



**The California State University**

COUNCIL ON OCEAN AFFAIRS, SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY (COAST)

**State Science Information Needs Program  
Grant Guidelines**

**Revised July 6, 2021**

## **Section 1. Overview**

### **1.1 The CSU Council on Ocean Affairs, Science & Technology (COAST)**

Established in 2008, COAST is the umbrella organization for marine, coastal and coastal watershed related activities for all 23 campuses within the California State University (CSU) system. As outlined in its [2016-2021 Strategic Plan](#), COAST's programmatic goals are to:

- Advance our knowledge of coastal and marine resources and the processes that affect them.
- Develop innovative solutions to the economic, sociological, ecological and technological challenges that our coastal zone faces.
- Promote environmental literacy to foster stewardship and sustainable use of our coast.

COAST has identified four strategic priorities that guide its overall activities in order to achieve its goals:

- Provide funding and opportunities to CSU faculty members and students to advance coastal, marine and coastal watershed research and education.
- Serve as a primary resource for informed decision-making in government, industry and local communities.
- Train CSU students to successfully join a highly skilled, technologically sophisticated workforce and ensure the success of students from all backgrounds.
- Communicate the activities, successes and impact of COAST members to stakeholders and the public.

COAST membership includes over 550 faculty members and associated researchers within the CSU.

### **1.2 State Fiscal Year 2019-2020 Funding and Establishment of a New Program**

Through the state Fiscal Year (FY) 2019-2020 budget process, \$3 million has been appropriated to COAST on a one-time basis as part of the General Fund allocation to the CSU<sup>1</sup>. The purpose of the funding is to assist the state with its marine, coastal and coastal-watershed science information needs.

To meet the state's needs, COAST has developed an entirely new funding program entitled the State Science Information Needs Program (SSINP). Research conducted under this program will be exclusively in response to specific scientific information needs identified by the state. Structured interviews with state agencies with relevant jurisdiction were conducted in order to identify these needs. The following topics were initially identified as the highest ocean, coastal and coastal-watershed priorities for the state:

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<sup>1</sup> Assembly Bill (AB) 74 is the legislation that enacted the state budget, to most easily identify the relevant section, please search the bill for "Council on Ocean Affairs".

- Sea-level rise
- Ocean acidification and hypoxia
- Water pollution (including marine debris and microplastics)
- Sustainable fisheries (including marine protected area management and sustainable aquaculture)

As additional high priority issues were identified through the interview process, they were considered for inclusion in the SSINP.

COAST will facilitate strong partnerships between the Principal Investigators of projects selected for funding and the state agency(ies) that identified the particular research need. This will ensure, to the greatest extent practicable, that the research team delivers to the state results that can be readily incorporated into improved management and decision-making.

### **1.3 Purpose of this Document**

The purpose of these Grant Guidelines (Guidelines) is to communicate the basic purpose of the SSINP, outline program requirements, provide detailed application instructions, and describe how funds will be administered.

It is important to note that the information in this document pertains only to SSINP. COAST will continue to fund student and faculty support programs, such as the [Grant Development Program](#), [Graduate Student Research Award Program](#) and others through existing contributions from the Chancellor's Office and individual campuses.

### **1.4 Purpose of Request for Proposals**

Identification of specific research needs for potential funding under SSINP is not within the scope of this document. Rather, specific Requests for Proposals (RFPs) will be released as specific research needs are identified. The purpose of the RFP is to solicit applications to answer specific research questions; the RFP will refer to these Guidelines for more general information about the program and grant administration requirements.

## **Section 2. Program Requirements**

### **2.1 Applicant Eligibility**

All CSU faculty members and research associates<sup>2</sup> (broadly defined) are eligible and encouraged to apply. The Lead Principal Investigator (PI) must be from the CSU. Non-CSU co-PIs are permitted. All PIs must have PI status on their home campus. Priority will be given to full-time Unit 3 members. Proposals from single PIs as well as those from multiple PIs at the same campus or different CSU campuses are permitted.

PIs who are part of a group that is historically underrepresented in marine and coastal science, including PIs who are Hispanic/LatinX, Black or African American, Asian, Pacific Islander, American Indian or Alaska Native; female; LGBTQIA+ and PIs with disabilities are strongly encouraged to apply. Applicants of any race, ethnicity, color, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, socioeconomic background, national origin, age, dis/ability or veteran status are welcome.

Individual PIs may participate in multiple proposals in response to any given RFP but may only be Lead PI on one proposal in any given round of funding.

Members of the COAST Executive Committee may not serve as Lead PIs; they may serve as co-PIs. COAST Executive Committee members may not receive academic year reassigned time funding, academic year additional employment or summer salary support.

No more than 20% of the total funding for any particular project may be awarded to a non-CSU co-PI through a subaward. Additionally, the participation of non-CSU co-PIs must be strongly justified in the application.

### **2.2 Eligible Use of Funds**

Requests may include support for activities or support such as the following, but are not limited to these examples:

- Data collection and/or generation (e.g. experiments, field work, surveys, interviews, sample analysis and data analysis);
- Travel to conduct work at another facility;
- Student support as related to the above activities;
- Equipment and supplies;
- Academic year reassigned time, academic year additional employment, summer salary (see Appendix A for more information)

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<sup>2</sup> An individual's primary affiliation must be with the CSU in order to be considered a CSU faculty member or research associate.

### **2.3 Project Duration**

Projects must be completed within 30 months from the award date. A six-month no-cost extension (NCE) will be allowed only when extraordinary circumstances have prevented the work from being completed within the initially proposed timeframe. The request must include a detailed justification and a revised budget. A NCE must be requested no less than 60 days before the award end date. Only one NCE will be allowed.

