



FY16 Request for Proposals

Proposals Due COB January 27th

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Ocean Alaska Science and Learning Center Mission and Goals

The Ocean Alaska Science and Learning Center is one of 18 National Park Service Research Learning Centers located around the country to increase the communication, use, and effectiveness of scientific research being conducted in the national parks. The mission of the OASLC is to promote stewardship of the marine-influenced ecosystems of Alaska's coastal national parks, through education and research. As part of the OASLC five-year strategic plan, we are announcing the FY16 annual funding call.

The pertinent strategic goals of the OASLC are:

- Increase marine science literacy of NPS personnel and partners in order to communicate marine science to the public.
- Support and increase the use of marine science in park management decisions.
- Promote and facilitate marine scientific research in Alaska's coastal parks.

The OASLC is seeking proposals to fund outreach, education and research projects focused on marine-influenced¹ resources (cultural or natural) of Alaska's eleven coastal national park units. In this call we are beginning a transition away from the smaller projects we funded in the past, towards funding fewer larger projects, although proposals of any size are welcome in FY16. We anticipate between \$100,000 and \$150,000 may be available.

Following the guiding principles of the OASLC outlined in our draft five-year strategic plan, proposals that benefit multiple parks, leverage other resources (e.g. existing projects, park

¹ Marine-influenced resources should include any terrestrial or marine resource with a direct connection to the ocean. For terrestrial based resources the marine connection should be the focus of the project (e.g. brown bears feeding on intertidal invertebrates) Contact us if you have questions.



facilities, etc.) and include well-developed education or outreach components will be favored in the rating process. Proposed projects must also focus on addressing at least one of the cross-cutting issues identified below.

Cross-Cutting Issues

In order to focus our resources on issues and projects that are likely to benefit multiple parks, the OASLC has identified several cross-cutting issues that affect most, or all coastal national park units in Alaska. Proposals must address at least one of these cross-cutting issues:

- Ocean acidification
- Climate change – including (but not limited to) sea level rise, coastal erosion, tidewater glacier change, marine environment changes, and other natural, cultural, and subsistence resource impacts
- Marine debris
- Increased marine vessel / shipping impacts – including oil spill preparedness and response, cruise ships impacts, and arctic shipping
- Documenting and using Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) – including (but not limited to) the loss of knowledge through the passing of native elders, place names, tides and currents, and the merging of TEK and western science
- Cultural connections to the marine environment – including (but not limited to) subsistence activity, traditional knowledge, historical connections, pre-historic connections, present day socio-economic connections
- Invasive species
- Tides, currents, sea level and other physical dynamics of the near shore environment

Eligibility

Any national park or National Park Service program (e.g. Inventory and Monitoring²) may submit a proposal as long as it pertains to one of the eleven coastal park units in Alaska, and is focused on one of the cross-cutting issues listed above. Projects with a natural resource focus, cultural resource focus, or education and outreach focus are all encouraged to apply. Parks with active partnerships already identified or involved in a proposed project should submit proposals on behalf of their partners.

² It is highly unlikely the OASLC will fund a long-term monitoring project beyond one year. Pilot studies, literature reviews or analyzing existing data for publication or other evaluation are more appropriate.



Funding must be obligated in FY 2016. Proposals must identify how funds will be obligated if external partners are involved (e.g. contract, CESU Agreement with XX University, etc.)

A letter of support from potential partners is encouraged (but not required), to indicate their willingness and ability.

A brief letter of support from the park superintendent will also be required for a proposal to be eligible.

Education/Outreach Component

In support of the OASLC mission to communicate science, each proposal is encouraged to include a meaningful educational or outreach component. We strongly urge principle investigators to include park interpretive staff when composing this aspect of the proposal. Funding may be included in the budget to complete these components. This aspect of the proposal will be rated. Meaningful education or outreach components could include (but are not limited to) resource briefs, web articles, school programs, public seminars or other community outreach activities. Be sure to identify the audience³ and who will be developing the education/outreach products. Internal audiences (i.e. “inreach” or NPS staff) are perfectly acceptable target audiences for well-developed education and “outreach” components.

OASLC staff may be involved in developing and/or executing the education/outreach products, but please contact us before you include us in the proposal. Proposals that include OASLC time or effort without contacting us first will be rated lower.

Review Process and Criteria

Proposals will be rated using a numerical scale by a review panel consisting of members of the OASLC Technical Committee. The review panel will include at least one expert in natural resources, cultural resources, and education and outreach, respectively. The numerical rating will be used to rank the projects and make a recommendation to the OASLC Board. The Board will make the final decision on selected projects. The following four criteria will be rated:

Leveraging – A guiding principle of the OASLC is to leverage existing research and education resources to facilitate work in Alaska’s coastal parks. Leveraging can include adding work elements to existing projects; in-kind support of personnel, equipment or facilities from parks or partners; coordinating travel with other projects to reduce costs, or any opportunity to increase

³ Please think carefully about who the audience really is. Rarely is “the general public” the target audience. Rather a subset of the public is usually the true audience, such as Visitor Center visitors, Facebook users, high school teachers or village elders.



the value of the work completed for the money spent. Please be specific on how your proposal is leveraging resources.

5 points – The proposal leverages resources to a high degree. Proposed work is a component added to an existing funded project; substantial in-kind support in terms of staff time is included, facilities or equipment are donated by a park or partner; dollar value of leveraged resources is equal or greater than the proposed budget; proposed work would not be possible without the leveraged resources.

3 points – The proposal leverages resources to a moderate degree. Proposed work shares resources with a concurrent project; some in-kind support of staff time, facilities, or equipment are provided, dollar value of leveraged resources is less than half of the proposed budget; proposed work is possible without leveraged resources, but does not accomplish as much.

