

Funding Opportunity

National Land Remote Sensing Education Outreach and Research Activity (NLRSEORA)

I. Introduction/Program Objectives

The Land Remote Sensing (LRS) Program of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Climate and Land Use Change (CLU) mission area is soliciting applications from qualified Educational Institutions, State and Local Governments, and Non-profit Organizations (NPOs) for a National Land Remote Sensing Education Outreach and Research Activity (NLRSEORA). This effort involves the development of a U.S. national consortium to expand the science of remote sensing through education, outreach and research / applications development in areas such as environmental monitoring to include the effects of climate variability on water availability (or lack thereof) and phenology; public health related issues to include identification of potential indicators relating to vector-borne diseases; natural resource management, land cover mapping, land use change and disaster analysis.

Applicants should develop proposals to address the following program objectives:

- Define, consolidate and communicate the data and information requirements of the user community(ies) gathered via a nationwide consortium which includes universities throughout the US. Provide feedback as to how data should be tailored to maximize usability to the scientific and academic community(ies) in the states/specified region.
- Establish strategic partnerships nationwide to develop and deploy remote sensing applications through collaborations involving university research teams, K-12 schools, Federal agencies, tribal, state and local governments, nongovernmental organizations, and (where feasible) commercial enterprises.
- Promote research and remote sensing experience at the university undergraduate and graduate level to increase numbers and visibility of graduating students with employment skills in remote sensing.
- Develop materials for and conduct or participate in appropriate educational and training organizations, curricula, programs, workshops, meetings, seminars, as well as technology transfer and outreach activities.

II. Award Information

One (1) grant will be awarded as a result of this funding opportunity announcement. Grants are normally awarded in, but are not restricted to, twelve (12) month budget periods. The estimated amount of funding available is \$960,000.00 for the first year, with the total program not exceeding \$5,000,000.00 over five (5) years. Subject to the availability of funds and initial program results, USGS anticipates funding this yearly as an ongoing program.

A draft grant is included with this funding opportunity announcement to illustrate the terms and conditions that will apply to any resultant award.

III. Eligibility Information

This announcement is open to any non-profit organization, educational institution, or State, Local, or Indian Tribal government. There is no cost-share or matching requirement. Proposals with budgets exceeding \$5M/5 years will not be considered.

IV. Application Submission Instructions

All applications must be submitted electronically through grants.gov by the closing date and time identified in the announcement. Hard copy/paper or late submissions will NOT be considered.

Your electronic submission shall consist of forms SF-424, SF-424A, and SF-424B, plus the items described below. No additional documents or materials may be submitted. Failure to comply with the required application components listed below may negatively impact your proposal's rating and/or result in your proposal being rejected from consideration.

Items 1 through 3 as described below shall be combined together, in the order noted below, and submitted through grants.gov in either MS Word or PDF format. **The application shall not exceed 20 single-spaced pages** (including figures, tables, references, appendices, curriculum vitae, 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" by 11" paper. The SF forms do **not** count toward the 20-page limit. The application shall be in color as needed for review by peer review panel members.

The application submitted through grants.gov as the Project Narrative Attachment Form (in MS Word or PDF format) shall be **assembled in the following order**:

1. **Proposal Narrative**

The first page of the proposal shall contain the following information:

Project Title:

Principal Point of Contact:

Organization Name:

Address:

Phone:

FAX:

Email:

Contact Information for Technical and Administrative Negotiations:

Project Duration:

Proposed Start Date:

Funds Requested:

Total Project Cost:

2. Proposal Text. Please include the following:

- a. Background/Relevance. Give a brief introduction outlining the applicant's capabilities to address the goals of this grant. This should include a description of existing programs and facilities that will contribute to the accomplishment of proposed objectives. Also provide a brief description of applicant's experience and performance on other awards demonstrating the applicant's ability to accomplish proposed objectives.
- b. Objectives. Clearly state measurable objectives that address the LRS goals under this program announcement.
- c. Work Plan/Approach/Methods. Provide detailed discussion of proposed activities, including a timeline to achieve objectives.
- d. Budget. Include salaries (including student stipends/tuition), fringe benefits, travel, miscellaneous (supplies and equipment), and indirect costs.

3. Budget Narrative. This information will provide more details than the SF-424A form and will provide adequate information for the Contracting Officer to conduct a detailed analysis of the costs to determine that they are reasonable, allowable and allocable. Please include the following:

- a. Salaries, stipends and internships. Provide a list of the number and types of appointments and payments to personnel and students.
- b. Fringe benefits/labor overhead. Indicate the rates/amounts in conformance with normal accounting procedures. Explain what costs are covered in this category and the basis of the rate computations.
- c. Travel. Briefly itemize the estimated travel costs (i.e., number of people, number of travel days, per diem rate, mileage rate, airfare or other transportation, and any other travel costs).
- d. Miscellaneous. This is the section to itemize costs that are not identified elsewhere on the budget sheet.
- e. Total Direct Charges. Totals for items a - d.
- f. Indirect Charges (Overhead). Indirect cost/general and administrative (G&A) cost. Show the proposed rate, cost base, and proposed amount for indirect costs based on the cost principles applicable to the Applicant's organization. If the Applicant has

separate rates for recovery of labor overhead and G&A costs, each charge should be shown. NOTE: A copy of the indirect negotiated cost agreement with the Federal Government will be requested from all applicants recommended for an award. This request will be made at the time of recommendation notification.

- g. Amount proposed. Total items e and f.
- h. Multi-year projects. The Applicant shall provide summary information as well as a detailed budget for four additional years. **The SF 424 submissions should reflect out-year support as well.**

V. Application Evaluation Information

Proposals will be evaluated by a panel of USGS Climate and Land Use Change mission area managers and scientists. The panelists read all the proposals prior to their meeting and at the panel meeting discuss each proposal according to the evaluation criteria. The panel will evaluate the technical merit of the proposals. The peer review panel votes on each proposal based on the criteria established in subsection B below; panel rankings are the principal determination of proposal success pending available funds.

All proposals are considered in accordance with the criteria set forth below:

1. **National Coordination:** This factor considers the capability to coordinate activities of a national consortium with the objective of advancement of the science of land remote sensing. This also includes a demonstrated capability to provide a coordinated national level training program for current and future workforces as well as the activities tailored toward increasing land remote sensing awareness at the K-12 level education programs. (20 points)
2. **Quality and Impact:** Technical quality of the proposal. This factor considers the scientific merit of the proposed approach and the probability of achieving positive results within the designated period. This would include the capability to leverage USGS capabilities along with other freely available data sources and discovery tools to best serve the land remote sensing related education, research and operational needs of the state, local and regional communities across the United States. (20 points)
3. **Experience/Competence:** Competence and recent research performance related to applications or uses for remotely sensed data. This factor considers experience and competence of the grant application team to manage a national program for land remote sensing education, outreach and research. This factor includes performance records and capability to provide the necessary facilities and support that will ensure satisfactory completion of the proposed work. This factor includes experience providing research results in a timely manner. (30 points)
4. **Budget and Administration:** Appropriateness and reasonableness of the budget. This factor considers whether the proposed budget is commensurate with the level of effort needed to accomplish the project objectives and whether the cost of the project is reasonable relative to the value of the anticipated results. (15 points)
5. **Performance Metrics:** This factor considers the availability and effectiveness of a specific set of annual and 5-year program mileposts and metrics against which performance can be easily evaluated. (15 points)