### **2.4 Project Budget Amounts**

Awards for the third round of funding will range from \$200,000-\$360,000.

### **2.5 Collaboration with State Agency(ies)**

Once a project is selected for funding, COAST will facilitate a strong partnership between the Principal Investigators and the state agency(ies) that identified the particular research need. The selected research team will consult and collaborate with representatives of the relevant state agency(ies) to ensure, to the greatest extent practicable, that the research team delivers to the state results that can be readily incorporated into improved management and decision-making.

### **2.6 Required Participation in Briefings**

Due to the focus of this funding program to support the state of California's ocean, coastal and coastal-watershed science information needs, PIs will be required to participate in at least one briefing before relevant policymakers. This could include members of the legislature and/or their staff, relevant commissions and/or state agency representatives. The timing and location of the briefings will be determined by COAST staff in consultation with the PIs but will likely be 12-18 months from the award date; the location will likely be Sacramento. PIs will be required to include cost estimates for one trip within California in their proposed budgets (see Section 3.3.7). Co-PIs are not obligated to participate in these briefings but are highly encouraged to do so.

To help PIs prepare for briefings, COAST will provide communication training and support. Training costs will be borne by COAST; PIs will be expected to commit adequate time and effort to prepare for briefings.

### **2.7 Diverse Student Participation**

When PIs are selecting students to be involved in the project, it is expected that they not only consider but ***actively recruit students from groups that are historically underrepresented in marine and coastal science***, including students who are Hispanic/LatinX, Black or African American, Asian, Pacific Islander, American Indian or Alaska Native; female; LGBTQIA+; economically disadvantaged; veterans; and students with disabilities. Students of any race, ethnicity, color, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation,

socioeconomic background, national origin, age, dis/ability or veteran status should be welcomed and encouraged to participate in STEM research.

### **Section 3. Competitive Grant Application Process**

#### **3.1 RFPs and Proposal Timing**

RFPs for the SSINP Competitive Grants will be announced on COAST's website and via the COAST listserv. RFPs may solicit projects to respond to state research questions on one particular topic (e.g. sea-level rise) or on multiple topics (e.g. sea-level rise and marine debris). Applications for the competitive grant program may be submitted only during the periods outlined in the RFP.

The projected schedule below is subject to change, pending COAST's receipt of legislatively appropriated funds from the California State University and unforeseen circumstances.

<b>Proposed Competitive SSINP Schedule</b>	
Round 1 RFP Released	January 15, 2020
Round 2 RFP Released	April 30, 2020
Round 1 Proposals Due	April 23, 2020
Round 2 Proposals Due	September 3, 2020
Round 1 Awards Announced	September 2020
Round 2 Awards Announced	May 2021
Round 3 RFP Released	July 2021
Round 3 Letters of Intent Due	September 1, 2021
Round 3 Full Proposals Due	October 1, 2021
Round 3 Awards Announced	Second Quarter 2022

COAST anticipates that all remaining Competitive Grant funding will be awarded through Round 3. Though mentioned in previous versions of this document, a fourth round of Competitive Grant funding will not be offered. Please note, COAST still anticipates providing \$50,000 in funding through the Expedited Grant Application Process (see Section 5 below).

#### **3.2 Overview of Competitive Proposal Application and Project Selection Process**

The competitive grant program ensures that proposals are reviewed with fairness and transparency. An overview of the program is presented in bullets below.

### 3.2.1 Research and prepare project information

- Potential applicants use these Guidelines and the relevant RFP to evaluate their eligibility, relevance of project to identified research needs, feasibility and compliance with relevant policies and regulations.

### 3.2.2 Preparation of a Letter of Intent (LOI)

- Applicants must submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) by the deadline stated in the RFP.
- LOIs can be submitted by the lead PI; LOIs do not need to be routed for approval in accordance with campus procedures and policies for extramural funding.
- ***Only applicants who have submitted a LOI may submit a full proposal; all applicants who submit an LOI will be eligible to submit a full proposal.***
- The LOI shall be submitted as a single pdf to [avierra@csumb.edu](mailto:avierra@csumb.edu).
- See Section 3.3 for details on required LOI components.

### 3.2.3 Preparation and submission of full proposals

- Applicants must submit a complete full proposal by the deadline stated in the RFP.
- Proposals must be routed for approval in accordance with campus procedures and policies for extramural funding.
- Proposals must be submitted through the campus' pre-award office as a single PDF file to [csucoast@csumb.edu](mailto:csucoast@csumb.edu). Proposals submitted directly by applicants will be returned without consideration.
- See Section 3.4 for details on proposal requirements.

### 3.2.4 Screening by COAST staff for eligibility

- COAST staff will screen proposals for eligibility (see Section 2) and completeness. Incomplete or ineligible applications may not be evaluated or considered for funding at the sole discretion of COAST.

### 3.2.5 Ad hoc review

- Each proposal will be evaluated against the Evaluation Criteria (see Section 4) by individuals with demonstrated expertise in the relevant topic area or discipline (no more than two reviewers shall be from the CSU).
- Applicants will be required in their proposal to identify 10 (four from within the CSU and six from outside the CSU) such experts. Proposers may also designate persons they would prefer not to review the proposal, indicating why. COAST may draw from the applicant's list or may use other methods to determine appropriate individuals to conduct the aforementioned peer review. The determination of the individuals to conduct the peer review is at the sole discretion of COAST.
- All reviewers will be required to state that they do not have a conflict of interest in reviewing any proposals. All applicants and individuals who participate in the review of submitted applications are subject to state and federal conflict of interest laws.

