

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

Ocean Acidification and Hypoxia Monitoring, Research, and Communication

BACKGROUND

Oregon's coastal communities and economies depend on a thriving marine ecosystem. However, ocean acidification and hypoxia (OAH) are endangering Oregon's ocean resources. The State of Oregon is committed to understanding, actively adapting to, and mitigating OAH, which requires strategic investments of funding. To address the risks and vulnerabilities caused by OAH, the state legislature and the Governor adopted the [Oregon Ocean Acidification and Hypoxia Action Plan 2019-2025](#) (the OAH Action Plan) and committed funding to guide State response efforts. Because Oregon is one of the first places to experience the impacts of OAH globally, these actions will help demonstrate that local actions are meaningful in fighting the global challenges of climate and ocean changes.

The Oregon Ocean Science Trust (OOST), in consultation with the Oregon Coordinating Council on Ocean Acidification and Hypoxia (OAH Council), requests proposals for ocean and estuarine monitoring, applied research and management planning, and essential communications to address OAH. Through the passage of House Bill 3114 ([HB 3114](#)) by the Oregon legislature and the Governor's signature in 2021, the State of Oregon has provided about \$1,000,000 to implement priority actions from the OAH Action Plan.

SCHEDULE

The table below represents the RFP schedule. Dates listed are subject to change.

RFP Announcement: October 15, 2021 **Update:** *Projects 4 and 5 re-announced on February 7, 2022, with closing date of c.o.b. March 7, 2022.*

Informational Webinar(s): October 22, 2021 **Proposal Due Date:** December 21, 2021

Issue of Notice to Intent to Award: February 2022 **Project Start Date:** March 2022

Project Final Report: March 2024

State of OAH Symposiums: Initial updates – Fall 2022

Midterm updates – Fall 2023

Final project presentation – Fall 2024

FOCUS AREAS

The OOST announces this opportunity as a one-time investment using state funds as allocated through HB 3114. Total project award amounts were adjusted to support the implementation of competitive granting opportunities. OOST and the OAH Council will select one awardee for each project for up to the total amount listed. This abbreviated project list of research, monitoring and communications actions were prioritized in the Oregon OAH Action Plan by the OAH Council. Each project is described in more detail in separate appendices, as noted below.

Applicants may apply for multiple projects. However, a separate proposal is required for each project (see Proposal Format and Submission). If multiple proposals are submitted, each separate proposal must describe how the multiple projects are complementary but not reliant

on one another. The Review Panel will evaluate each proposal independently. The submission of proposals for multiple projects can be used as one of many ways for the project teams to demonstrate leveraging resources.

The three focus areas for projects supported by this RFP are:

- A. Ocean and Estuarine Monitoring**
- B. Applied Research and Management**
- C. Communications - Increasing OAH Awareness (*Upcoming Opportunity*)**

Competitive grants will be awarded in compliance with the requirements and based on the intent of research focus articulated in HB 3114. OOST has retained a nominal percentage (2.5%) of the overall funding available for this RFP to support administration of the grant process and award tracking through the tenure of the grant cycle. The total amount of funding available for each of the six projects OOST is funding is listed below.

(A) Ocean and Estuarine Monitoring

The OAH Action Plan identifies strategic augmentation of ocean monitoring and research that is essential to inform the State on how to mitigate and adapt to future OAH changes. Although reducing causes of OAH is of primary importance, Oregon must also adapt to the changes and minimize the economic impacts of OAH using the best available science for management, planning, and decision-making. However, this will only be possible if Oregon understands OAH dynamics and trends well enough to foresee potential impacts.

The prioritized projects below highlight three key locations where the State needs more information. Data generated by these ocean and estuarine monitoring projects should be able to stand alone (i.e., generate useful data with one-time funding) or contribute substantially toward development of a site(s), for long-term monitoring (see RFP Appendix A for additional requirements associated with each project). Applicants are encouraged to consider how/if collected data could also document short-term trends in OAH through real-time monitoring during OAH events.

1. **\$97,500** for intertidal OAH monitoring in Oregon marine reserves;
2. **\$287,625** for subtidal OAH monitoring in Oregon marine reserves; and
3. **\$97,500** for OAH monitoring in Yaquina Bay, Oregon.

