

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

**U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY**

**NATIONAL GEOLOGICAL AND GEOPHYSICAL  
DATA PRESERVATION PROGRAM**

**(NGGDPP)**

**Authorized by The Energy Policy Act of 2005  
(Public Law 109-58, Sec. 351)**

**GRANT PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT**

**No. G15AS00016**

**For Fiscal Year 2015**

**FY 2015 Grant Objectives: Provide funding to State geological surveys, on a 1:1 matching basis for each proposed grant objective to:**

- 1. Inventory collections of geological or geophysical data**
- 2. Create metadata for individual items in those data collections**
- 3. Create or update digital infrastructure**
- 4. Rescue data at risk**

**ISSUE DATE:**

**January 8, 2015**

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**CLOSING DATE & TIME:**

**March 9, 2015**

**6:00 PM Eastern Daylight Time**

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**PLEASE READ THE ENTIRE ANNOUNCEMENT CAREFULLY  
TO NOTE CHANGES SPECIFIC CHANGES ARE NOTED ON PAGE 2.**

**PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT STATEMENT:** The Paperwork Reduction Act says that the agency must tell you why we are collecting this information, how we will use it, and whether you have to give it to us. The National Geological and Geophysical Data Preservation Program is collecting this information to evaluate submitted applications to acquire funding for data preservation-related activities. Your response is required to receive funding. A Federal agency cannot conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number (1028-0087). The average estimated burden associated with this collection estimated to average 36 hours per

response, including the time for reviewing instructions and completing the required information. Comments regarding this collection of information should be directed to the Bureau Clearance Officer, U.S. Geological Survey, 12201 Sunrise Valley Drive, MS807, Reston, VA 20192.

Specific changes:

## **NGGDPP Program Announcement and Applications Changes for Fiscal Year 2015**

1. On page 5 there is **“Clarification on Objective #2”**. Please read this clarification over carefully if you are applying for funds to address this objective.
2. **Encourage applications to objective #4**, “rescue data at risk”. This objective is on page 6.
3. **Encourage reporting of success stories** in the submission of the Final Technical Report. See page 11.
4. Please be sure to **place requested proposal information into the correct locations** within the proposal template. Failure to do so may result in disqualification of the proposal. See page 9 and 10.

## **NGGDPP Program Announcement and Applications Changes from Fiscal Year 2014**

1. **“Preliminary Results and Prior Work”** on page 3 of the application needs to be put in Appendix 1 of the “Attachment A – Application Format”. Appendix 1 does not count against the 15-page grant application page limit.
2. **“Detailed Budget”** on pages 6-7 of the application must show at least a 1:1 Federal/State match for each grant objective for which you are requesting funds; the non-Federal share may be more than the Federal contribution and may include services or cash provided to contractors to perform services directly applicable to proposed work on the project. The detailed budget for each proposed grant objective must be independent and stand-alone from the other budgets submitted, and must show at least a 1:1 Federal/State match for each objective. Failure to submit a 1:1 Federal/State match for each detailed grant objective budget shall result in grant application rejection. See Grant Proposal Examples and ReadMe files at [http://datapreservation.usgs.gov/fin\\_ast\\_prg.shtml](http://datapreservation.usgs.gov/fin_ast_prg.shtml), if further instructions or examples are needed.

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The application narrative (NOT the required forms) should follow the attached format (see Attachment A). Using the tabular format provided in this program announcement ensures every application contains all information essential for evaluation. When you have finished entering the requested information, save this document and submit it via <http://grants.gov/> as a Microsoft Word file or as a PDF. All other required forms shall be submitted as PDFs.

**Related to this narrative format, please note the following:**

1. All text boxes in the required format will expand to fit the text you enter; keep in mind the 15-page limit for application submission. If you wish to provide additional information not requested by the Program Announcement, you may add it at the end of Attachment A provided you are within the page limit.
2. Include "Preliminary Results and Prior Work" in Appendix 1 at the end of "Attachment A – Application Format". Appendix 1 does not count toward the 15-page application limit.
3. Graphics and charts may be included in this file by inserting them in the document at the end of Attachment A. Be sure to include figure numbers and reference the numbers within the text as necessary.
4. A table has been provided to compile information normally included in a CV or resume for project personnel. This table does not count toward the 15-page application limit.

