

NOAA Financial Assistance Administrative Terms

This Federal assistance award will be implemented using “Grants Online,” a Federal solution for full life-cycle grants management processing. Grants Online allows the non-Federal entity, or recipient, to accept awards electronically, manage user roles for individuals within their organization, and submit post-award action requests, financial reports, performance progress reports, and tangible personal property and real property reports. Grants Online operates in a web environment, and can be accessed anywhere at any time, provided that you have Internet access. You will be required to use an Internet browser to log in and to use Grants Online. Internet Explorer is the preferred browser for PC users; FireFox is the preferred browser for Mac users. No software is required for installation. Logins and passwords are required. If you do not have a password, you can contact the Grants Online Help Desk for assistance in obtaining your login credentials.

For more information, contact the Grants Online Help Desk at GrantsOnline.HelpDesk@noaa.gov, (301) 444-2112, or toll free at 1-877-662-2478 between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Eastern Time Monday through Friday excluding Federal holidays.

Please refer to the NOAA website at:

http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/grantsonline/Process%20Maps/Award_and_Post_Award_OverviewOnly.pdf for additional information.

I. Award Payments – ASAP Enrollment

Consistent with 2 C.F.R. §200.305(a) and Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions, your award payments will be made through electronic funds transfers using the U.S. Department of the Treasury’s Automated Standard Application for Payments (ASAP) system. Non-Federal entities must enroll in ASAP system by first submitting an Organization Profile Change Request via Grants Online, which will include the following requirements:

- EIN#
- DUNS#
- Name of Organization
- Type of Organization (i.e. Non-profit, For Profit, State etc.)
- Address
- Point of Contact
- Title
- Point of Contact's Email Address
- Phone Number

II. Reporting

A. Financial Reports

Federal Financial Reports (SF-425), required by 2 C.F.R. §200.327 and Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Term and Conditions, are to be completed in NOAA's Grants Online system. Grants Online will notify your organization via email when your reports are available for completion and submission through the Grants Online system. The status of all reports can be seen under —Associated Documents under the Grants File.

To complete a report, login to NOAA Grants Online at <https://grantsonline.rdc.noaa.gov>, search for the award and navigate to the Grants File overview page. Find the report near the bottom of the page and click on the link to the report to complete the report. For multiple awards that require Federal Financial Reports (SF-425) covering the same period, you may create and submit a multiaward SF-425 from the —Awards tab. For additional assistance with Grants Online, please review the Recipient Quick Reference Guide available at http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/grantsonline/Documents/Quick%20Reference%20Guides/GrantRecipients_Quick_Ref_Guide.pdf. This site also has additional detailed non-Federal entity assistance material. If you are having problems with accessing Grants Online, please contact the Grants Online Help Desk at 1-877-662-2478 or GrantsOnline.HelpDesk@noaa.gov.

1. Federal Financial Report (SF-425) - (final report only)
 - a. A final comprehensive Federal Financial Report must be submitted, within 90 days after award expiration. The report shall cover the entire project period from the start date through the end date of the original award, or approved extended end date of the award, and must include the cumulative total of indirect costs charged to the award.
2. Federal Financial Report (SF-425) - Due semi-annually; reported under the —"Federal Cash" line of the report.
 - a. The SF-425 shall be submitted on a semi-annual basis. If the non-Federal entity is reporting on more than one NOAA grant and/or agreement, then the SF-425 attachment must be used.
 - b. Interim semi-annual Federal Financial Reports (SF-425) are due no later than 30 days after the semi-annual reporting periods ending March 31 and September 30 for the entire project period of the award.
 - c. A final Federal Financial Report (SF 425) is due within 90 days after award expiration. The report shall cover the last semi-annual reporting period ending on September 30 or March 31, or a portion thereof, based on the end date or approved extended end date of the award.
 - d. The SF-425 is due for the non-Federal entity using ASAP for payment. If converting to ASAP during the course of the Award, the SF-425 forms will be due as described above starting with the ASAP conversion date.