- Applicants will receive copies of all ad hoc reviews with the reviewers' identifying information removed.

### **3.2.6 Scientific Review Panel (SRP)**

- COAST will convene a scientific review panel (SRP) of individuals with relevant expertise. SRP members will be a subset of individuals engaged in the ad hoc review process and will be charged with determining which proposals are competitive.
- SRP members will prepare a panel summary for each proposal discussed by the panel. Individual summaries will be provided to applicants. Based upon the ad hoc reviews, SRP members may nominate proposals for which discussion will be foregone.
- State Agency Panel (SAP) members (see below) are expected to observe the SRP and may ask clarifying questions but will not actively participate in the discussion.

### **3.2.7 State Agency Panel (SAP)**

- Following the SRP, COAST will convene a SAP to further evaluate proposals deemed competitive by the SRP. The SAP comprises representatives of government agencies that assisted in the development of the RFP or that are potential end-users of the anticipated results. SAP members will determine which proposals best meet the state's scientific information needs.
- COAST staff will prepare a summary of the SAP discussion of each proposal; this summary will be provided to the applicants.

### **3.2.8 Final selection for funding**

- The COAST Director and Executive Committee will consider the ranking of proposals and comments from the mail/email reviewers and recommendations from the Review Panel and will make final decisions. COAST reserves the right to exercise discretion when making awards.
- Partial funding may be considered to fully leverage grant awards.

Throughout the review process, interviews and/or site visits may be conducted and may affect funding decisions.

## **3.3 Submittal of LOI**

- LOIs should be addressed to CSU COAST and shall include:
  - Lead PI and coPI(s) names, titles, campus affiliation, and contact information.
  - Working project title.
  - Indication of the research objective from the RFP the research is intended to address.
  - Three to five possible reviewer suggestions (name, institution, contact information or webpage).

- This preliminary information will be used to research potential ad hoc reviewers. Applicants are NOT required to list these same individuals on their Suggested Reviewer Form that will be part of their full proposal submission.
- Brief description of the project not to exceed one page.
- **Only applicants who have submitted a LOI may submit a full proposal; all applicants who submit an LOI will be eligible to submit a full proposal.**
- The LOI shall be submitted as a single pdf to [avierra@csumb.edu](mailto:avierra@csumb.edu).

### 3.4 Submittal of full proposals and required elements

Proposals must be routed for approval in accordance with campus procedures and policies for extramural funding.

Proposals must be submitted through the campus' pre-award office as a single pdf file to [csucoast@csumb.edu](mailto:csucoast@csumb.edu). Proposals submitted directly by applicants will be returned without consideration.

Proposals must be submitted using a standard 12-point font (Times New Roman, Arial, etc.), single spaced, and have margins of one inch on all sides. Forms: all information must be typed and the forms must be included with the rest of the application materials in one single pdf file; all information is required.

Each proposal must include the following elements in this particular order. Proposals that are not in accordance with the order below will be returned for corrections.

#### 3.4.1 Cover Pages (template available on COAST's SSINP webpage)

- One set of Cover Pages is **required** for every proposal.
  - Provide the
    - Project title.
    - Total amount of funding requested.
    - Number of CSU campuses involved.
    - Amount of funding requested for non-CSU co-PIs.
      - This amount cannot exceed 20% of the total amount of funding requested.
    - Desired start date within the timeframe specified in the relevant RFP.
  - Provide names and contact information for the Lead PI and any co-PIs.
    - If a co-PI is not from the CSU, change "Campus" to "Institution/Organization" and include the co-PI's department if applicable.
  - Identify the research objectives the proposal primarily seeks to address by checking the appropriate box(es). Please choose only the objective(s) the proposed research **directly addresses**. Proposals may be returned for

modifications in the event that multiple research objectives are selected and COAST believes the proposal does not directly address all of them.

- Provide name and contact information for Grants Office personnel submitting the proposal.

#### **3.4.2 Suggested Reviewers** (template available on COAST's SSINP webpage)

- Provide the names and contact information for four suggested reviewers from within the CSU and six suggested reviewers external to the CSU.
  - Suggested CSU reviewers may not be from your home campus. You may consider using <https://fresca.calstate.edu> to help identify potential CSU reviewers.
  - Of the six external reviewers, at least three must be from outside of California.
- Do not suggest anyone with whom there may be a potential conflict of interest (financial interest, current collaborator, former mentor-mentee relationship, etc.).
- Proposers may also designate persons they would prefer not to review the proposal, indicating why.

#### **3.4.3 Required Permit/Lease Information** (template available on COAST's SSINP webpage)

- The submission of this form is mandatory whether or not you believe permits or leases<sup>3</sup> are required for successful completion of the project. If no permits nor leases are required, please indicate this by checking the box at the top of the form.
  - Name of the agency issuing permit/lease.
  - Type of permit/lease required (e.g., scientific collecting permit, coastal development permit, campus Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee [IACUC], campus Institutional Review Board [IRB])
  - Activity for which the permit/lease is required (e.g., collection of X species, use of fill to restore a wetland in X area).
  - Status of permit/lease (e.g., current [list expiration date if applicable], application pending, not yet applied for)
  - Estimated time from permit/lease application submission to approval (fill in n/a if permit/lease is current)

#### **3.4.4 Project Summaries (Scientific and Plain Language)**

- Provide a scientific summary of the proposed activity no more than 300 words in length. The Scientific Summary should provide an overview of the project, describe the intellectual merit of the proposed activity and explain its relevance to the research

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<sup>3</sup> "Lease" in this context refers primarily to authorization to use state of California lands or lands granted to local governments by the California legislature. The California State Lands Commission has primary authority for leasing state lands. For more information, please see <https://www.slc.ca.gov>.

objectives identified in the RFP. The overview should include a statement of research goals and methods to be employed. The Scientific Summary should be informative to other persons working in the same or related fields, and, insofar as possible, understandable to a broad audience within the scientific domain.