**PART I: AUTHORIZING LEGISLATION, ELIGIBILITY, FY 2015 GRANT OBJECTIVES, IMPORTANT DATES**

<b>A. AUTHORIZING LEGISLATION</b>	
	<p>The National Geological and Geophysical Data Preservation Program (NGGDPP) was authorized by Section 351 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (Public Law 109-58, Sec. 351). Objectives of the Program as outlined in the Act are to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Archive geologic, geophysical, and engineering data, maps, well logs, and samples;</li> <li>2. Provide a national catalog of such archival material; and</li> <li>3. Provide technical and financial assistance related to the archival material</li> </ol> <p style="text-align: center;">For details of the <i>Implementation Plan for the National Geological and Geophysical Data Preservation Program</i> visit: <a href="http://datapreservation.usgs.gov/">http://datapreservation.usgs.gov/</a>.</p>
<b>B. ELIGIBILITY – WHO MAY SUBMIT AN APPLICATION?</b>	
	<p>Only State geological surveys are eligible to apply to this Program Announcement pursuant to the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (Public Law 105-58, Sec. 351). Since many State geological surveys are organized under a state university system, such universities may submit an application on behalf of the State geological survey.</p>
<b>C. FY 2015 GRANT OBJECTIVES</b>	
<p><b>PLEASE NOTE:</b> Applications that do not specifically address one or more of the FY 2015 grant objectives below will not be considered for an award.</p>	
	<p>(1) <b>Inventory collections of geological or geophysical data.</b> A State geological survey may request funds to inventory and assess the scope, type, quantity, and condition of their geological and geophysical data and/or sample collections. A collection comprises items that share similar characteristics (e.g., core, water samples), collected for a specific purpose (e.g., ground water investigation; oil and gas exploration), or from a common location (e.g., geotechnical investigation prior to construction). If a State received previous support to</p>

inventory collections included in this FY 2015 application, provide detailed justification for requesting additional grant support that describes the uniqueness of this request. To enter collection inventory information in the National Digital Catalog, go to: "NGGDPP Metadata Reference Information" ([http://datapreservation.usgs.gov/ndc\\_mri.html](http://datapreservation.usgs.gov/ndc_mri.html)).

Metadata generated as a result of this objective should be created and entered into the National Digital Catalog using the guidelines described in Grant Objective 2 below.

- (2) Create metadata for individual items in data collections.** The metadata should adequately describe item-level (e.g., air photo, mylar map, paper well logs) and geologic sample-level attributes (e.g., rock core, rock cuttings, etc.) of items belonging to specific State collections for inclusion in the National Digital Catalog (NDC) (<https://www.sciencebase.gov/catalog/>) and address required NDC metadata elements. State specific data resources that cover known geographic locations and are geologic and/or geophysical in nature are targeted because most agencies dealing with data have a variety of data under their purview. Required metadata attributes that relate to specific sample and/or item data will assure proper registration of metadata into the National Digital Catalog. It is recommended that proposers include additional "optional" metadata attributes specific to their collections, which creates a more robust metadata record facilitating search and discovery by a wide variety of users. It is recommended that proposers fully describe the metadata schema that will be used (i.e., do not just refer to a metadata template and/or state that metadata will be created). Please list specific metadata categories and describe how (or if) the metadata schema will go beyond the basic NDC metadata template.

When proposing to this objective, it is important to note that the metadata creation for this objective should be treated as a standalone effort (i.e., it cannot serve as the metadata creation component for other objectives). All other objectives already require that metadata be created for all items within that objective.