3. Request for Advance or Reimbursement (SF-270)

- a. The SF-270 shall NOT be submitted by the non-Federal entity using the Department of Treasury ASAP system unless specifically directed by a specific condition.
- b. The SF-270 shall be submitted using the NOAA Grants Online system, as reimbursements are necessary for the financial management of the award.
- c. For non-Federal entities that must submit a SF-270 based on a Corrective Action Plan or Special Award Condition, the agency may require, along with the submission of each SF-270, expense reports showing a breakdown of costs for each payment request or an invoice. A request for payment may be submitted monthly and no less than quarterly, through the Grants Online system for Grants Officer review and approval. Upon approval of the request for payment, funds will be released in ASAP within 7 business days.
- d. Semi-annual Federal Financial Reports (SF-425) are not required if the SF-270 is used; however, a Final SF-425 will be required.
- e. Reimbursements will be made through ASAP.

B. Performance Reports

Performance Progress Reports, required by 2 C.F.R. §200.327-328 and Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions, are to be completed in NOAA's Grants Online System. The Grants Online System will notify your organization through email when your reports are available for completion and submission through NOAA Grants Online. Non-Federal entities are responsible for ensuring all personnel listed on an award have a current email address. The status of reports can be seen under Associated Documents under the Grant File.

To complete your report, login to NOAA Grants Online at <https://grantsonline.rdc.noaa.gov/>, search for the award and navigate to the Grants File overview page. Then find the report near the bottom of the page and click on the link to the report to complete it. You must attach the report document for submission, or in the rare cases where there is very little to report, fill out the report in the report comments section. The Federal Program Officer is the authority on the acceptable form and content of Project Progress Reports. For additional assistance with Grants Online, please review the Recipient Quick Reference Guide available at http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/grantsonline/Documents/Quick%20Reference%20Guides/GrantRecipients_Quick_Ref_Guide.pdf. This site also has additional detailed Non-Federal entity assistance material. If you are having problems with your access to Grants Online, please contact the Grants Online Help Desk at 1-877-662-2478 or GrantsOnline.HelpDesk@noaa.gov.

1. Frequency: Performance reports are due on a semi-annual basis, unless otherwise specified in a specific condition, no later than 30 days following the end of each six (6) month period from the start date of the original award. The last semi-annual performance report is required. The final report, which summarizes activities conducted during the entire award must be submitted within 90 days following the end date of the project.

C. Property Reports and Disposition

Property records, including any documentation relating to disposition of property, required by 2 C.F.R. §200.311-314, are to be submitted in NOAA's Grants Online System, if applicable. The Tangible Personal Property Report (SF-428) and the Real Property Status Report (SF-429) should be included in documentation, as applicable. At the end of the period of performance, but no later than the closeout period, the non-Federal entity must report on property using the property forms (SF-428/SF-429 forms) located at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/post-award-reporting-forms.html#sortby=1>. These include real property (§200.311), Federally-owned and exempt property (§200.312), equipment acquired with grant funds (§200.313), and residual inventory of unused supplies exceeding \$5,000 in total aggregate value (§200.314). Disposition instructions should be requested by the non-Federal entity. In addition, non-Federal entities may be required to submit annual reports on real property, per §200.329. Research awards should also refer to the Federal-Wide Research Terms and Conditions at <http://www.nsf.gov/awards/managing/rtc.jsp>.

D. Reporting Subawards and Executive Compensation

The non-Federal entity is reminded that Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions requires specified reporting regarding subawards and executive compensation. This information is not reported through Grants Online. Follow reporting instructions in the Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions.

III. Scientific Integrity

A. General Guidelines

1. *Maintaining Integrity.* The non-Federal entity shall maintain the scientific integrity of research performed pursuant to this grant or financial assistance award including the prevention, detection, and remediation of any allegations regarding the violation of scientific integrity or scientific and research misconduct, and the conduct of inquiries, investigations, and adjudications of allegations of violations of scientific integrity or scientific and research misconduct. All the requirements of this provision flow down to subrecipients.
2. *Peer Review.* The peer review of the results of scientific activities under a NOAA grant, financial assistance award, or cooperative agreement shall be accomplished to ensure consistency with NOAA standards on quality, relevance, scientific integrity, reproducibility, transparency, and performance. NOAA will ensure that peer review of "influential scientific information" or "highly influential scientific assessments" is conducted in accordance with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Final Information Quality Bulletin for Peer Review and NOAA policies on peer review, such as the Information Quality Guidelines.
3. In performing or presenting the results of scientific activities under the NOAA grant, financial assistance award, or cooperative agreement and in responding to allegations regarding the violation of scientific integrity or scientific and research misconduct, the non-Federal entity and all subrecipients shall comply with the provisions herein and NOAA

Administrative Order (NAO) 202-735D, Scientific Integrity, and its Procedural Handbook, including any amendments thereto. That Order can be found at <http://nrc.noaa.gov/ScientificIntegrityCommons.aspx>.

