



U.S. Department of the Interior  
**OFFICE OF INSULAR AFFAIRS**

**CORAL REEF & NATURAL RESOURCES INITIATIVE**  
**(includes Invasive Species)**

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 15.875

**FISCAL YEAR 2020 APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**

**I. Program Description**

The Office of Insular Affairs (OIA) is requesting proposals for Fiscal Year 2020 for its Coral Reef & Natural Resources (CRNR) Initiative. The CRNR Initiative provides grant funding for management and protection of coral reefs and to combat invasive species in the U.S. insular areas. The goal of the CRNR Initiative is to improve the health of coral reef ecosystems and other natural resources in the U.S. insular areas for their long-term economic and social benefit. Priority will be given to projects that help the insular areas address a variety of threats to coral reef ecosystems and to **eradicating** aquatic and terrestrial plant, insect, and animal invasive species.

The U.S. insular areas include the United States territories of the Virgin Islands, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Mariana Islands, and American Samoa, as well as the independent Freely Associated States of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of Palau.

**II. Eligible Applicants**

Applications for 2020 funding are encouraged and will be considered from insular government entities, educational institutions, or non-profit organizations in the four U.S. territories or three freely associated states, in accordance with 2 CFR 200.

**III. Award Information**

The total amount of funding for this program this year is not yet known. The period of performance for the majority of projects funded under this initiative is 12 to 36 months. Project proposals must be designed accordingly. Past and present recipients of awards under this

initiative are eligible but must submit new proposals to compete for funding each year unless multi-year funding has been awarded.

**a. Review and Selection Process**

All eligible Coral Reef & Natural Resources Initiative grant applications will be reviewed and evaluated using criteria shown in the next section. Recommendations from the merit review will be made to the Assistant Secretary for Insular and International Affairs for final project selection. Scores will be provided to the applicant if requested.

In order to comply with the new financial assistance regulations, 2 CFR 200 "Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards," past performance information will be considered during the selection process.

**b. Evaluation Criteria and Merit Review**

All eligible Coral Reef & Natural Resources Initiative grant applications will be evaluated and scored using the following five criteria. An application's score will be based upon the point scale (total of 100 points) shown in the left column of each item and the guidelines listed in the right column:

<b>Criterion A. –PROJECT NEED (Problem Statement and Desired Outcome):</b>	
<b>Ai. A critical problem exists and needs to be addressed. Weight 15%</b>	
<b>15</b>	The application clearly identifies a critical problem within one or more of the islands under OIA jurisdiction. Project is urgently needed to address the problem and fits within CRNR's goal to improve the health of coral reef ecosystems and combat invasive species in the U.S. insular areas for their long-term economic and social benefit.
<b>7</b>	The problem is critical, but the problem does not need to be addressed within this grant period.
<b>1</b>	Although there is a problem, it is not critical.
<b>Aii. The desired outcome is identified and the project directly addresses the critical problem with an appropriate solution. Weight 15%</b>	
<b>15</b>	The desired outcome is clearly identified and the proposed project directly addresses and significantly improves the critical problem identified in Ai. with an appropriate solution.
<b>7</b>	The desired outcome is identified and the proposed project adequately addresses the critical problem identified in Ai. with an appropriate solution.
<b>1</b>	The proposed project only minimally addresses the critical problem.
<b>Aiii. The project aligns with one or more of the Office of Insular Affairs' CRNR priorities listed in the announcement. Weight 20%</b>	
<b>20</b>	For invasive species related projects, the proposed project actually eradicates an invasive species. For coral projects, the proposed project is a concrete rather than abstract project.
<b>10</b>	The proposed project strongly aligns with one of the priorities.