Support for metadata creation is available for items in collection inventories that were previously entered in the USGS database. The following website, <http://datapreservation.usgs.gov/catalog.shtml>, provides general information about the NDC. For specific information relating to NDC metadata creation, upload, and manipulation or modification go to "NGGDPP Metadata Reference Information" ([http://datapreservation.usgs.gov/ndc\\_mri.html](http://datapreservation.usgs.gov/ndc_mri.html))

- (3) Create or update digital infrastructure, including data migration to assure data are not lost due to recording media degradation or changing data recording formats or programs.**

1. Convert paper records and data to digital formats for preservation and access.
2. Maintain digital data in modern formats and on storage media.
3. Update digital data to new formats to preserve accessibility as older digital storage technologies become obsolete.
4. Support computer programming, equipment, and staff necessary to create new, or improve existing, databases relevant to collection of digital and physical data.

When proposing to this objective proposers should consider using software with optical character recognition (OCR) capabilities. Most modern software capable of reading and editing PDFs have OCR capabilities; however, proposers are allowed to request funding for software with OCR capabilities provided that sufficient justification is given within the proposal.

It is recommended that all proposals to this objective fully describe the quality assurance (QA) and quality control (QC) methods/protocols. It is not sufficient to simply state that QA/QC

procedures will be used.

If proposers are considering the scanning of aerial photographs, it is incumbent upon the proposer to demonstrate that the scanning has not already been done by another entity such as the USGS Earth Resources Observation Systems (EROS) data center. Experts at USGS EROS are available to assist with determining if scanning of specific aerial photographs has been completed.

Collection inventories and metadata for records converted or generated as a result of digital infrastructure activities shall be established and entered into the National Digital Catalog as described in Grant Objectives 1 and 2.

**(4) Rescue data at risk.** This objective is for time-dependent preservation of unique geologic data or collections in imminent danger of loss from deteriorating physical surroundings, threat of disposal, or rapidly deteriorating medium on which they reside (e.g., data stored on magnetic tape). ***Proposals to this objective are strongly encouraged.***

Collection inventories and metadata for rescued data or collections shall be established and entered into the National Digital Catalog as described in Grant Objectives 1 and 2.

#### D. IMPORTANT DATES

The deadline for filing applications is: March 9, 2015, 6:00 pm, Eastern Daylight Time. Applications received after this time will **NOT** be considered for an award.

The earliest start date for new grants is July 15, 2015. The Government's obligation for this assistance program is subject to availability of appropriated funds from which to award grants.

The latest start date is September 15, 2015. Awards are for a 12-month period only. No awards will be issued for less than or more than 12 months.

#### E. FUNDING

One application from each State geological survey will be accepted that addresses one or more of the FY 2015 grant objectives.

In FY 2015, the NCGDPP expects to award about \$835,000 to fund about 20 to 35 successful applications. The NCGDPP funded 25 proposals for an average of \$25,039.73 in FY2014. In FY2015 a limited number of states **may** receive more than the average value; however, applicants should not submit applications in amounts much over that of the average funded in FY2014. Unusually large budgets are discouraged, since the Program seeks to fund as many acceptable well-written proposals as possible.

Statute (Public Law 109-58) requires NCGDPP Grant funds be at least 1:1 with non-Federal dollars (direct and indirect costs). Each submitted grant objective must address the 1:1 funding independently and be standalone from other grant objectives. The non-Federal share may be more than the Federal contribution and may include services or cash provided to contractors to perform services directly applicable to proposed work on the project. The 1:1 ratio, however, does not prevent states from securing additional funds from other non-Federal tax-supported entities to increase the total amount of data preserved. The Program encourages multiple partnerships as they leverage resources available for preservation of geological and geophysical data. Federal regulations prohibit matching Federal funds with other Federal funds. The value of collections and data, and its acceptability when applied to meet the cost-sharing (1:1) requirement, must be appraised by an independent third party certified in the state in which the organization is registered. The organization using the value of their collections or

data as part of the cost-sharing requirement must pay for the appraisal of the holdings.