(B) Applied Research and Management

The OAH Action Plan identifies the need for the State to promote OAH resilience and adaptation in its management decisions and in regional planning for ecosystems and coastal communities. To support both thriving marine habitats (e.g., submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV)) and economies considering current and future ocean changes, it is essential to strategize needed information to maximize resources and time.

The prioritized projects below highlight research gaps and management planning where the State needs more information (See RFP Appendix B for additional requirements associated with each project). A wide range of projects will be considered under this RFP section (as

applicable to specific project descriptions) such as, but not limited to, species restoration, carbon mitigation potential, and large-scale ecosystem services, as they pertain to OAH impacts to Oregon's coastal communities.

4. **\$131,625** for ecosystem modeling of submerged aquatic vegetation;
5. **\$170,625** to develop recommendations, through workshops or seminars, for maximizing the abundance of wild shellfish, cultured shellfish and submerged aquatic vegetation in estuaries in Oregon (\$24,375); and to develop best management practices for conducting shellfish cultivation in a manner that protects or promotes estuarine health (*e.g., wild shellfish and SAV*) (\$146,250); and
6. **\$175,500** to fund a study on the life cycle impacts of ocean acidification and/or hypoxia on shellfish species that are of importance to Oregon.

(C) Communications – Increasing OAH Awareness (Upcoming Funding Opportunity)

The OAH Action Plan identifies the importance of access to OAH information to empower coastal communities to take informed actions that contribute to a more robust future. This can only occur through clear, strategic, and compassionate communications. As Oregon continues to experience the impacts from OAH, it is key that Oregonians envision ways to overcome the impacts of OAH. Oregon is best served by positive, solutions-oriented messaging. Oregon supports equity and environmental justice in communications – many underserved or under-resourced communities in rural and urban centers are expected to be disproportionately impacted by climate change due to limited access to resources and information, and this project should include strategies to address this.

EXPECTATIONS

Best use of this State investment is a critical component for applicants to address in this call for proposals and should be carefully considered and directly addressed. Proposals should conceptually connect the proposed project deliverables to the needs addressed within the OAH Action Plan, OOST research priorities, and the OAH Council's Biennial Reports. Additionally, further connections should be made with local, regional, and national OAH efforts.

Applicants need to clearly demonstrate how the proposed work implements, complements and/or amplifies local, regional, and national OAH and ocean change efforts including, but not limited to, the following:

- 2021 [State Agency Climate Adaptation Framework](#)
- 2021 [State of Oregon Climate Equity Blueprint](#)
- 2020 National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration Ocean Acidification Program – [Ocean, Coastal, and Great Lakes Acidification Research Plan: 2020-2029](#)
- 2018 [Pacific Coast Collaborative West Coast OA and Hypoxia Asset Inventory](#)
- 2016 [West Coast OA and Hypoxia Science Panel Report](#)
- 2016 [Final Recommendations from the Oregon Shellfish Task Force](#)

Applicants are required to use Best Available Science, including but not limited to Traditional Ecological Knowledge, in the development of proposals, and implementation on projects if

awarded – as applicable. Traditional Ecological Knowledge is a cumulative body of knowledge, practice and belief evolving by adaptive processes and handed down through generations by cultural transmission, about the relationship of living beings (including humans) with one another and with their environment. Best Available Science should incorporate the accuracy, reliability, and relevancy of methodology, approaches, and interpretation of data and other information used throughout the applicant’s process.