4. *Primary Responsibility.* The non-Federal entity shall have the primary responsibility to prevent, detect, and investigate allegations of a violation of scientific integrity or scientific and research misconduct. Unless otherwise instructed by the grants officer, the non-Federal entity shall promptly conduct an initial inquiry into any allegation of such misconduct and may rely on its internal policies and procedures, as appropriate, to do so.
5. By executing this grant, financial assistance award, or cooperative agreement the non-Federal entity provides its assurance that it has established an administrative process for performing an inquiry, investigating, and reporting allegations of a violation of scientific integrity or scientific and research misconduct; and that it will comply with its own administrative process for performing an inquiry, investigation, and reporting of such misconduct.
6. The non-Federal entity shall insert this provision in all subawards at all tiers under this grant, financial assistance award, or cooperative agreement.

B. Investigating Scientific Integrity or Scientific and Research Misconduct

1. *Initiating Investigation.* If the non-Federal entity or subrecipient determines that there is sufficient evidence to proceed to an investigation, it shall notify the grants officer and, unless otherwise instructed, the non-Federal entity or subrecipient shall:
 - a. Promptly conduct an investigation to develop a complete factual record and an examination of such record leading to either a finding regarding the violation of scientific integrity or scientific and research misconduct and an identification of appropriate remedies or a determination that no further action is warranted.
 - b. If the investigation leads to a finding regarding the violation of scientific integrity or scientific and research misconduct, obtain adjudication by a neutral third party adjudicator. The adjudication must include a review of the investigative record and, as warranted, a determination of appropriate corrective actions and sanctions.
2. *Finalizing Investigation.* When the investigation is complete, the non-Federal entity shall forward to the grants officer a copy of the evidentiary record, the investigative report, any recommendations made to the non-Federal entity adjudicating official, the adjudicating official's decision and notification of any corrective action taken or planned, and the subject's written response (if any).

C. Findings and Corrective Actions

If the non-Federal entity finds that scientific integrity has been violated or scientific and research misconduct has occurred, it shall assess the seriousness of the misconduct and its impact on the research completed or in process and shall:

- a. Take all necessary corrective actions, which includes, but are not limited to, correcting the research record, and, as appropriate, imposing restrictions, controls, or other parameters on research in process or to be conducted in the future, and
- b. Coordinate remedial action with the grants officer.

IV. Data Sharing Directive

The Data and Publication Sharing Directive for NOAA Grants, Cooperative Agreements, and Contracts ensures that environmental data funded extramurally by NOAA are made publicly accessible in a timely fashion (typically within two years of collection), and that final manuscripts of peer-reviewed research papers are deposited with the NOAA Central Library (upon acceptance by the journal, or no later than at time of publication). Therefore, non-Federal entities, or recipients, must make data produced under financial assistance publicly accessible in accordance with the Data Management Plan included with the Proposal, unless the grant program grants a modification or an exemption. The text of the Directive is available at <https://nosc.noaa.gov/EDMC/PD.DSP.php>.

V. Post Award Actions Requests

Grants Online provides the ability for non-Federal entities to submit post award action requests. The Department of Commerce requires that post award action requests be approved by an Authorized Representative. Grants Online enforces this business rule by routing all post award action requests through the non-Federal entity's Authorized Representative(s). Non-Federal entities, or recipients, must follow the guidance provided in Grants Online at http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/grantsonline/Documents/AAR_Assistance/Recipient_AAR_Help.pdf.

VI. Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreements

This term supplements the Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions, Section B.06. Non-Federal entities must submit new or updated Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreements (NICRA) to the NOAA Grants Office, when applicable. NICRAs can be submitted to the NOAA Grants Office through an email to the assigned Grants Specialist and Grants Officer for recordkeeping.