**NOTE:** Notification of a successful application does **not** constitute authority to incur costs. Costs may be incurred only after the receipt of a **grant award** signed by a Contracting Officer of the USGS.

#### F. IMPORTANT POINTS TO REMEMBER WHEN PREPARING AND SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION

**READ** this Program Announcement carefully and address each point explicitly. There have been some modifications to “Attachment A – Application” format, and what is expected for the grant application. The application review panel cannot make assumptions about or interpret what is or is not included in the application.

**PRIORITIZE** each proposed Grant Objective 1-4 chosen on a scale from 1 to 4 with “1” being your top priority. Please note that if funds are awarded for fewer grant objectives than your submittal, portions of the proposal (Introduction and Project Objective) may need to be adjusted slightly to accommodate this change.

Each **Grant Objective must be financially independent from the other objectives** and must show, at least, a 1:1 funding level (Federal/State) for each proposed objective. Please note that the State portion can be larger than the Federal portion; however, if the Federal contribution is more than the State portion for **any** grant objective, the Grant Proposal will be disqualified.

**PROVIDE** detailed information for project personnel including senior staff, students, and contractors. If any of the aforementioned personnel have not been hired at the time of proposal submission, please provide a description of desired skills, experience, and knowledge that will be necessary for filling those positions. **ENSURE** appropriate salary allocation for supervisory input/oversight. Assigning senior staff to NGGDPP funded tasks (or in-kind salary offsets) for an extended period of time for supervisory or other management purposes without a description and specific justification relating to the senior staff's NGGDPP work may result in disqualification of the Grant Proposal. If your project personnel include contractors, please include a detailed description of the scope of work and the experience and skills necessary for completing the work. Please also provide a description of how contractors will be integrated into the workflow and/or how the work will be evaluated. A table in the application is provided for this information; submission of separate *curriculum vitae* (CVs) or resumes is not needed.

**PROVIDE** rationale for choosing which data to inventory, create metadata for, create digital infrastructure for, or for which you propose data rescue. You are required to prioritize your proposed grant objectives in the appropriate boxes on the application form. All collections you propose to work on **must be owned by your State**.

If there is a possibility the data for which you are requesting funding might logically be available from another source (e.g., state oil and gas commission), **MAKE THE CASE** for why your State geological survey is the only source and why your State is requesting NGGDPP funds to “preserve data and collections” owned by another State entity.

Funding requests for computer programming and **EQUIPMENT** (e.g., scanners, computers, and storage media) are acceptable provided they are sufficiently justified (i.e., they are necessary for the successful completion of the proposed work as it relates to the NGGDPP objectives). What is not appropriate is NGGDPP funding for software licenses, database software systems, or equipment that would be required for your State's IT infrastructure and operation regardless of your proposed NGGDPP-related work.

**DOCUMENT** prior work; the panel will not necessarily know anything about your prior work. Include all preliminary results and prior work in Appendix 1 table. Appendix 1 does not count toward the 15 page Grant Application page limit.

**HAVE** a Long-Range Data-Preservation Plan (LRDPP) in place and describe how the proposal specifically meets the LRDPP. If you do not have a LRDPP, please **PROVIDE** a brief explanation of



how your State will create its LRDP.
See Grant Proposal <b>EXAMPLES</b> and <b>README</b> files at <a href="http://datapreservation.usgs.gov/fin_ast_prg.shtml">http://datapreservation.usgs.gov/fin_ast_prg.shtml</a> , if further instructions or examples are needed.
<b>ALWAYS</b> contact us if you have questions, we are here to help.
<b>START</b> submitting your application to Grants.gov well in advance of the due date; <b>do not wait until the due date to begin the submission process.</b>

