



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

2019 Gulf Star Program: Economic Impacts of Water Quality Issues in the Gulf of Mexico

Deadline for proposal submission: **April 15, 2019**

The Gulf of Mexico Alliance (GOMA) is a partnership of the five Gulf States, federal agencies, academic organizations, businesses, and other non-profits in the region. Our goal is to significantly increase regional collaboration to enhance the environmental and economic health of the Gulf of Mexico. For more information about the Gulf of Mexico Alliance and the Gulf Star program visit www.gulfofmexicoalliance.org.

BACKGROUND

Gulf Star is a public-private partnership administered by GOMA. Gulf Star partners are agencies, businesses, and private organizations that provide funding for regional projects identified by GOMA Priority Issue Teams. The purpose of the Gulf Star program is to support foundational projects related to loss of critical habitats, coastal resilience, water resources, living marine resources, environmental education, and data/monitoring. These priorities are detailed in GOMA's 2016 [*Governors' Action Plan III for Healthy and Resilient Coasts*](#).

GOMA's Water Resources Team focuses its efforts on a wide range of water resource concerns affecting the region. These include: pathogens, harmful algal blooms, nutrient pollution, hypoxia, freshwater inflows, water resource sustainability, and other emerging issues. The Team works to identify, prioritize, and pursue additional data and research related to human, aquatic, and economic health and to protect and improve water resources in the Gulf of Mexico. Through this Request for Proposals (RFP), funding from the Gulf Star program is available to the Water Resources Team to address economic impacts associated with prevalent water quality issues in the Gulf region.

PROJECT SUMMARY AND SCOPE OF WORK

Recognizing the need to provide relevant, up-to-date information to State and Federal agencies and other stakeholders, the Gulf of Mexico Alliance Water Resources Team seeks proposals to collect, synthesize, and share information regarding the economic impacts of harmful algal blooms (HABs) and their impact on industry sectors such as tourism, commercial and recreational fisheries, and aquaculture. This is a timely topic of interest to State and Federal partners, industry and businesses, and many other groups across the region.

The Water Resources Team seeks to fund a project that will address the following:

1) Synthesis of available data and information regarding:

- the economic impacts of the 2017-2019 harmful algal bloom (HAB) event in Florida
- the social consequences of harmful algal blooms for people and communities

2) Development of data products and recommendations for both protection and restoration investments aimed at State and Federal restoration trustees, numerous other agencies, and stakeholders who could use the information to protect and improve water quality and minimize negative impacts to relevant economic sectors such as tourism, commercial and recreational fisheries, and aquaculture.

3) Application of the results to other geographic locations across the Gulf region

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

1) Final report that includes a data synthesis of the economic impacts of the 2017-2019 HAB event in Florida; social consequences of HABs for people and communities; and recommendations for restoration investments and other potential actions to minimize negative impacts to the economy.

2) At least one workshop for State and Federal partners, industry/businesses, and interested stakeholder groups to learn about the results of this project.

AWARD DETAILS

Grant award agreements and payments will come directly from the Gulf of Mexico Alliance. Available funding for the project selected from this RFP is approximately \$50,000. Minimum award value is \$25,000; proposals for less than \$25,000 will not be considered.

Although project costs cannot include already-incurred costs, projects may include funding for continuation or expansion of existing projects. Cost sharing or matching is not required, but is viewed favorably.

Project duration can be no more than 12 months. Anticipated start date is July 1, 2019.

ELIGIBILITY

Any state or municipal agency, academic/research institution, tribe, business, or non-governmental organization is eligible to submit a proposal and be considered for funding under this RFP. Applicants of winning proposals must be active (or intend to become active) GOMA Priority Issue Team members and will be required to attend the 2020 and 2021 GOMA All Hands meetings, provide regular project updates, and submit semi-annual progress reports to the Team.

Applicants must be U.S. organizations or corporations with a valid tax ID number and will be required to certify that they have the institutional, managerial, and financial capability to ensure proper planning, management, and completion of the project described in the scope; will establish safeguards to prohibit employees from using their positions for a purpose that constitutes or presents the appearance of

personal or organizational conflict of interest, or personal gain; will initiate and complete the work within the applicable time frame after receipt of approval from the Gulf of Mexico Alliance; and will comply with all applicable requirements of all other Federal laws, executive orders, regulations and policies governing this project.

PROJECT TEAM

Proposals must include an interdisciplinary team of investigators composed of at least one economist and one scientist with expertise in water quality issues. Collaborations may be from the same institution or multiple institutions. Partnerships and collaboration at the local, state, and regional level are strongly encouraged.