1	The proposed project minimally aligns with one of the priorities.
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<b>Criterion B. –PROJECT FEASIBILITY (The applicant has the ability to successfully complete the project)</b>	
<b>Bi. The Project budget is reasonable. Weight 10%</b>	
10	The grant application budget is comprehensive and well detailed. All budget items are allowable, reasonable, and directly relevant to the project. The budget reflects competitive sourcing and reasonable cost comparisons.
5	The grant application budget presents basic information, although there are some questions and possible inadequacies in terms of appropriateness, technical soundness, and application.
1	The grant application budget minimally presents basic information. Some budget items may not be appropriate and there are major questions regarding technical soundness and applicability.
<b>Bii. The project timeline is reasonable. Weight 10%</b>	
10	The grant application timeline is reasonable, comprehensive and well detailed. It can be completed within the 3-year timeframe for CRNR grants.
5	The grant application presents a timeline with general appropriateness, although it is less detailed and there are some questions or concerns regarding the proposed project length.
1	The grant application presents a timeline that minimally presents basic information.
<b>Biii. If the applicant is a previous OIA grantee, their prior performance was acceptable. If not a previous OIA grantee, then the responses to the financial questions for new grantees in Section IV(B)(9) of this application document were acceptable. Weight 10%</b>	
10	For New Grantee: Answers to financial questions are all affirmative. For Existing Grantee: Prior performance and submission of financial and narrative reports was excellent, always on time and accurate.
5	For New Grantee: Answers to more than half of the financial questions are affirmative. For Existing Grantee: Prior performance and submission of financial and narrative reports was moderate, sometimes late.
1	For New Grantee: Less than half of the financial questions are affirmative. For Existing Grantee: Prior performance and submission of financial and narrative reports was problematic. Reports were not timely and/or adequate.

<b>Criterion C. –PROJECT SUPPORT</b>	
<b>Ci. The project has support and/or participation from major stakeholders and local government officials. Weight 10%</b>	
10	The project has very strong support from stakeholders, the public, Congress, and local government and the proposal includes numerous letters of support from key partners and supporters.
5	Letters of support have been submitted, and the proposal demonstrates that there will be local government involvement in the project.
1	The project will have little, if any, support.

<b>Criterion D. –PROJECT IMPACT</b>	
<b>Di. The applicant has the organizational resources necessary to successfully implement the proposed work plan AND has experience working in the Insular Area(s) in which they propose to work. Weight 10%</b>	
<b>10</b>	The organization has extensive experience both in the proposed field of work AND in working within the proposed Insular area(s).
<b>5</b>	The organization has some experience working in the proposed field of work AND some experience working in the proposed Insular Area(s).
<b>1</b>	The organization has either little experience working in the proposed field OR little experience working in the proposed Insular Area(s).

The Assistant Secretary of Insular Affairs and/or designated official will consider the merit review, as well as the amount of funds available and the following program policy factors when making recommendations for funding:

1. Geographic distribution of funding
2. Emergency Situations

**c. Discussions and Award**

The Government may enter into discussions with a selected applicant for any reason deemed necessary, including, but not limited to: (1) only a portion of the application is selected for award; (2) OIA needs additional information to determine that the recipient is capable of complying with the requirements of DOI Financial Assistance Regulations and/or (3) special terms and conditions are required. Failure to resolve satisfactorily the issues identified by OIA will preclude award to the applicant.

**IV. Application Information**

**Applications must be submitted via Grants.Gov ([www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov)). Please note that an applicant must first be registered with Grants.Gov to use the system and must have a Data Universal Numbers System (DUNS) number as well as an active Central Contractor Registration (CCR).**

**Submission Deadline:** The submission deadline is April 1, 2020.

**Decision Timeframe:** Decisions on funding of project proposals will be made within 90 days of the deadline for applications.

**Application Preparation:** Applications should be prepared and submitted by the grant recipient. Applications prepared and submitted by a third party, such as an existing or potential contractor who may benefit from the grant, are not eligible. Grant recipients must follow the applicable procurement procedures contained in 2 CFR 200 when procuring services and goods under OIA grants. Please note that OIA must ensure that funded projects are in compliance with

the National Environmental Policy Act and other applicable environmental laws and regulations. Therefore, please factor the cost of compliance into the formulation of your request.

**Application Format:** OIA does not require a standard format; however, your proposal should include all of the following elements in order to receive full consideration:

- A. Signed and Dated Cover Letter:** The cover letter should briefly summarize the application and be signed by an Authorized Representative of the applicant organization. Cover letters should be addressed to:

Douglas W. Domenech  
Assistant Secretary Insular and International Affairs  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Mail-Stop 3119  
Washington, D.C. 20240

- B. Project Narrative:** The project narrative must include the following elements:

**1. Detailed Project Description(s):** Describe the project(s) being proposed in detail.

**2. Detailed Project Budget(s):** Provide detailed budget information for the proposed project(s) and activities. A budget breakout chart, by category, is suggested. Please make sure to explain categories that are not self-explanatory, such as “OTHER”, in full. **If charging indirect cost, please include or attach a copy of the negotiated indirect cost rate document.** Please note that all activities and costs to be charged to the grant must be in full compliance with the applicable cost principles:

Entity incurring costs	Applicable directive
State, local, or Federally recognized Indian Tribe	2 CFR 200 Subpart E - Cost Principles; 200.416-200.417 - Special Considerations for States, Local Government, and Indian Tribes
Non-profit organization	2 CFR 200 Subpart E – Cost Principles
Institution of Higher Education	2 CFR 200 Subpart E – Cost Principles; 200.418 - 200.419 – Special Considerations for Institutes of Higher Education

2 CFR 200 can be viewed using the following link:

[http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr200\\_main\\_02.tpl](http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr200_main_02.tpl)

**3. Detailed Project Timeline(s):** Provide a detailed project timeline for completion of each proposed project.

**4. Statement of Need:** Describe why this project is necessary and include supporting information. Summarize previous or ongoing efforts (of your organization as well as outside organizations) relevant to the proposed work.

**5. Project Goals and Objectives:** State the long-term goals you want to achieve. Objectives are the specific steps you will take to reach those goals. Your objectives, must be specific, measurable, and realistic (attainable within the period of performance).

**6. Priority Listing for Multiple Projects:** If multiple projects are being proposed, please provide a listing of the proposed projects in order of priority. For example:

*SUMMARY PRIORITY PROJECTS*

<u>Priority Project (list in priority order)</u>	<u>Requested Amount</u>
1. <i>Priority 1 - Project [Name]</i>	\$
2. <i>Priority 2 - Project [Name]</i>	\$
3. <i>Priority 3 - Project [Name]</i>	\$
<i>Total Request for Fiscal Year 2013</i>	\$

**7. Grant Recipient:** Please provide the name, title, and address of the potential grant recipient. Typically, this is the head of the local government or organization.

**8. Recipient Grant Manager:** Please provide the name, title, and contact information for the person who will be the day-to-day grant manager if the proposal is funded. Contact information should include the mailing address, phone number, fax number and email address (as applicable).

**9. First Time Applicants:** Please ensure that the following questions are answered on your application if you are a first time applicant for OIA grant funding:

- a) Does your organization have independent financial capabilities that can comply with the financial management and accounting requirements detailed in 2 CFR 200 (see below)?
- b) Does your organization have a financial unit? If so, please describe the staffing and structure (such as the number of CPAs, utilization of accounting software etc.)
- c) Has your organization received and managed federal grant funding before?
- d) Does your organization undergo an annual financial audit?
- e) Has your organization ever completed a single audit?
- f) Is your organization a 501(c)(3) nonprofit? If so, please submit supporting documentation of your 501(c)(3) status.

All applicants, but especially first time applicants, are strongly encouraged to review Code of Federal Regulations Title 2, Part 200 (2 CFR 200) in order to familiarize themselves with the Department of the Interior's administrative requirements, particularly the financial management requirements, associated with managing federal grant funding. 2 CFR 200 can be viewed using the following link:

[http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr200\\_main\\_02.tpl](http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr200_main_02.tpl)

**10. Automated Standard Application for Payments (ASAP) Identification Number:** Organizations already enrolled in ASAP under Agency Location Code 14010001 should list their ASAP identification number on their application. Please see *Section VI. Fund Disbursement* below for additional information.

#### **11. Registration Process Requirements**

There are several actions you must complete in order to submit an application with the Federal Government. Each applicant must register with the System for Award Management (SAM). You are required to have a DUNS number (Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System) in order to register with SAM. Utilize the following links to guide you through this process:

Registration process for DUNS can be found at: <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>

Registration process for SAM can be found at <https://www.sam.gov>

**This process can take several weeks – START EARLY, DON'T DELAY**

### **C. Required SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance Forms**

Applicants must complete and submit three SF-424 forms as part of the application for OIA grants: 1) the SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance; 2) the SF-424A Budget Information – Non Construction Programs, and 3) the SF-424B Assurances – Non-Construction Programs. The SF-424 forms can be found on the Grants.Gov website and are made available as part of the Grants.Gov application process:

<https://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormsMenu?source=agency>

## **V. Award Administration Information**

### **A. Award Instrument Information**

- Projects will be funded, subject to availability of funds, by issuance of a grant agreement.
- Agreements will include a cover letter signed by an Office of Insular Affairs Official and a grant award document issued by the grant manager.
- The recipient shall obtain prior approval for any budget or program revisions.

### **B. Term of the Agreement**

- Agreement terms are typically from 18 months to 3 years. Grantees should have no expectation that extensions will be approved.