## G. QUESTIONS

<p>For Grants.gov questions, contact Laura Mahoney, (703) 648-7344, <a href="mailto:lmahoney@usgs.gov">lmahoney@usgs.gov</a> or <a href="http://www.grants.gov/applicants/app_help_reso.jsp">http://www.grants.gov/applicants/app_help_reso.jsp</a> <a href="http://www.usgs.gov/contracts/grants/grantsgov.html">http://www.usgs.gov/contracts/grants/grantsgov.html</a></p> <p>For Contract questions, contact Maggie Eastman, (703) 648-7366, <a href="mailto:mrussell@usgs.gov">mrussell@usgs.gov</a></p> <p>For NGGDPP Grants Program questions, contact Betty Adrian, (303) 202-4828, <a href="mailto:badrian@usgs.gov">badrian@usgs.gov</a> or <a href="mailto:gs-css_nggdpp_program@usgs.gov">gs-css_nggdpp_program@usgs.gov</a></p>
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## PART II: APPLICANT GUIDELINES

### A. ELECTRONIC APPLICATION SUBMISSION REQUIREMENT

**All applications shall be submitted electronically using Grants.gov: <http://www.grants.gov>.** Be sure to read the instructions carefully. Paper copies will NOT be accepted.

**Please be aware the electronic submission process requires first-time users to register using an e-Authentication process. This registration process can be somewhat complex and can take up to 3 weeks to complete. Be advised it is virtually impossible to begin the process of electronic submission for the first time if you start just a few days before the due date. If you are from a university, contact your Office of Sponsored Programs. They may already have completed the registration process and should work with you to submit the application.**

Once at the website, click "Get Registered" under the "For Applications" heading and follow the instructions provided. In order to complete the SF 424 forms (not the narrative), **everyone** must use the Adobe Reader version which is available for download from the Grants.gov site at:

[http://www.grants.gov/help/download\\_software.jsp#adobe811](http://www.grants.gov/help/download_software.jsp#adobe811). To ensure that you have the correct version of Adobe Reader, you can use the versioning test located at:

<http://www.grants.gov/applicants/AdobeVersioningTestOnly.jsp>. Any and all edits made to the application package must be made with the Adobe Reader version specified on Grants.gov. Grants.gov does not guarantee to support other versions of Adobe Reader released prior to version 8.1.1. For more information on Adobe Reader, please see: [http://www.grants.gov/applicants/applicant\\_faqs.jsp#adobe-reader-error](http://www.grants.gov/applicants/applicant_faqs.jsp#adobe-reader-error).

Please note that there is an underscore between "applicant" and "faqs" in the URL. If you have any questions regarding the registration process, please contact the Grants.gov help desk at 1-800-518-4726.

In the Grants.gov forms, floating your cursor over a field will provide instructions for completing that field. You can also click on the Check Package for Errors button to check the entire application for validation errors (i.e., incomplete fields, etc.).

There are several steps of the submission process that require careful attention to assure the application has been fully accepted. It is highly recommended that applicants read the document available at <http://www.grants.gov/assets/TrackingYourApplicationPackage.pdf>.

When a grant application package is submitted to Grants.gov, an on-screen confirmation will be provided as well as three additional emails over two business days from Grants.gov providing information on the application processing status:

1. **CONFIRMATION: Submission Confirmation Screen**

After a grant application package is submitted, a confirmation message will appear on the computer screen. This screen confirms that an application has been submitted to Grants.gov. This page contains a tracking number to check the status of the submission as well as a "Track My Application" link, to see the progress of the submission.

2. **NOTIFICATION 1: Submission Receipt Email**

Within two business days after the application package has been received by the Grants.gov system, a submission receipt email will be sent that indicates the submission has entered the Grants.gov system and is ready for validation. This email also contains a tracking number for use while tracking the status of the submission as well as a "Track My Application" link, to use to see the progress of the submission.

3. **NOTIFICATION 2: Submission Validation Receipt Email – This is the important one!**

After receiving the submission receipt email, the next email that will be sent is a message validating or rejecting the submitted application package with errors. The Grants.gov system is designed to check for technical errors within the submitted application package. Grants.gov does not review application content for award determination.

