



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

CORAL REEF INITIATIVE PROGRAM (CRI)
Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 15.875

FISCAL YEAR 2017 APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

I. Program Description

The Office of Insular Affairs (OIA) is requesting proposals for Fiscal Year 2017 for its Coral Reef Initiative (CRI) Program. The CRI program provides grant funding for management and protection of coral reefs in the U.S. insular areas. The goal of the CRI program is to improve the health of coral reef ecosystems in the U.S. insular areas for their long-term economic and social benefit. Proposals that support protection and sustainable use of coral reefs will be considered for funding. Priority will be given to projects that help the insular areas address a variety of threats to coral reef ecosystems from land-based sources of pollution, over-fishing and invasive species to ocean warming and acidification.

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

II. Award Information

For 2017, the maximum budget that an applicant may request is \$250,000. The period of performance for the majority of projects funded under this program is 12 to 36 months. Project proposals must be designed accordingly. Past and present recipients of awards under this program 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 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 Director, Office of Insular 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 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:

Criterion A. –PROJECT NEED (Problem Statement and Desired Outcome):	
Ai. A critical problem exists and needs to be addressed. Weight 15%	
15	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 CRI's goal to improve the health of coral reef ecosystems in the U.S. insular areas for their long-term economic and social benefit
7	The problem is critical, but the problem does not need to be addressed within this grant period.
1	Although there is a problem, it is not critical.
Aii. The desired outcome is identified and the project directly addresses the critical problem with an appropriate solution. Weight 15%	
15	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.
7	The desired outcome is identified and the proposed project adequately addresses the critical problem identified in Ai. with an appropriate solution.
1	The proposed project only minimally addresses the critical problem.
Aiii. The project aligns with one or more of the Office of Insular Affairs's CRI priorities listed in the announcement. Weight 20%	
20	The proposed project addresses one, or preferably, multiple CRI priorities: <i>Land-based sources of pollution, watershed restoration, capacity building, ocean acidification, ocean warming, coastal protection, education and outreach, over-fishing, invasive species, coral disease and bleaching, reef resilience, marine managed areas.</i>
10	The proposal project aligns with one of the TAP priorities, but not necessarily the highest priority.
1	The proposed project minimally aligns with one of the TAP priorities.
Criterion B. –PROJECT FEASIBILITY (The applicant has the ability to successfully complete the project)	
Bi. The Project budget is reasonable. Weight 10%	
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.
Bii. The project timeline is reasonable. Weight 10%	
10	The grant application timeline is reasonable, comprehensive and well detailed. It can be completed within the 3-year timeframe for CRI 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.
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%	
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.

Criterion C. –PROJECT SUPPORT	
Ci. The project has support and/or participation from major stakeholders and local government officials. Weight 10%	
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.

Criterion D. –PROJECT IMPACT

Di. 48 USC 1469d – the grant program’s authorizing legislation: “The Secretary of the Interior is authorized to extend to the governments of American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, the Virgin Islands, and the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, and their agencies and instrumentalities, with or without reimbursement, technical assistance on subjects within the responsibility of the respective territorial governments. Such assistance may be provided by the Secretary of the Interior through members of his staff, reimbursements to other departments or agencies of the Federal Government under sections 534 and 536 of title 51 , grants to or cooperative agreements with such governments, agreements with Federal agencies or agencies of State or local governments, or the employment of private individuals, partnerships, or corporations. Technical assistance may include research, planning assistance, studies, and demonstration projects.” The project meets the purpose of the grant program’s authorizing legislation. Weight 10%	
10	The project clearly addresses subjects of vital concern and importance within the responsibility of the seven insular governments.
5	The project addresses subjects of concern and importance within the responsibility of the seven insular areas.
1	The project addresses subjects of minor concern and importance within the responsibility of the seven insular areas.

The Director of Insular Affairs and/or designated official should 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 Eligible Applicants

Applications for 2017 funding are encouraged and will be considered from insular government entities, educational institutions, or non-profit organizations whose grant proposal directly benefits coral reef habitats in the four U.S. territories or three freely associated states, in accordance with 2 CFR 200.

V. Application Information

Submission Deadline: The submission deadline is July 7, 2017.

Decision Timeframe: Decisions on funding of project proposals will be made within 60 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 the Director of the Office of Insular Affairs:

Nikolao Pula, Director
Office of Insular Affairs
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Mail-Stop 2429
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. 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

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

<i><u>Priority Project (list in priority order)</u></i>	<i><u>Requested Amount</u></i>
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. 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.

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. 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.

VI. 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>

VII. Agency Contacts

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