JTTI program, outside of the scope of this NOFO.

### Student Opportunities

WPO recognizes that many proposed projects provide opportunities for students. The FY22 NOFO schedule is intended to allow investigators a chance to hire students during the spring recruitment season rather than waiting until the summer, when many students are already committed. Applicants are encouraged to promote the education and field experience of undergraduate and graduate students and consider leveraging educational scholarship or internship opportunities. Example programs within NOAA include the Ernest F. Hollings Scholarship, William Lapenta Internship, and José E. Serrano Educational

Partnership Program with Minority Serving Institutions (EPP/MSI). For more information on NOAA student opportunities, please visit the website for [NOAA's Office of Education](#).

### Diversity and Inclusion

NOAA, OAR, and WPO strongly encourage applicants and awardees to support the principles of diversity, inclusion, and accessibility when writing their proposals and performing their work. Applicants are expected to include in their proposal information on if and how their proposed project supports a diverse workforce and inclusive research and development opportunities. When writing the proposal, applicants are encouraged to consider the diversity of their team, potential partnerships with institutions of underrepresented populations, new and existing educational and outreach programs, and involvement with other initiatives that build the capacity of and materially foster a diverse and inclusive research team and environment. Proposals in response to this funding opportunity should be relevant to and consistent with NOAA's core values, including those on diversity, inclusion, accessibility, civil rights, and scientific integrity. Strong projects will consider their ability to expand and diversify NOAA capabilities for all Americans in an equitable and just manner. Additional information can be found at the websites for [NOAA's Office of Inclusion and Civil Rights](#), [OAR's Commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility](#), and [NOAA's Acquisition and Grants Office Policy on Awardee Conduct](#).

### Government Shutdown Guidance

In the event of a lapse in government appropriations, assume that there is no change to the regularly-scheduled deadlines unless a revised deadline has been announced. Any deadline revisions will be announced promptly and clearly but may not occur until after the shutdown ends.

### Waiting until the Deadline

With all WPO competitions using the same deadline, there is potential for a large number of submissions in a short period of time. Applicants from large institutions are encouraged to consider potential strain on their institution's grants representative and complete their submission packages early to avoid backlogs and potential delays near the deadline(s).

### Program Contacts

- Fire Weather & Atmospheric Composition and Weather Testbeds: Jordan Dale  
([jordan.dale@noaa.gov](mailto:jordan.dale@noaa.gov); 240-475-7182)
- CTB and S2S: Dr. Jessie Carman ([jessie.carman@noaa.gov](mailto:jessie.carman@noaa.gov); 202-381-7037)
- JTTI: Dr. Chandra Kondragunta ([chandra.kondragunta@noaa.gov](mailto:chandra.kondragunta@noaa.gov); 202-603-2567)
- VORTEX-USA: Alan Gerard ([alan.e.gerard@noaa.gov](mailto:alan.e.gerard@noaa.gov); 405-325-6477)
- General NOFO Questions: [oar.wpo.competitions@noaa.gov](mailto:oar.wpo.competitions@noaa.gov),  
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