4. **NOTIFICATION 3: Grantor Agency Retrieval Email**

Once the application package has passed validation, it is delivered to the grantor for award determination and further approval. After the grantor has confirmed receipt of the application, a third and final email will be sent from Grants.gov. The grantor may also assign the application package an agency-specific tracking number for use within their internal system. **IF THIS E-MAIL HAS NOT BEEN RECEIVED WITHIN FOUR DAYS OF THE CLOSING DATE, PLEASE CONTACT THE CONTRACTING OFFICER.**

For assistance, please call the **Grants.gov Contact Center** at: 1-800-518-4726. Their hours of operation are 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; they are closed on [Federal Holidays](#).

When contacting the Grants.gov Contact Center, please have the following information available to help expedite the inquiry:

- Funding Opportunity Number (FON)
- Name of Agency You Are Applying To
- Specific Area of Concern

The electronic submission will consist of required forms SF-424, SF-424a, and SF-424b, plus the items described below. To obtain hard copies of the required forms, or to view complete forms instructions, please visit the Grants.gov Forms Repository at [http://www.grants.gov/agencies/aapproved\\_standard\\_forms.jsp#1](http://www.grants.gov/agencies/aapproved_standard_forms.jsp#1). *Please note there are underscores between "approved" and "standard" and "standard" and "forms" in the URL.*

For more information on the Grants.gov registration and submission process, please see <http://www.usgs.gov/contracts/grants/grantsgov.html>

**B. APPLICATION PREPARATION INSTRUCTIONS**

Page limit

The application shall not exceed **15** single-spaced pages (including figures, tables, etc.) and the type size shall not be smaller than 11 point. All pages of the application shall be numbered. All text, figures, and tables shall be sized to fit on 8½" x 11" paper. The SF forms, preliminary results and prior work, project personnel justification and expertise

	table, letters from stakeholders, negotiated rate and cost agreements, and equipment quotes do <b>not</b> count toward the <b>15-page limit</b> .
File format	Your application narrative must be submitted in MS Word or PDF using Attachment A – Application Format. Following this format ensures every application contains all essential information and is evaluated equitably. All forms must be submitted through <a href="http://Grants.gov">Grants.gov</a> . Please be sure to place requested proposal information into the correct locations within the proposal template. Failure to do so may result in disqualification of the proposal.
<b>C. REJECTION OF APPLICATIONS AFTER INITIAL REVIEW</b>	
	If the application does not meet all requirements specified in the Announcement, as determined by the Contracting Officer in consultation with the acting NGGDP Program Coordinator, the applicant will be promptly notified in writing of the rejection along with the reason for the rejection.
	If the application does not address at least one of the FY2015 grant objectives and the proposed objectives are not prioritized, the application will be rejected.
	If the application is not in the format specified, it will be rejected.
<b>D. INVOLVEMENT OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES</b>	
	Federal employees, including USGS employees, are prohibited from assisting in any capacity (paid or unpaid) with preparation of any application submitted under this Announcement. Applications that have a real, or apparent, conflict of interest related to Federal employees will not be processed for evaluation.
<b>E. NGGDPP PRODUCTS AND REPORTS</b>	
<b><i>If you're proposed work involves...</i></b>	<b><i>... then you shall:</i></b>
Inventorizing collections	Submit collection level metadata records using the supported methods documented at "NGGDPP Metadata Reference Information" ( <a href="http://datapreservation.usgs.gov/ndc_mri.html">http://datapreservation.usgs.gov/ndc_mri.html</a> ).
Creating metadata	Provide metadata for individual samples in collections already inventoried and entered in the National Digital Catalog through one of the supported methods documented at "NGGDPP Metadata Reference Information" ( <a href="http://datapreservation.usgs.gov/ndc_mri.html">http://datapreservation.usgs.gov/ndc_mri.html</a> )
Creating or updating digital infrastructure	
Rescuing data at risk	
Final technical report	All awards made under the NGGDPP will require submittal of a final technical report that must document and summarize the results of the work. Such reports must contain: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cover page with the following information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Award Number</li> <li>o Title</li> <li>o Author and Affiliation with Address and zip code</li> <li>o Author's Telephone numbers, fax numbers and E-mail addresses</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Term covered by the award (start and end dates)</li> <li>o Submittal Date of Final Technical Report</li> <li>o Abstract</li> <li>• Main body of the report with the following information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Comparison of actual accomplishments to the goals established for the period;</li> <li>o If established goals were not met, explanation of circumstances and impediments.</li> <li>o Specific examples of user success stories that highlight state preservation accomplishments.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>A final technical report must be submitted within 90 days after the end of the grant performance period.</p> <p>Final technical reports shall be submitted electronically to Betty Adrian at <a href="mailto:badrian@usgs.gov">badrian@usgs.gov</a>.</p> <p>A copy of the transmittal letter shall be submitted to Margaret Eastman at <a href="mailto:mrussell@usgs.gov">mrussell@usgs.gov</a>.</p>
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**F. PROPOSAL EVALUATION CRITERIA**