If the Department of Commerce (DOC)/NOAA is your organization's cognizant agency, the non-Federal entity may contact Lamar Revis, Grants Officer, NOAA Grants Management Division, 1325 East West Highway, 9th Floor, Silver Spring, MD 20910, or lamar.revis@noaa.gov. The negotiation and approval of a rate is subject to the procedures required by NOAA and the Department of Commerce Standard Terms and Conditions.

If an applicant has not previously established an indirect cost rate with a Federal agency they may choose to negotiate a rate with the Department of Commerce or use the de minimis indirect cost rate of 10% of Modified Total Direct Cost (as allowable under 2 C.F.R. §200.414).

VII. Research Terms and Conditions

For awards designated on the CD-450 as Research, the Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions and the Federal-wide Research Terms and Conditions as implemented by the Department of Commerce, currently at <https://www.nsf.gov/awards/managing/rtc.jsp>, both apply to the award. The Commerce Terms and the Research Terms are generally intended to harmonize with each other; however, where the Commerce Terms and the Research Terms differ in a Research award, the Research Terms prevail, unless otherwise indicated in a specific condition.

VIII. Audit Findings Follow-up and Corrective Action

In accordance with §200.511 and the Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions, Section D, an auditee is responsible for follow-up and corrective action on all audit findings. For information on the summary of prior year audit findings and the corrective action plan, please also refer to §200.511(b) (1) (2), and (3) (i) (ii) (iii), and refer to §200.516 Audit findings, paragraph (c).

Paragraph (c) Corrective action plan of §200.511 Audit Findings Follow-up, further states that at the completion of the audit, the auditee must prepare a corrective action plan to address each audit finding included in the current year auditor's reports. As defined in §200.26, a corrective action means action taken by the auditee that: (a) Corrects identified deficiencies; (b) Produces recommended improvements; or (c) Demonstrates that audit findings are either invalid or do not warrant auditee action. The corrective action plan must provide the name(s) of the contact person(s) responsible for corrective action, the corrective action planned, and the anticipated completion date. If the auditee does not agree with the audit findings or believes corrective action is not required, then the corrective action plan must include an explanation and specific reasons.

NOAA as either the cognizant, oversight or Federal awarding agency of the auditee is responsible for follow-up on audit findings to ensure that the non-Federal entity takes appropriate and timely corrective action. As part of audit follow-up, NOAA must: (i) Issue a management decision as prescribed in §200.521 Management decision; and (ii) Monitor the non-Federal entity taking appropriate and timely corrective action. For additional information on applicable Federal agency responsibilities of NOAA for follow-up with corrective actions, see §200.513 Responsibilities.

IX. Audit Resolution

Non-Federal entities that expend \$750,000 or more in Federal funds during the non-Federal entity's fiscal year in Federal awards must have a single or program-specific audit conducted for that year in accordance with §200.501. As provided in §200.513, a Federal awarding agency is responsible for issuing a management decision for findings that relate to Federal awards it makes to non-Federal entities.

As further prescribed in DOC's Departmental Administrative Order (DAO) 213-5, as revised on May 22 2015, and 2 C.F.R. Part 20 Subpart F, Department and operating unit personnel shall act promptly to resolve both the financial and nonfinancial issues identified in an audit report. Comments, arguments, and evidence (if any) submitted by the auditee and the operating unit shall be considered in resolving the findings. A DOC decision on the resolution of audit findings and recommendations will be made in accordance with the procedures and within the specified timeframes identified in DAO 213-5.

The audit action official shall issue the Management Decision and Audit Resolution Determination. The Management Decision and Audit Resolution Determination will be maintained in the official grant file and a copy will be forwarded to the Program Officer.

Recipients are afforded the opportunity to appeal the Audit Resolution Determination. The appeal process is the last opportunity for auditees to provide evidence to support their disputes. NOAA will not accept any submission from a recipient regarding an appeal after the established deadline, unless requested by the Grants Officer, the Office of Inspector General, or the Office of the General Counsel. After the Department renders a decision on an appeal, there are no other administrative appeals available.

An audit of the award may result in the disallowance of costs incurred by the recipient and the establishment of a debt (account receivable) due DOC.

Recipients are responsible for the repayment of audit-related debts and for the collection of audit-related debts from their sub recipients where an audit has determined funds are owed. This does not relieve the recipient of liability for the debt.