- Prior to the expiration of the grant agreement, modifications may be proposed by either party and will become effective upon written approval.

#### **C. Funding Restrictions**

- All funding is contingent upon the availability and appropriation of funds by the United States Congress.
- Costs must be allowable in accordance with the applicable Federal cost principles referenced in 2 CFR 200, Subpart E – Cost Principles.

#### **D. Submission from Successful Applicants**

- If selected for possible award, the Office of Insular Affairs reserves the right the request additional or clarifying information for any reason deemed necessary.

#### **E. Award Notices**

- After an applicant's proposal is selected for award, the applicant will receive a letter from the Office of Insular Affairs. This letter will detail the next steps in the awarding process.
- The Office of Insular Affairs anticipates that the grant recipients and projects will be chosen during the spring and summer 2018 once full year appropriations are received by the Office of Insular Affairs.

#### **F. Administration and National Policy Requirements**

- Code of Federal Regulations – By accepting financial assistance, your organization agrees to abide by the applicable Federal regulations in the expenditure of Federal funds and performance under this program: 2 CFR Part 200 – Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards

### **VI. Grant Reporting**

The standard grant reporting requirements are listed below:

- An SF-425 Federal Financial Report and a narrative project status report will be due semi-annually for the periods beginning January 1 and ending June 30, and beginning July 1 and ending December 31.
- Reports are due within 30 days of the end of the period (i.e. January 31 and July 31). Final reports are due 90 days after the expiration or termination of the award.

These standard reporting requirements will apply to all awards unless otherwise indicated in the Terms and Conditions section of the award. Additional requirements are assigned on a case-by-case basis and may also be found in the Terms and Conditions section of the award.



## **VII. Fund Disbursement**

Grant recipients located in the U.S. Territories or in the United States will be required to enroll with, and utilize, the U.S. Treasury's Automated Standard Application for Payments (ASAP) system to request payments under a grant. All payments are made via Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) or Automatic Clearing House (ACH).

Please note that a grantee must be enrolled in ASAP under Agency Location Code 14010001 to have access to OIA grant funds. A grantee that is already enrolled in ASAP with another Federal grant program, such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, must enroll separately with OIA under ALC 14010001 or it will not have access to the OIA grant.

Organizations already enrolled in ASAP under ALC 14010001 should list their ASAP ID on their applications as noted above in *Section IV(B)(9)*.

The ASAP enrollment forms can be found on the OIA website:

<http://www.doi.gov/oia/grants.cfm>

## **VIII. Audits**

In accordance with the provisions of 2 CFR 200, Subpart F - Audit Requirements, non-Federal entities that expend financial assistance of \$750,000 or more in Federal awards will have a single or a program-specific audit conducted for that year. Non-Federal entities that expend less than \$750,000 a year in Federal awards are exempt from Federal audit requirements for that year, except as noted in 2 CFR 200.503. In addition, grantees are subject to site visits and audits by the Department of Interior (DOI) and other Federal officials.

## **IX. Marketing and Branding**

A graphic of the U.S. flag, accompanied by the following language, "Funding provided by the U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Insular Affairs", should be displayed on all signage that is intended to identify the project and funders, as appropriate. The graphic and language should be included for all programs, projects, assistance, activities, and public communications, including news articles, partially or fully funded by the Office of Insular Affairs. The U.S. flag may replace or be used in conjunction with the Department of the Interior, Office of Insular Affairs seal. If the seal is displayed, it must remain intact and unchanged, and may only be displayed using either the standard color scheme or a single color that complements the background where it appears. The U.S. flag and language should be publicly displayed on the final product. The OIA grant manager should be contacted for an electronic version of the U.S. flag and Office of Insular Affairs seal if needed.

## **X. Other Information**

### **A. Modification or Changes to the Announcement**

Notices of any modifications to this announcement will be posted on Grants.gov. When you download the application materials at Grants.gov, you can also register to receive notifications by email of any changes or modifications to this announcement.

**B. Government Right to Reject or Negotiate**

The Office of Insular Affairs reserves the right, without qualification, to reject any or all applications received in response to this announcement and to select any application, in whole or in part, as a basis for negotiation and/or award.

**C. Notice of Right to Conduct a Review of Financial Capability**

The Office of Insular Affairs reserves the right to conduct an independent third party review of financial capability for applicants that are selected for negotiation of award.

**D. Notice of Potential Disclosure under Freedom of Information Act**

Applicants should be advised that identifying information regarding all applicants, including applicant names and/or points of contact, may be subject to public disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, whether or not such applicants are selected for negotiation of award.