Peer Panel	<p>NGGDPP applications will be reviewed by a peer panel of approximately ten members. <b>Approximately five members will be representatives of State geological surveys and five members will be Federal agency representatives.</b> These panel members represent the professional areas of science, Federal and State data preservation managers.</p>
Application Evaluation Criteria	<p><i>All applications submitted will be evaluated in accordance with the criteria listed below. NOTE: To avoid any conflict of interest, no panelist may vote on an application from his or her State geological survey or State agency nor may any panelist take part in any discussion with other panel members about his or her State's application.</i></p>
	<p><b><i>All applications will be evaluated according to the following criteria:</i></b></p>
	<p><b>Technical merit of the application.</b> This factor considers the merit and technical viability of the proposed approach and the probability of achieving positive results within the designated period.</p>
	<p><b>Relevance.</b> This factor considers the relevance of the proposed data preservation activities will be evaluated relative to the USGS NGGDPP goals and the State's long-range data-preservation plan. A case must be made for how the proposed work is specifically relevant to both the NGGDPP and the State's LRDP.</p>
	<p><b>Competence and recent performance of Principle Investigator (PI) and team members.</b> This factor considers experience and competence of the PI and coworkers, and the promptness with which the results from previous funding were submitted to the acting NGGDPP Program Coordinator as described in the application. This factor includes the performance records and capability to provide necessary facilities and support to ensure satisfactory completion of the proposed work. The recent performance element refers to whether the Final Technical Report reporting requirements from previous USGS awards have been satisfied.</p>
	<p><b>Appropriateness and reasonableness of the budget.</b> This factor considers whether the proposed budget: 1) describes how Federal funds will be matched 1:1 by State funds, independently for each grant objective; 2) is commensurate with the level of effort needed to accomplish the project objectives; and 3) is reasonable relative to the value of the anticipated results.</p>

## G. NOTIFICATION

Following the peer panel reviews, the USGS will make funding decisions and will notify applicants of one of three possible decisions:

1. The application has been recommended for funding in FY 2015, subject to appropriations;
2. The application is being declined and will not be funded in FY 2015; or
3. The application will be funded at a reduced amount in which case the applicant will be notified and requested to submit an amended application and budget.

## H. AWARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Pre-award costs are not authorized.

Requests for no-cost extensions to the project period are discouraged and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The timely conduct of funded projects is important to achieving program goals. Applicants should consider time commitments prior to applying for a grant. The USGS reserves the right to limit the length of time and number of no-cost extensions. Please note that no-cost extensions are not intended to be used merely for the purpose of expending unobligated balances. Applicants should supply documentation supporting their request for an extension, as described in Attachment B.

Requests for increases in funds beyond the amount awarded are also discouraged. Funding is given according to the reviewers' judgment of the merit of an application and their expert knowledge of the expenses likely to be incurred during the project.

A final technical report must be submitted within 90 days after the end of the grant performance period.

## I. QUESTIONS

	<i>contact</i>	<i>phone</i>	<i>Email</i>
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