- Provide a plain-language summary of the proposed activity no more than 200 words in length. The purpose of the Plain-Language Summary (in contrast to the Scientific Summary above) is to communicate with non-scientific audiences. A good summary should state the general problem, identify the knowledge gaps, and describe the anticipated activities to fill those gaps. It should be free of jargon, acronyms, equations, and any technical information that would be unknown to the general public.
- If the proposal is funded, the project summaries may be posted on the COAST website and distributed by other means to state partners. Each project summary should be provided on its own page and is not included in the 10-page limit for the Project Description.

### 3.4.5 Project Description

- The Project Description must not exceed 12 pages in length. The page limit includes tables and figures but does not include the Cover Pages, Suggested Reviewers, Permit/Lease Form, Project Summary, Dissemination Plan, References or Budget. Please use the headings below to organize this section. Please see Section 4 for explicit scoring criteria and associated points.
  - **Relevance to state research needs:** Describe in detail how the project will address either 1) a research objective identified in the RFP or 2) a different state need for scientific information within the same topic. If you believe the research objective cannot be fully addressed given the scope of the SSINP (either in amount of funding or time constraints), please describe in detail how the project will advance the science to a point where the state can derive benefits and/or where a subsequent research project would be further enabled.
    - **Letter of support:** If addressing a *different* state need for scientific information within the same topic, applicants must concretely demonstrate the relevance of the research project to state needs, including the identification of specific state agencies that will benefit, in the form of a detailed letter of support from each agency. The letter must additionally describe *how* the agency will benefit.
      - A letter of support is NOT needed if the project addresses a research objective identified in the RFP.
  - **Methodology and workplan:** Describe in detail the significance of the project and the proposed activities for which funding is requested.
    - Within the context of the existing scientific body of work on this topic, describe the need for the proposed activities. Describe how the proposed activities will advance scientific knowledge.

- Identify project goals and objectives and provide a detailed description of the research activities to be conducted, including specific methodology.
  - Provide details sufficient for reviewers to judge the likelihood of success in obtaining data that supports the objectives and tests stated hypotheses.
  - Include the experimental design; describe the data that will be generated and how those data will be analyzed. Identify and address possible pitfalls in the methodology and potential solutions.
  - If the project relies upon existing data, please describe the merits of using such data.
- Clarify the nature of each participant's contribution to the project. Participation by non-CSU co-PIs must be strongly justified.
- Provide a workplan that describes how the activities will lead to successful completion of the project in no more than 30 months from award start date. Include milestones and note any required permits.
- **Student Involvement:** Describe the nature and extent of involvement of undergraduate and graduate students in the project. Awardees are expected to welcome students of any race, ethnicity, color, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, national origin, age, dis/ability or veteran status.
  - Indicate the number of undergraduate and graduate students that will participate in the project and describe the nature of their participation.
  - Describe your strategy for actively recruiting students from groups that are historically underrepresented in marine and coastal science, including students who are Hispanic/LatinX, Black or African American, Asian, Pacific Islander, American Indian or Alaska Native; female; LGBTQIA+; economically disadvantaged; veterans; and students with disabilities.
  - Describe how historically underrepresented and other marginalized students will be made to feel welcomed and supported during their participation in this project.
- **Relevant experience conducting research of a similar nature and scale:** Describe the PI's and/or research team's relevant experience conducting research of a similar nature and scale to that proposed for the SSINP. This can include factors such as number of PIs/co-PIs involved, total funding, number of students involved, number of campuses or institutions involved.
- **Dissemination Plan:** Provide a plan (<250 words) to disseminate the results of the project.
  - Specify the number of manuscripts that will result from this project and identify the peer-reviewed journals to which they will be submitted for publication. Identify conferences at which the results of this project will be presented.

- Describe intended efforts to communicate the results of this project to non-academic audiences as well. This could include local or state councils, stakeholders, or the general public. The applicant does not need to describe efforts to communicate with state agencies and/or the state legislature. COAST will identify opportunities for funded PIs to present their research before state agencies and the legislature (see section 2.6)