1 point - Leveraged resources are minimal to non-existent. Proposed work is not combined with any other effort; staff time, facilities or equipment are available but charged to the project.

Multiple Parks – The ocean is a shared common resource that connects all coastal parks. A national and regional goal is to establish a “seamless network” of coastal parks. In addition, the OASLC strives to work with all coastal parks in Alaska with the limited funds available. By focusing our efforts on cross-cutting issues and on multi-park efforts we aim to increase the overall capacity and inter-connectedness of coastal parks.

5 points – The proposal clearly involves work in multiple parks; or work on resources, issues and/or produces deliverables that will very clearly be applied to management practices in more than one park.

3 points – The proposed work occurs in a single park but clearly has the potential to benefit additional parks through shared natural or cultural resources; or solving similar management challenges; or providing shared deliverables, in the future.

1 point – The proposed work involves only a single park.

Feasibility and Technical Soundness – Are the objectives and methods clear and appropriate? Is project completion feasible given the objectives, methods, proposed budget, timing of work

and financial instruments (i.e. agreements, contracts, etc.), personnel experience, suggested partners, etc?

5 points – The project is easily realistic as described in the proposal. Objectives are clearly stated and easy to evaluate; methods are an accepted and sound way to complete the work; a clear path towards obligating the money in FY16 is identified; the amount of work is feasible with the time available, the personnel are experienced and knowledgeable; adequate planning for timing field work is apparent, partners are obviously willing to work together (e.g. with a letter of support), etc.

3 points – The project is probably realistic as described in the proposal. Objectives are described but lack specificity; methods are untested, or fail to address important considerations; a plan for conducting the work is identified but obligation of funds may depend on things beyond the PIs control (e.g. weather, successful funding of another proposal, seasonal hires, etc.), the work is feasible as long as things go according to plan, capable personnel (e.g. new staff or interns who have training but no experience) are likely to be available, capable partners have been suggested but not confirmed, etc.

1 point – The project is not realistic as described in the proposal. Plans for conducting the work suggest ideas without thought to the time needed to complete the work, hire staff, obligate money, fail to account for other needed resources (such as facilities or vehicles), or identify necessary partners.

Education and/or Outreach - Science and scientific results are far more effective when they can be communicated clearly and effectively. Do the education and/or outreach methods enhance understanding of the state of the science, the scientific process, or the role of science in responding to these cross-cutting issues? Do the methods effectively communicate the results or process used to conduct research? External and internal (i.e. NPS staff) audiences will be weighted equally.

5 points – The education and/or outreach component is effective and well planned. The proposal specifically increases the scientific knowledge of a particular audience. The target audience is clearly identified and appropriate. The methods are well tested with strong potential to create relevancy and meaning for the target audience. The proposal helps the chosen audience respond to the cross-cutting issues identified or informs them specifically about the overall project results. Appropriate staff are identified to fulfill the educational or outreach component of the proposal.



3 points – The education and/or outreach component is informative but lacks a targeted approach specifically designed to enhance scientific understanding. A target audience is identified. Methods may be new or untested. Staff are identified who could possibly do the work, but lack previous experience.

1 point – The proposal contains basic products that would generally inform audiences about the cross-cutting issue. The scientific aspects of the issue or project are not included. The audience is vaguely defined. Staff with appropriate abilities to complete the component are not identified.

Deliverables and Reporting Requirements

Deliverables of the proposals themselves should be clearly identified in the proposal.

Annual reports are due by October 30th each year, if the project remains unfinished. Reports should include the status of the proposed work, any deviations or unexpected changes that occurred, and a status of funds for the project. The annual report may be a page or less.

Final reports are due by October 30th in the year the project is completed. Reports should include a brief summary of the final outcomes of the project, any deviations or unexpected changes to the proposal that occurred, lessons learned from the project, a final total of funds spent, and any partnerships that were created or involved. The final report may be a page or less.

In addition, copies of any technical reports or other tangible deliverables should be given to the OASLC, and uploaded to IRMA.

Finally, 10 to 15 high quality photos of the work being conducted should be shared with the OASLC for future communication and outreach products. Photos should be high resolution, sufficient for printing (generally, the higher the better). Please also include photo credits and a caption, or sufficient information to understand who or what is in the photo and where, when and by whom it was taken. Contact us if you have questions about the best types of photos.



OASLC Funding Call Proposal Template

Submit Proposals to Benjamin Pister at benjamin_pister@nps.gov

Project Title:

Amount Requested: \$

Parks Involved:

Project Manager/Contact Person:

Email:

Phone:

Brief Summary of the Project (150 words max):

Project Description (1500 words max): *Be sure to address each of the four rating criteria listed in the funding call. Include objectives, methods, who will do the work and where, any partners that will be involved, and any final products or results that will be produced. The project must clearly address one of the cross-cutting issues listed in the funding call. Succinct and concise proposals tend to be favored. Seriously. Make it easy on reviewers.*

Provide a List of Principle Tasks and a Timeline for Completion:

Deliverables: *Indicate the final products or results of the project.*

Budget: *You may add line-by-line budget in this Word document, or submit your budget in Excel. Be sure to include how you will obligate money if you plan to use a financial instrument such as a contract or an agreement, and the overhead rate.*



Letters of Support: *Please attach any letters of support from collaborators as applicable. Scanned copies are acceptable.*

Superintendent's Letter: *Please include a letter of support from your superintendent. Projects without this letter will not be considered. An email from your superintendent is acceptable.*