Delta Science Program

DELTA STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

2021 Delta Science Proposal Solicitation Notice

Frequently Asked Questions: February 11, 2021

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Questions were due by February 3, 2021; additional questions sent to deltasciencesolicitation@deltacouncil.ca.gov will not receive a response.

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Questions about Eligibility

1. What are the requirements for an out of state university (including international) to be certified as being in good standing and eligible to do business in California?

State Universities including State Universities outside the State of California are eligible based on their public entity status established as a State University public entity.

If the entity is a corporation, the Delta Stewardship Council (Council) determines whether the corporation is in good standing by consulting the Office of the Secretary of State's website at www.sos.ca.gov. Additional information regarding requirements to be eligible to do business in California may be found at the Business Registration Section of the California Business Navigator at https://businessportal.ca.gov/registration-permits/register-a-business/.

2. Can applicants submit more than one proposal in response to this Solicitation?

Yes. Each submitted proposal will be evaluated separately based on its individual merit. However, a lead principal investigator may only receive one award as a principal investigator. A Letter of Intent is required to have been submitted for each proposal.

3. Are applicants from Reclamation Districts, water districts, and Non-Governmental Organizations eligible for funding?

Yes. Reclamation Districts, water districts, and Non-Governmental Organizations including nonprofit organizations that are in good standing to do business in California are eligible for funding via Council contracts.

4. Are applicants from Federal Agencies or National Laboratories eligible for funding?

Applicants from Federal Agencies and National Laboratories that are in good standing to do business in California are eligible for funding via Council contracts.

However, those applicants are not eligible for funding from the United States Bureau of Reclamation (USBR).

Questions about Budget: Collaborations/Partners

5. NEW: Can we add collaborators with budgets exceeding $50k or 25% of the total budget even if we did not indicate this in the LOI?

Yes, this is OK.

6. NEW: What is included in the 'total budget' for the purposes of the budget threshold of "$50k or 25% of the total budget"?

The 'total budget' refers only to the requested budget, matching funds and cost share are not included.

7. NEW: Is the requirement for a competitive bid process strictly enforced? Several sub-contractors on our proposal have been included because of a) existing working relationships and b) they have previously been funded by a Delta Science award. Are these sufficient justifications to include them without a bidding process?

The competitive bid process for subcontractors is a state contracting requirement. The primary entity could pursue a sole source exemption for the sub(s) unless they are an exempt government entity (see list below).

If the entity's budget is greater than the budget threshold ($50k or 25% of the total budget), then they will likely need to contract directly with the Council. In which case competitive bidding is not required.

Exempt government entities/auxiliaries:

- A California State agency, State college or State university.
- A state agency, state college or state university from another state
- A local governmental entity, including those created as a Joint Powers Authority (JPA), and including local government entities from other states.
- An auxiliary organization of the CSU, or a California community college.
- The Federal Government
- A foundation organized to support the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, or

- An auxiliary organization of the Student Aid Commission established under Education Code § 69522.

8. NEW: Since Co-PIs with budgets less than $50k or 25% are supposed to be listed as subcontractors, yet a competitive bid process could theoretically eliminate the named subcontractor from the project. What documentation will we need to provide of the competitive bidding process?

We are looking for a process description that includes: How did you hire the sub? Did you conduct that process in a fair and competitive manner? The Contractor's acknowledgment and justification about their competitive process is all we need for this purpose. Under an audit, we have the right to request proof of that process as described.

9. NEW: If all subs need to be selected through a competitive bidding process, is it true that we cannot identify a subcontractor in our proposal unless we've already conducted a competitive bidding process to select that subcontractor?

The process of subcontractor selection can be done after contract execution by adding "TBD" (To Be Determined) for the sub and using the maximum costs that the prime is expecting to pay for sub services in the budget. An amendment to add the subcontractor to the agreement is required before any subcontractor can begin work.

10. NEW: If we include a sole practitioner or independent subcontractor who will not exceed $50K or 25% of the total budget threshold, do we simply incorporate them in our budget as additional personnel?

If the sole practitioner or independent contractor is not an employee of the institution, they must be included in the budget as a subcontractor or consultant. Please also see the Solicitation Notice, pages 4-5 for important information about sole practitioners. Independent subs (consultant or contractors) should NOT be listed in the Personnel tab. Please add their information to the "Consultant", "Subcontractor UC" or "Subcontractor nonUC" tabs.

An independent consultant is an individual not employed by the entity of proven professional or technical competence who provides primarily professional or technical advice to the entity and the entity does not control the manner, means or methods of performance. Subcontractors are involved in performing a portion of the Scope of Work (i.e. contributing intellectually, not performing a routine service).

11. I have two collaborations from my research institute, and each of them request budget >$50k or 25% of total budget. Do I need to submit separate budget for those researchers?

Yes, this means different research institutes. No need for separate budgets if your collaborators are all at the same institution.