#### 3.4.6 Budget and Justification (template available on COAST's SSINP webpage)

- Each proposal must contain a budget for each year of support requested as well as a cumulative budget.
  - For a proposal with multiple CSU campuses, a separate budget and justification must be provided for each campus requesting support.
    - To ensure that all budgets have been approved by the applicants' campus, a Budget Sign-Off Form will be required from any campus that is NOT the campus submitting the full proposal. E.g., if Campus A submits a proposal that includes two other CSU campuses, Campuses B and C, then Budget Sign-Off Forms **MUST BE INCLUDED** for Campuses B and C. The Budget Sign-Off Form is not required for Campus A because it is assumed that the proposal has been routed for approval by the submitting campus. A template for the Budget-Sign Off Form is available on COAST's SSINP webpage.
    - The Budget Sign-Off Form is not required for non-CSU institutions (see below for information on Subawards)
  - A budget template is provided. Modifications to the template are allowed but must be approved by COAST prior to submission. Contact the staff member listed at the end of this document to discuss desired modifications.
  - The budget justification must be no more than three pages per campus. The amounts for each budget line item requested must be documented and justified in the budget justification as specified below.
- No more than 20% of the total funding for any particular project may be awarded to a non-CSU co-PI through a subaward. The participation of non-CSU co-PIs must be strongly justified in the application.
  - For proposals that contain a subaward(s) to a non-CSU co-PI, each subaward must include a separate budget and budget justification of no more than three pages. The description of the work to be performed by the subawardee must be included in the Project Description.
- Support for justified and normally allowable expenses may be requested as long as they clearly contribute to completion of the project. Details for selected categories of support are provided below. This list is not exhaustive and omission of a specific category or item does not imply exclusion. Contact COAST staff with any questions.
  - **CSU Senior Personnel:** Support for academic year reassigned time, academic year additional employment, and/or summer salary for CSU faculty members

(Unit 3) and research associates. See Appendix A for specific details, weighted teaching unit (WTU) rates and restrictions.

- To request support for reassigned time (REASSN), use WTUs as the unit. To request support for academic year additional employment (ACAD) or summer salary (SUMR), use months as the unit.
    - Non-Unit 3 members should request support in the ACAD column of the budget template and should use month as the unit.
  - Support for a non-CSU co-PI should not be noted under CSU Senior Personnel. The correct place to note these costs is under Subawards (see below).
- **Other CSU Personnel:** Support for project-related post-doctoral scholars and technical staff may be requested if
- Scholars/staff are integral to the implementation and on-schedule completion of the project.
  - Individuals involved can be specifically identified with the project or activity.
  - The costs are not also recovered under direct administrative costs.

Use an hourly or monthly basis as appropriate.

PIs are strongly encouraged to request student support if student participation will be integral to the implementation and on-schedule completion of the project.

- **Fringe benefits:** Fringe benefit costs for CSU senior and other personnel may be included.
- **Student tuition and fees:** Tuition and fees for students involved in the project may be requested. These expenses are excluded from the calculation of modified total direct costs.
- **Equipment:** Support for tangible, nonexpendable items with a useful life of more than one year and acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit is allowable if the item is necessary to conduct the proposed activities and not otherwise reasonably available and accessible. Equipment must be of the type normally charged as a direct cost to sponsored agreements and acquired in accordance with organizational practice.
  - Please provide a cost estimate for any piece of equipment costing more than \$5,000. Cost estimate should be on letterhead from the vendor.
  - Equipment is excluded from the calculation of modified total direct costs.
- **Other Direct Costs**
  - **Travel:** Support for transportation, lodging, subsistence and other travel related expenses incurred by PIs, students and project related staff to conduct the proposed activities.
    - Travel to one scientific conference to present the results of this project may be requested.

- PIs are required to request \$250-750 for one trip (within California) to participate in a briefing to relevant policymakers.
- **Materials and supplies:** Support for tangible, expendable items other than equipment necessary to carry out the project.
- **Publication costs:** Support for article publishing charges that provide for open access for any publications that are anticipated within the award period. See Section 6.10 for information on support for publication costs that occur after the award period.
- **Subawards:** COAST can only transfer funds to CSU campuses. Subawards must be used to fund activities by non-CSU co-PIs. Subawards to non-CSU co-PIs are limited to 20% of the total award amount. This is the correct location within the budget to note costs for non-CSU co-PIs.
- **Other:** Support for other direct costs such as sample analysis costs, consultant fees, etc. Other direct costs are considered part of the award to a CSU PI, even if funds are spent on services outside the CSU.
  - **Direct administrative costs:** Up to 10% of modified total direct costs may be budgeted as direct administrative costs. Indirect costs are not allowed (see section 6.3). Campuses are not obligated to request direct administrative costs.
- Amounts and expenses budgeted also must be consistent with the proposing organization's policies and procedures and cost accounting practices used in accumulating and reporting costs.
- Costs may not be incurred prior to the award start date.
- All funds awarded must be used for the specific purposes requested and approved and may not be converted to other uses without prior authorization.

### 3.4.7 Additional Materials

- In cases where the proposal does not directly address a research objective in the RFP, a letter of support from a state agency is required (see section 3.3.6). This letter is not counted in the 10-page limit for the Project Description.
- A two-page curriculum vitae (CV) must be included for each PI including non-CSU co-PIs. CVs should include a complete education history and appropriate research (including publications) and professional activities covering at least the last three years. NIH and NSF biographical sketches are good examples of what might be included.
- A list of all current and pending internal and external support for research/scholarship must be submitted for each PI, including non-CSU co-PIs.
- If academic year reassigned time funding is requested, a brief letter from the PI's Department Chair must be provided indicating that the request 1) is justified for the activity proposed and 2) will be granted to the PI as specified in the proposal if the award is made. In the event that a faculty member and his/her Chair are both applying

for an Award, the faculty member's letter should come from his/her Dean, with the same provisions. An example of a letter is available on COAST's SSINP webpage.

- PIs who have received prior funding through COAST within the last five years must include a report on the outcome of that funding using the Prior Funding Report available on COAST's SSINP webpage. Recipients of the Seminar Speaker Series Program awards are not required to submit this form.

## **Section 4. Evaluation Criteria**

### **4.1 Evaluation Criteria and Scoring for Proposals**

All projects will be evaluated by the following evaluation criteria. Scoring information on all proposals will remain confidential.