OUTREACH/ENGAGEMENT

In addition to state and Federal natural resource managers, proposals must identify other specific stakeholders or users of the proposed project's deliverables and identify how best to communicate the project outcomes to them.

DATA AND INFORMATION SHARING

All relevant project-derived material (data, metadata, reports, products, etc.) must be publicly available by the completion of the project. Project leads are encouraged to consult with the GOMA Data and Monitoring Team to determine appropriate data discovery, access, dissemination, and archival measures. It is recommended that related project metadata are entered into the GOMAportal (www.GOMAportal.org), but other publicly available systems are acceptable as well. Data and Monitoring Team point of contact is Katie Wallace at Katherine.M.Wallace@FloridaDEP.gov.

PROPOSAL CONTENT AND FORMAT

Proposals should be submitted in PDF format via email to Christina Mohrman, GOMA Program Coordinator, at christina.mohrman@gomxa.org by **Monday, April 15, 2019**. Proposals must be submitted using the GOMA Proposal Form that requires three main sections as described below:

(1) Title Page (GOMA fillable PDF form)

(2) Project Description and Budget (GOMA fillable PDF form; 5 pages maximum)

GOMA's Proposal Form requires that the Project Description and Budget be no longer than 5 pages and should contain the following elements:

Project Description:

In a clear and concise manner, describe what will be accomplished during the project:

- project goals and objectives, methods or approach, and team members
- primary activities that will be accomplished with this grant and the schedule for implementation
- Outreach/Engagement – stakeholders or users of the results of the project and describe the steps that will be taken to transfer the results of the project to the appropriate audience
- Data and Information Sharing - describe how all relevant project-derived material (data, metadata, reports, products, etc.) will be publicly available by the completion of the project.

Budget:

- Project Cost Details: Salary, Fringe, Travel, Supplies, Equipment, Contractual, Indirect
- Travel must include funds to attend the 2020 GOMA All Hands Meeting in Biloxi, Mississippi and 2021 GOMA All Hands Meeting in Louisiana (specific venue TBD)
- Indirect is limited to 10% of the total amount requested
- Justification should be provided for each applicable cost category

(3) Attachments (as appropriate)

Background information or other relevant information can be provided as an attachment. A Letter of Commitment is required for project team members from organizations other than that of the applicant's. Commitment letters should be attached as PDF to proposals. Attachments are not included in 5-page limit for the Project Description and Budget.

PROPOSAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

Projects will be evaluated on: rationale (10 points), proposal merit (10 points), impacts and application of results (10 points), applicant (10 points), outreach and engagement and/or data sharing (5 points), and proposal specifications (5 points).

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. Rationale (10 points) – Project addresses objectives identified in the GOMA Action Plan III; clearly states the need for the project and the high primacy in accomplishing the Priority Issue Team's actions.
2. Proposal Merit (10 points) – Project assesses whether the goals and objectives are clear and the methodology is appropriate for the proposed project. Likelihood that the proposed project will attain the stated objectives and action identified in the GOMA Priority Issue Tier II action it proposes to address.
3. Impacts and Application of Results (10 points) – Project evaluates the overall impact and anticipated outcomes of the completed project. Identifies opportunities for leveraging or complimentary projects (if any).
4. Applicant (10 points) – Principle Investigator and applicant team is well qualified to perform the proposed work and demonstrates intent to be active on GOMA Team(s) throughout the life of the project. Project lead and other project team members are experienced and have proper expertise to perform the project.
5. Outreach and Engagement and/or Data Sharing (5 points) – Applicant addressed the Outreach and Engagement and Data Sharing requirements satisfactorily.
6. Proposal Specifications (5 points) – Proposal is limited to 5 pages and contains all information required by the RFP. Budget costs are reasonable and justifiable.

SUBMITTAL, SELECTION, AND NOTIFICATION

Proposals must be submitted by email to Christina Mohrman, GOMA Program Coordinator, at christina.mohrman@gomxa.org by April 15, 2019.

Proposals will be evaluated by GOMA staff and the Water Resources Priority Issue Team. The evaluation committee will be composed of subject matter experts (who will remain anonymous). The Team will submit their recommendation to the GOMA Alliance Management Team who makes the final selection

regarding funding of the project. The GOMA Alliance Management Team reserves the right to make selections based on the evaluation criteria and their own deliberations.

The Gulf of Mexico Alliance will notify the applicants of their award status in mid-May, 2019. Project start date is planned for July 1, 2019.

QUESTIONS

For questions about this RFP, please contact Christina Mohrman, GOMA Program Coordinator, at christina.mohrman@gomxa.org.

No questions will be allowed after the submission deadline during the evaluation process.