Awardees are required to submit resulting data and work products to a public database and to the appropriate state agency in a timely manner, to allow use by regional resource managers and community planners. Applicants should describe a timeline for when data and other work products will be available as well as the mechanism of delivery to the public or other users. Priority will be given to locations and/or data not previously obtained or data that can be directly compared to historical data to evaluate change through time and that could initiate a longer-term monitoring effort at that site. Applicants will be required to clearly document metadata, methodologies, and other relevant materials for the project.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit data, analytical reports/findings, and work products to appropriate national and state data archives and agencies including, but not limited to, the following:

- West Coast Ocean Data Portal – Ocean Health Scorecard Project
- National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration
- Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife – Shellfish Assessment Team; Oregon Marine Reserves Team
- Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development – Oregon Coastal Management Program
- Oregon Department of Environmental Quality - Oregon Water Quality Assessment Reports and the Oregon Triennial Water Quality Methodology Review calls for data and associated data portals

The OAH Council will be convening “State of OAH” workshops on OAH science, impacts, and solutions with communities, policy makers and at-risk industries. Successful proposal teams will be required to present initial, midterm, and final oral presentations updates at annual State of OAH workshops and participate in the subsequent future planning seminars. Additionally, a written project summary is required to be submitted to the OOST and the OAH Council at the completion of projects. This required participation will allow for the public dissemination of information and work products gathered from this funding call, in addition to providing the OOST and the OAH Council the opportunity to continue to strategize for future state needs and funding priorities.

Project outreach, in addition to the State of OAH workshops, is strongly encouraged. Applicants should identify the kind(s) of activities proposed (e.g., outreach meetings, publications, infographics) and the target audience for outreach effort. Include information about what scale the activities are proposed (e.g., number of participants, events, materials, locations). Applicants should also consider how project outcomes may be used for future ocean chemistry

communications and public engagement. Project deliverables should include summaries of key outcomes and audience appropriate messaging that can be used by the OOST and OAH council to educate and build support for future calls to action. The hope is that each monitoring and research project can be used to support the next steps of the communications plan, which is being developed concurrently with other projects.

LEVERAGING

Applicants should clearly state how/if their proposed work will be leveraged with additional resources brought to the funding opportunity. Examples include providing specialized sampling equipment, providing education/outreach support, and/or augmenting existing studies. Leveraging is not required but is encouraged to maximize limited State resources. The submission of proposals for multiple projects can be used as one way for the project teams to demonstrate leveraging resources.

ELIGIBILITY

The OOST and the OAH Council encourage the submission of project proposals from a diversity of entities, including but not limited to the seafood industry, not-for-profit community organizations, resource consultants, local governments, tribal governments, Oregon State agencies, universities and community colleges, and other educational entities. Collaborative proposals with a diversity of partner entities are encouraged. Proposals from entities with demonstrated experience working in Oregon will be prioritized. Federal agencies are not eligible to receive project funds but can be listed as project collaborators for the purpose of leveraging resources and regional expertise.

Eligible applicant(s) must possess the following attributes and/or demonstrated experience to be considered for funding. Applicants should provide specific examples of work in their 1-page Curriculum Vitae (see Proposal Format and Submission) that demonstrates the following:

- Specialized scientific knowledge relevant to OAH and/or the ecosystem and processes impacted;
- In-depth understanding of OAH impacts on industry and/or coastal communities; and
- Ability to place project findings into the context of regional resource management, planning, and governance.

ALLOWABLE EXPENDITURES

Applicants may include up to 15% of the total project cost for indirect project costs. Indirect costs are overhead, or administrative costs, that cannot be readily identified to a specific project or function but are actually incurred by an organization. Indirect costs include expenses, such as facilities fees/services and administrative time. Applicants are encouraged to waive indirect project costs or submit a lower rate of indirect project costs (less than 15%), where possible.

BUDGET

Generalized allowable budget categories that may be included on the budget form as well as justified within the budget narrative.

Salaries, Wages, and Benefits: For each request, provide a position title and estimated budget.

Contracted Services: For services provided by a separate entity performing work, costs should be line itemed and should match the scope of work described in the application. Materials and supplies purchased and provided by the contractor, as well as contractor travel, should be documented here. Do not combine contract costs if more than one contractor is used. Federal Funds cannot be used to pay a federal agency or State Agencies other than Oregon.

Materials and Supplies: Consumable items purchased and used during the project are documented here. Include expendable equipment with costs less than \$5,000.

Travel: Document funding needed to support field travel (based on current State of Oregon rates). Funds may also be used to pay for the travel of invited speakers or presenters to workshops or seminars.

Equipment: Includes nonexpendable items with a per unit cost of \$5,000 or more. Equipment purchased must be retained by Grantee after the grant closes, or request approval from the OOST to transfer the equipment to another entity.