**E. Personally Identifiable Information**

In responding to this Announcement, applicants must ensure that Protected Personally Identifiable Information (PII) is not included in the Application Package. These documents will be used by the Technical Assistance Grant Program Review Panel in the review process to evaluate each application. PII is defined by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) as: Any information about an individual maintained by an agency, including but not limited to, education, financial transactions, medical history, and criminal or employment history and information that can be used to distinguish or trace an individual's identity, such as their name, social security number, date and place of birth, mother's maiden name, biometric records, etc., including any other personal information that is linked or linkable to an individual. This definition of PII can be further defined as: (1) Public PII and (2) Protected PII.

**1. Public PII:**

PII found in public sources such as telephone books, public websites, business cards, university listing, etc. Public PII includes first and last name, address, work telephone number, email address, home telephone number, and general education credentials.

**2. Protected PII:**

PII that requires enhanced protection. This information includes data that if compromised could cause harm to an individual, such as identity theft.

**F. Conflicts of Interest**

- a. Applicability
  - i. This section intends to ensure that non-Federal entities and their employees take appropriate steps to avoid conflicts of interest in their responsibilities under or with respect to Federal financial assistance agreements.
  - ii. In the procurement of supplies, equipment, construction, and services by recipients and by sub-recipients, the conflict of interest provisions in 2 CFR 200.318 apply.
- b. Requirements
  - i. Non-Federal entities must avoid prohibited conflicts of interest, including any significant financial interests that could cause a reasonable person to question the recipient's ability to provide impartial, technically sound, and objective performance under or with respect to a Federal financial assistance agreement.

- ii. In addition to any other prohibitions that may apply with respect to conflicts of interest, no key official of an actual or proposed recipient or sub-recipient, who is substantially involved in the proposal or project, may have been a former Federal employee who, within the last one (1) year, participated personally and substantially in the evaluation, award, or administration of an award with respect to that recipient or sub-recipient or in development of the requirement leading to the funding announcement.
  - iii. No actual or prospective recipient or sub-recipient may solicit, obtain, or use non-public information regarding the evaluation, award, or administration of an award to that recipient or sub-recipient or the development of a Federal financial assistance opportunity that may be of competitive interest to that recipient or sub-recipient.
- c. Notification
  - i. Non-Federal entities, including applicants for financial assistance awards, must disclose in writing any conflict of interest to the DOI awarding agency or pass-through entity in accordance with 2 CFR 200.112, Conflicts of interest.
  - ii. Recipients must establish internal controls that include, at a minimum, procedures to identify, disclose, and mitigate or eliminate identified conflicts of interest. The recipient is responsible for notifying the Financial Assistance Officer in writing of any conflicts of interest that may arise during the life of the award, including those that have been reported by sub-recipients.
- d. Restrictions on Lobbying. Non-Federal entities are strictly prohibited from using funds under this grant or cooperative agreement for lobbying activities and must provide the required certifications and disclosures pursuant to 43 CFR Part 18 and 31 USC 1352.
- e. Review Procedures. The Financial Assistance Officer will examine each conflict of interest disclosure on the basis of its particular facts and the nature of the proposed grant or cooperative agreement, and will determine whether a significant potential conflict exists and, if it does, develop an appropriate means for resolving it.
- f. Enforcement. Failure to resolve conflicts of interest in a manner that satisfies the Government may be cause for termination of the award. Failure to make required disclosures may result in any of the remedies described in 2 CFR 200.338, Remedies for Noncompliance, including suspension or debarment (see also 2 CFR Part 180).

## **G. Data Availability**

- a. Applicability. The Department of the Interior is committed to basing its decisions on the best available science and providing the American people with enough information to thoughtfully and substantively evaluate the data, methodology, and analysis used by the Department to inform its decisions.
- b. Use of Data. The regulations at 2 CFR 200.315 apply to data produced under a Federal award, including the provision that the Federal Government has the right to obtain, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the data produced under a Federal award as well as authorize others to receive, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use such data for Federal purposes.
- c. Availability of Data. The recipient shall make the data produced under this award and any subaward(s) available to the Government for public release, consistent with applicable law, to allow meaningful third party evaluation and reproduction of the following:

- (i) The scientific data relied upon;
- (ii) The analysis relied upon; and
- (iii) The methodology, including models, used to gather and analyze data.

## **XI. Agency Contacts**

Charlene Leizear, Director, Technical Assistance Division  
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