12. If all partners (different universities or other entities) are contributing equally to a project and can enter into a stand-alone agreement directly with the Council, does the primary lead still need to account for more than 50% of the budget? For example, if a project involves UCSC, UCB and a university not in California, and each of the partners is responsible for a unique and equal amount of work, can the budget be split into about 30%? If not, then the budget will have to be done as subawards to these partners and these subawards will be >25% of the budget.

The decision to initiate stand-alone agreements with the Council vs. a subaward will be at the discretion of the Council and based on the budget and the justifications provided. For a given single project, there could be three entities with approximately 1/3 of the budget that have separate Council agreements. One entity should be the primary lead entity that applies, even if the budgets are divided equally. Each entity should upload its own Excel budget in the application.

13. Is there a preference for more, smaller contracts or fewer, larger contracts?

No, there is no preference.

14. If a project/proposal has a partnership between two or more entities, how should they apply?

One partner entity should be the primary applicant and submit a single proposal that details and justifies the budget for all collaborating entities proposed using our budget template. Partner entities (or subcontractors) budgets that exceed $50k or 25% of the total budget will likely need their own agreement with the Council. Partner entities, if their budget exceeds $50k or 25% of the total budget, must submit a separate budget form and title page specific to their institution. Combine the title pages for each institution into a single PDF.

Subcontracting might still be permissible with an exempt government public entity/auxiliary if the subcontract is justified by explaining how the subcontract is integral to the work being performed under contract with the public entity and necessary to be included as a subcontractor rather than being separately contracted as stand-alone direct agreements with the Council.

15. The FAQ (above question) says that "Partner entities (or subcontractors) budgets that exceed \$50k or 25% of the total budget will likely need their own agreement with the Council." What kind of "agreement" needs to be made with the Council? If each partner organization's budget will likely exceed \$50,000, should we still submit one LOI for the project and the budget will be split across institutions?

One partner entity should be the primary applicant and submit a single proposal (and a single Letter of Intent) that details and justifies the budget for all collaborating entities proposed using our budget template. Partner entities (or subcontractors) budgets that exceed \$50k or 25% of the total budget will likely need their own agreement with the Council and should submit a separate budget template and separate title page. The Council would negotiate a contract agreement with each partner entity.

Partner entities must indicate on the Letter of Intent if their budget exceeds \$50k or 25% of the total budget.

Subcontracting might still be permissible with an exempt government public entity/auxiliary if the subcontract is justified by explaining how the subcontract is integral to the work being performed under contract with the public entity and necessary to be included as a subcontractor rather than being separately contracted as stand-alone direct agreements with the Council.

16. For collaborating entities with >\$50k (or 25% of the total) but who are subcontractors, do we still need a separate budget form?

Yes. Submit a separate budget form for each entity whose budget is greater than \$50k or 25% of the total budget.

17. If some PI's have costs greater than $50K/25%, are ALL PI's required to submit separate budget worksheet, including those with smaller budgets?

Those entities with budgets below the $50k or 25% of the total budget are not required to submit a separate budget worksheet AS LONG AS they are included in another entity's budget (i.e. the primary applicant) as a subcontractor.

18. When multiple entities collaborate, but funding is not required through this contract for one or more of the entities, then should a budget document be submitted for each entity?

A budget should not be submitted for an entity or collaborator that will not receive funding. If another entity is providing the funding from somewhere else to complete that project, it would be considered matching funds and does need to be described in the matching funds portion of the application. PIs participating in the project with permanent funding from a different source should be described as in-kind services.

19. Is it a possibility is to have multiple Principal Investigators? Are multiple (i.e. 2) Principle Investigators allowed to be listed on the proposal, or should we have one Principal Investigator and list others as Co-Investigators?

We ask that a single proposal be submitted for each project, and that only one PI is identified. That is to ensure that only one investigator is responsible for the application. All other key investigators should be listed as co-PIs. We do encourage collaborations (i.e. the work can be divided evenly among investigators).

20. UPDATED: Do consultants need to be named specifically? Does this affect the scoring of proposals?

If the consultant is known at the time of the application, they must be named specifically in the budget. There will be no difference in the proposal score based on naming a consultant (or not). If a subcontractor is unknown at the time of Proposal submission, they may be added to the Agreement budget as TBD (to be determined), but an amendment is required before any subcontractor can begin work. Subcontractor(s) must be solicited by a competitive bid process unless the subcontractor is an exempt government entity/auxiliary. Any private independent individuals acting as subcontractors, including sole proprietors, are required to provide a valid, active business tax certificate and/or active business license.

Questions about Budget: Allowable Costs

21. NEW: Regarding document accessibility costs, what will be involved to make publications accessible? Is this mainly for web-based products?

There are many steps involved in preparing PDFs so they are compliant with the state ADA law; it is a time-consuming process. However, we only need documents to be accessible that may be posted to our website (for example the final report). We will be able to provide some guidance to investigators when the time comes, but this extra work should be factored into the budget.