Other Direct Costs: Items that do not fit in the other budget categories, including but not limited to permit fees, registration costs, outreach costs, etc.

Total Indirect Cost: Percentage of total direct costs

PROPOSAL FORMAT AND SUBMISSION

Applicants may submit an application for more than one project, but each must be submitted as an independent proposal. Applicants who submit more than one project will not receive preference consideration for award funding. Applicants must clearly articulate that they will obtain all needed research, collection, or other permits and approvals necessary from the State, federal agencies, and other entities that may have regulatory authority to collect samples, place equipment, or perform other actions at a given location.

The main narrative for proposals should not exceed a maximum of 6 pages and must include the following sections: (1) Project Description and Scope; (2) Methods; (3) Data Dissemination and Management; (4) Outreach; (5) Relevance to the Oregon OAH Action Plan; and (6) Milestone Schedule.

Project abstracts of no more than 350 words should be included on a separate title page that also includes project partners' names, affiliations, contact information, total timeframe for project, and total cost.

Up to 2 figures, tables, and/or maps can be provided separate from the main text of the proposal and should not exceed a total of two pages.

A 1-page "Literature Cited / References" document can be provided and is not included in the 6-page maximum proposal length.

Project budget narratives should not exceed a maximum of 1-page and must include the following budget categories: (1) Salaries, Wages, and Benefits; (2) Contracted Services; (3) Materials and Supplies; (4) Travel; (5) Equipment; and (6) Other. A separate budget form is also required to be submitted, and does not count toward the 1-page budget narrative.

Applicants must also include a 1-page Curriculum Vitae for the Principal Investigator, as well as each of the listed project partners receiving funds.

Conflict of Interest form(s) are required, one per member of the project team, to be submitted.

You are NOT eligible if the following apply:

- Current appointment to the OOST
- Current appointment to the OAH Council

You MAY have a conflict of interest if the following applies:

- Past appointment to the OOST
- Past appointment to the OAH Council

Applicants should email a single PDF file version of the proposal with all materials by the RFP deadline of December 21st, 2021.

REVIEW PROCESS

The OOST and the OAH Council will prioritize projects that engage Oregonians in OAH science, monitoring, and communications. The OOST and the OAH Council both have a broad mandate to advance ocean conservation issues in support of the Oregon OAH Action Plan, and other statewide ocean planning documents, for the benefit of all Oregonians. Embedded within these mandates are commitments to reach out and engage underserved and under-resourced people and communities who have not traditionally participated in ocean change issues in the past due to various barriers and perceptions, including, but not limited to, ethnicity, race, language, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disabilities, or other cultural, religious, or economic status, and other considerations as listed in the 2021 Oregon Climate Equity Blueprint.

Proposals will be evaluated by a Proposal Review Team consisting of members of the OOST advisory board and the OAH Council, as well as other regional ocean science and community

experts. Proposals will be evaluated using a scoring rubric based on the following general guidelines:

- Quality of the submitted management, research, or educational rationale and its applicability to the State OAH Action Plan needs and goals;
- Proposal's geographical area of study focusing on filling regional spatial data gaps;
- Potential for leveraging current and future work;
- Application considerations for local and regional management and other planning needs, including those of tribes, local governments, and state agencies; and
- Engagement with underserved or under-resourced people and communities who have not traditionally participated in ocean change issues in the past due to various barriers and perceptions.

During the proposal review process, review panel members may seek expert review of proposals, or a portion of proposals. However, only review panel members will be responsible for scoring each proposal based on criteria established prior to the announcement of the RFP.

RFP STAFF CONTACTS

For further information about Statewide OAH needs and/or suitability of potential proposals, please contact:

Dr. Charlotte Whitefield
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
Staff to the Coordinating Council on Oregon Ocean Acidification and Hypoxia
Charlotte.m.regulawhitefield@odfw.oregon.gov

For further information about the proposal process and about eligibility, please contact:

Lisa DeBruyckere
Contractor to the Oregon Ocean Science Trust
Creative Resource Strategies, LLC
OOSTGrants@dsl.oregon.gov