<b>SCORING CRITERIA FOR PROPOSALS</b>	
<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Points</b>
<p><b>Relevance to state research needs</b> Demonstrates that the project will address either 1) a research objective identified in the RFP or 2) a different state need for scientific information within the same topic.</p>	20
<p><b>Methodology and workplan</b> Is consistent with the best available science. Applicant demonstrates how relevant science proposed is up-to-date and appropriate for the specific topic, as well as the feasibility of the proposed work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Scientific and technical merit (40 points) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Scientific need and potential contribution identified</li> <li>○ Goals and objectives clearly stated</li> <li>○ Methodology well described and has high likelihood of generating appropriate data</li> <li>○ Participants' contributions well defined</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Feasible workplan (10 points)</li> </ul>	50
<b>Student involvement</b>	7
<b>Relevant experience conducting research of a similar nature and scale</b>	10
<b>Dissemination plan</b>	3
<p><b>Budget and justification</b> Project completion is feasible with the budget requested</p>	10
<b>Total possible points</b>	<b>100</b>

## **Section 5. Expedited Grant Application Process**

There may be instances in which the state identifies scientific information required to advance a policy or decision in the next 6-18 months. To meet these needs, funds have been reserved to support projects on an expedited basis that does not align with the Competitive Grant applications process outlined in Section 3. Funds awarded through the Expedited Grant Application Process are not subject to the Proposed Competitive SSINP Schedule in Section 3.1; rather, RFPs will be released as needed.

Projects funded under this expedited process will be completed in 12 months or less, thereby enabling the state to utilize the results quickly. The award range for projects funded through this expedited process will be lower than those funded through the competitive process with an award ceiling of \$50,000.

### **5.1 Overview of the expedited grant proposal application and project selection process**

5.1.1 COAST will announce expedited grant opportunities on its website and through the COAST listserv. Pre-proposals will be requested within two to four weeks, depending upon the timeline for completion of the work. The research objective(s) are likely to be narrow in scope.

5.1.2 Applicants must submit the materials listed below as a single PDF file to [csucoast@csumb.edu](mailto:csucoast@csumb.edu). Submission through the campus pre-award office is not necessary for pre-proposals.

5.1.3 COAST staff will screen pre-proposals for eligibility (see Section 2). Ineligible pre-proposals will not be considered further.

5.1.4 Pre-proposals will be evaluated by individuals with demonstrated relevant expertise and COAST staff within two weeks of submission.

- Pre-proposals will be evaluated based on the scientific need for the project and its ability to meet clearly identified management/decision-making need(s), appropriate methodology to meet stated goals and objectives and feasibility.

5.1.5 Highly regarded pre-proposals will be invited to develop and submit full proposals within two to four weeks.

5.1.6 Full proposals will be evaluated by individuals with demonstrated relevant expertise using the Evaluation Criteria outlined in Section 4.

5.1.7 The COAST Director and Executive Committee will consider the reviews and make final decisions. COAST reserves the right to exercise discretion when making awards. Partial funding may be considered to fully leverage grant awards.

### **5.2 Submittal of pre-proposals**

Pre-proposals must be submitted using a standard 12-point font (Times New Roman, Arial, etc.), single-spaced, and have margins of one inch on all sides. The following elements must be included:

#### 5.2.1 Cover Pages

5.2.2 Project Description: the Project Description must not exceed three pages in length. The page limit includes a brief project summary, tables and figures but does not include references or the Cover Page. Do not begin the text of Project Description on the Cover Page.

- Provide a brief project summary. Provide background explaining both the scientific and management/decision-making needs for the project. List project goals and objectives, describe the methods to be employed, and explain how the results will be evaluated and conclusions drawn.

5.2.3 Total Cost Estimate: provide an estimate of total costs that includes total direct costs and direct administrative costs, if requested.

- Up to 10% of Total Modified Direct Costs may be budgeted as direct administrative costs.

5.2.4 A two-page curriculum vitae (CV) must be included for each PI. CVs should include a complete education history and appropriate research (including publications) and professional activities covering at least the last three years. NIH and NSF biographical sketches are good examples of what might be included.

### **5.3 Submittal of full proposals**

Submission of full proposals will follow the procedures outlined in Section 3.3

## **Section 6. Administrative Procedures**

### **6.1 Mechanism for Transfer of Funds and Designation of Award Financial Management**

Funds will be transferred to the award recipient's campus by Cash Posting Order (CPO). The campus will designate the location for award financial management. This location may include an auxiliary, research foundation, and/or corporation (hereafter referred to as auxiliary). If an auxiliary is designated for award financial management, the auxiliary will incur project expenses and then invoice the state side.

When an award involving more than one campus is made, funds will be transferred directly to each participating campus.

When an award involving a subaward is made, the CSU campus that included the subaward in its budget is responsible for executing an agreement with the subawardee and managing the subaward. This includes regular monitoring of subawardee's programmatic and financial activities in order to reasonably assure that the subawardee uses the award for authorized purposes, complies with laws, regulation, and the provisions of the agreement, invoices the CSU campus for allowable expenses in accordance with the agreement, and achieves its performance goals. Note that the subawardee is subject to the limitations on indirect costs and direct administrative costs outlined in Section 6.3

### **6.2 Schedule for Advancement of Funds**

Funds budgeted for the first year of the award will be advanced to the PI's campus within six to eight weeks of the award being announced. Funds for subsequent years will be advanced annually upon receipt of satisfactory progress and financial reports. The overall goal in disbursing the awarded funds over time is to ensure, to the greatest extent practicable, that projects are on schedule and will result in the stated research objectives.

### **6.3 Allowed Direct Administrative Costs**

Funding provided originates from legislatively appropriated funds and is subject to CSU Executive Order 753/1000. As such, awards are not subject to campus indirect costs (facilities and administrative fees)<sup>4</sup>. Justified direct administrative costs are allowed. This value cannot exceed 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC). The recipient campus assumes all responsibility for compliance with this provision.

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<sup>4</sup> Provisional Guidance on Allowability of Indirect (F&A) Costs on CSU Internal Grant Proposals: Grants issued from CSU lottery funds, student fees (including State University fees) or other legislatively appropriated funds, as a result of a competition within the CSU, shall not be subject to indirect/F&A costs. Indirect cost will not be allowed as a grant-funded expense in proposals submitted in response to RFPs from programs that receive the majority of their support from student/university fee revenue or lottery funds. However, the F&A foregone at the campus/auxiliary's federally negotiated off-campus rate may be shown as cost match on the proposal. This amount may also be used by the auxiliary or enterprise fund as an offset to the university's cost allocation plan, in accordance with EO 753/1000.

If award financial management is transferred to an auxiliary, research foundation, and/or corporation, the direct administrative costs must be transferred to said entity and may not be retained by state-side operations.

These conditions also apply to all subawards.

#### **6.4 Non-CSU Partner Compliance with State and/or CSU Administrative Policies**

In cases where a non-CSU entity is proposed as a co-PI, that entity should adhere as closely as possible to the state of California and/or CSU administrative policies. Examples of such entities include the University of California, private universities, non-profit organizations, and private businesses.

Non-CSU partners should act as good stewards of public funding by enacting sound procurement mechanisms, maintaining purchased equipment, ensuring adequate financial management, and otherwise ensuring that grant funding is appropriately spent to realize project objectives. This sound fiduciary management includes adherence to CSU Travel Policies as articulated in the [Integrated CSU Administrative Manual section 3601.01](#).

#### **6.5 Potential for Additional Sponsors**

Where possible, COAST will facilitate partnerships with other sponsors interested in contributing funds to a particular project. The goal in doing so is to maximize the effectiveness of COAST funding in meeting the state's need for scientific information. Should a sponsor external to COAST and the CSU wish to partner and contribute funding, the PI(s) may be required to

- Re-budget the project to apportion costs between the two funding sources.
  - Co-funding will not result in a decrease in project direct costs. Any co-funding will incorporate the funder's required indirect cost obligations and may alter the total amount of the award.
  - COAST reserves the right to determine how any co-funding would be distributed among awardees.
- Submit financial reports to both funding sources.
- Submit progress reports to both funding sources. COAST will endeavor to lessen reporting burdens by either 1) requesting that the sponsor accept progress reports submitted to COAST in-lieu of its own or 2) accepting progress reports submitted to the sponsor in lieu of the use of COAST's own reporting template.

#### **6.6 Budget Revision Request**

Awardee(s) may revise amounts among approved budget categories by up to 10% of the total amount of the award without permission from COAST. This 10% limit applies to the lifetime of the award (i.e., a 10% change one year cannot be followed by another 10% change the following year). The revised budget cannot exceed the total approved award amount.

Awardee(s) will notify COAST of any such adjustment and explain how it plans to account for and manage the adjustment.

If awardee(s) seeks to adjust amounts upward or downward by more than 10% of the total amount of the award, create new or delete existing budget categories, a written request must be submitted to COAST. A template will be provided. Upon approval, the revised budget and allocations will become self-executing and will automatically be binding.

### **6.7 No-cost Extension Request**

One six-month no cost extension (NCE) will be allowed only when extraordinary circumstances have prevented the work from being completed within the initially proposed timeframe. A NCE must be requested no less than 60 days before the award end date. The request must include a detailed justification and a revised budget. Only one NCE will be allowed. Any funds remaining at the end of an approved NCE will be returned to COAST.

## **6.8 Reporting Requirements**

### **6.8.1 Progress reports**

- Progress reports will be required every six months from the project start date. Reports must be received by COAST no less than 30 days following the end of each six-month period. Reports must describe activities to date, success in meeting milestones identified in the original timeline, any problems encountered and plans for mitigating such challenges and adjusted timelines if needed. COAST will provide progress report templates and specific reporting dates.

### **6.8.2 Financial reports**

- System-generated financial reports providing cost descriptions and amounts covering the preceding six-month period are due with the progress reports. These reports are required from each CSU campus receiving funds. CSU campuses managing subawards must include financial reports from subawardees in the campus' own report.

### **6.8.3. Final report**

- A final report is due three months after the end of the award period. Additional reports may be requested until the conditions of the award are satisfied.

## **6.9 Acknowledgment of COAST Funding**

The awardee is responsible for assuring that acknowledgment of COAST support is made in any publication (including Web pages) of any material based on or developed under this project, by stating the following:

"Funding for this project has been provided by the California State University Council on Ocean Affairs, Science & Technology (COAST)."

### **6.10 Public Access to COAST-funded Research**

All SSINP-funded publications must be publicly accessible. This requirement is inspired by AB 2192 (Stone, 2017) which requires that all research grants funded by executive branch state agencies "shall provide, for free, public access to any publication of a peer-reviewed manuscript describing state agency-funded knowledge, a state agency-funded invention, or state agency-funded technology."<sup>5</sup>

In order to facilitate public access to SSINP-funded research, COAST will reserve funding to cover article publication charges that provide for open access to peer-reviewed articles. A PI awarded funding through SSINP may request funds for these purposes up to 36 months after the close of their award. COAST will provide more details in award notification letters.

### **6.11 Departure of Lead PI from CSU**

In situations where the Lead PI leaves the CSU before the end of the award period, an existing CSU co-PI with the requisite experience may take on the role of Lead PI with approval from COAST. If no CSU co-PI is available to take the Lead PI role, the award may be terminated and the unused portion of the award returned to COAST.

If the CSU PI (Lead or co) leaves the CSU before the end of the award period, that individual may continue to be involved with the project as a co-PI while at their new institution provided that a) a subaward can be made to the new institution by a CSU campus that is already receiving award funding (e.g., the new Lead PI's campus or another existing CSU co-PIs campus) AND b) no more than 20% of the cumulative total amount of the award is transferred outside the CSU (see section 2.1). If neither of the aforementioned conditions are not met, then the unused portion of the award shall be returned to COAST.

### **6.12 Project Management Plan for Lead PIs Who Will be Physically Distant from Campus**

Lead PIs who will be away from their home campus for four months or more during the award period (e.g., sabbatical, leave of absence) must develop a project management plan to ensure continuity of the project. If the absence is known at the time of proposal submission, this plan should be part of the proposal. In all other circumstances, COAST must be informed as early as possible and no later than 60 days prior to the leave commencing. This plan is subject to review and approval by COAST. This requirement does not apply to co-PIs but they are expected to coordinate any extended leave with the Lead PI.

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<sup>5</sup> [http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill\\_id=201720180AB2192](http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201720180AB2192)

### **6.13 Processes for Termination of Awards**

Terminations for convenience will not be allowed. Terminations for convenience include, but are not limited to, situations where the PI no longer expresses interest in conducting the research, the PI unexpectedly has overcommitted his/her time or other situations in which the PI is making a choice about his/her commitment to the research project.

#### **6.13.1 Voluntary Terminations (other than for convenience) and Changes to Awards**

- For voluntary terminations that are not considered terminations for convenience, the award agreement may be terminated at COAST's sole discretion. COAST would consider a voluntary termination for only very unique circumstances and those that are outside of the reasonable control of the PI. Examples may include, but are not limited to, 1) access to a study site being restricted by an unexpected event such as a landslide, 2) inability for the PI to obtain a permit for reasons beyond the PI's reasonable control (i.e. unexpected government restrictions on the taking of a threatened or endangered species).
- Other changes to awards may be negotiated at COAST's sole discretion. Changes may include changes to PI or co-PIs and/or changes to the budget. It is the recipient campus' responsibility to request approval from COAST for proposed changes no less than 30 days before the proposed change is to be implemented.

#### **6.13.2 Involuntary Termination of Award**

- COAST may terminate the award if the research team has not met the milestones by their stated timeframes, as outlined in the proposal. COAST will endeavor to work cooperatively with the research team to help them meet their stated milestones but reserves the sole discretion to terminate the award and request remaining funds be returned to COAST.
- COAST may also revoke the award for any reason at any time if it learns of or otherwise discovers that there are allegations supported by some reasonable evidence of a violation of any state or federal law or policy by the awardee. Under these circumstances, the termination would take place immediately.

### **6.14 Dispute Resolution**

COAST staff and the PI shall attempt to informally resolve any disputes. If the dispute cannot be informally resolved, either COAST or the PI may submit to the other party in writing a description of the dispute and the desired outcome. COAST's Director and/or Executive Committee Chair and the PI's dean shall meet to review the issue. A written response signed by the party receiving the notice of dispute shall be returned to the other party within 30 working days of the receipt of the notice of dispute, or as otherwise agreed between the parties in writing.

If both parties cannot agree upon a resolution after following the processes described herein, a party may seek counsel from the Office of the Chancellor. All decisions by the Office of the Chancellor shall be considered final.

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**Questions related to the State Science Information Needs Grant Guidelines may be directed to the staff member listed below. Due to the competitive nature of the funding and the subsequent need to ensure all applicants have equitable access to information, staff may ask that questions be submitted by email. Pertinent questions and responses to questions will be posted to the COAST website.**

Amy Vierra  
Policy and Communications Consultant, COAST  
(415) 806-2666  
avierra@csumb.edu

## **Appendix A: PI Support Conditions and Limitations**

CSU PIs may request support for academic year reassigned time, academic year additional employment and/or summer salary. A request may include a combination of these categories. There is no specific limit to the amount that may be requested for PI support relative to other categories (e.g., travel, sample collection, etc.). Requests for PI support must be justified and aligned with the objectives of the proposal.

Reassigned time funding is provided based on the system-wide Minimum Annual Rate for Assistant Professor/Lecturer B. For budgeting purposes, this rate is projected to be \$2,079 per semester WTU and \$1,386 per quarter WTU as of July 1, 2020. For academic years 2021-22 and beyond use the rates listed here plus 3% per year. Budgets can be adjusted once the actual rate is determined through collective bargaining.

Support for benefits associated with academic year reassigned time may not be requested. Support for benefits associated with academic year additional employment or summer salary may be requested.

Reassigned time funding, if awarded, may not be deferred for use beyond the end of the initial award period. Academic year additional employment and summer salary funding, if awarded, may be used after the end of the initial award period, if requested, as part of a NCE by following the procedure described above and approved by COAST. Any PI support that is unused at the end of the award period (including a NCE period) will be forfeited and returned to COAST.

Appropriate taxes may be deducted from academic year additional employment and summer salary by the PI's home campus. It is incumbent upon each applicant to determine if s/he can receive academic year additional employment or summer salary before responding to a RFP.