22. NEW: Is there guidance on what kind of expenses are allowed for the outreach/broader impacts? For example, we would like to present our project results at local classes and museums and so would like to include some funding for supplies (printing materials, preparing graphics, etc.).

Unfortunately, printing production expenses, including graphics, are not allowable expenses. However, salary/personnel costs are allowed, in addition to any travel expenses related to outreach.

23. NEW: Are we allowed to issue honorarium as part of our budget?

Honoraria are not an allowable expense for any non-UC entities.

24. Are open access publication costs and computer costs typically covered?

Open access publication costs are allowable only if the publication fees will be invoiced prior to the end of the agreement. Business entities need to provide their own materials and equipment that support their standard day-to-day business for completing the proposed project. Computer costs are typically part of indirect/overhead and not allowable unless determined to be a specialized need and justified. The Council will determine on a case-by-case review if the request is a specialized need which may be considered for inclusion in the budget. All equipment authorized to be purchased using State funds must be properly identified and will become the property of the State at the end of the agreement.

25. For the budget worksheet, would something non-tangible like a specialized software license fit best into "Material and Supplies" or "Equipment"?

Specialized software will need to be itemized, justified, and would be most appropriate under Materials and Supplies.

26. If there is a science outreach component to the project, such as the preparation of educational videos etc., are these costs acceptable to budget?

Those costs are generally allowable but must be itemized. Printing production costs are not allowable.

27. Should we include funding to attend stakeholder engagement workshops organized by the Delta Science Program and California Sea Grant in our budget?

Yes, you should include cost of travel and time to prepare for and attend stakeholder engagement and other workshops in your budget. Participation in the stakeholder engagement workshop organized by the Delta Science Program and CA Sea Grant is a required deliverable.

Questions about Budget: Indirect/Overhead Costs and Fringe Benefit Rates

28. NEW: For justification of our overhead rate, we have a memo produced annually by our Controller. Should we upload the memo at this time?

Yes, you can upload the justification memo now.

29. NEW: The proposal solicitation mentions that "smaller budget" research projects are encouraged, and I was wondering what is the range of budgets that qualifies as "smaller budget"?

We do not have a specific range in mind, but we mean budgets smaller than $700,000, which is the limit for research projects.

30. Is there a minimum or maximum limit on the dollar amount a proposal can request?

The Council has not identified minimum dollar amounts and smaller budget projects are encouraged. Research Awards have a maximum budget of $700,000 and Integrated Socio-Ecological Systems Awards have a maximum budget of $1,500,000. However, the USBR funding contribution of up to $3.5 million will be awarded to projects in the range of $500,000.

31. Can a proposal budget include indirect (i.e., overhead) costs including for subcontractors? Is there an indirect rate cap?

Yes. Applicants proposing to include indirect costs must provide documented substantiation to support an approved cost allocation plan or Government entity's federally negotiated rate approved by their cognizant agency. There is no cap but these 'reasonable indirect costs' must be fully documented, justified, and provided to the Council upon request.

Subcontractors are subject to the same requirements as the primary applicant to provide documented substantiation and justification that supports a 'reasonable' indirect cost rate. The cost allocation plan (formula for how indirect costs are calculated) or Government entity's federally negotiated rate documentation shall be provided to the Council upon request.

Note for government/public entities: Council will only pay overhead charges on the first $25,000 for each subcontract.

32. How is "overhead" (indirect costs) handled for Universities if PIs are University faculty members, given that these are contract agreements and not grants?

University personnel including PI faculty members are considered direct costs if they are providing personnel hours directly identifiable to the project. Indirect cost rates established for UC campuses are calculated as a percentage of the total Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC).

33. What is the correct UC/CSU indirect cost rate to use for the proposal?

For the purposes of this application, use whichever indirect cost rate (UC or federally negotiated) is higher: when the Council selects the final funding source for each successful project, the final indirect cost rate will be adjusted. If the funding source is ultimately the Delta Stewardship Council (State), all University of California entities must use the negotiated indirect UC rates as indicated on the website: https://www.ucop.edu/research-policy-analysis-coordination/policies-guidance/indirect-cost-recovery/state-of-california.html. These UC rates do not apply to federal funding passed through a California State agency to UC. Therefore, an appropriate federally negotiated rate must be applied if the award is funded by the United States Bureau of Reclamation:

https://www.ucop.edu/financial-accounting/resources/facilities-administration-rates.html. These rules and policies are established by the University of California, and applicants are encouraged to work with their contract/grant team. Proposals will not be evaluated based on the indirect rate.

34. If we use an indirect cost rate that is higher for the proposal, but are funded by the Council, can the work be expanded to compensate?

No. If the indirect rate needs to be decreased, the overall award will be decreased by that amount. So, you would not be able to expand the work.

35. For non-UC universities, can we use the UC rate without needing to provide a detailed justification?

No. You still need to provide a detailed justification for the proposed rate.

36. What does "fringe benefit" rate mean?

The percentage of benefits allowed for your employees, i.e., medical, dental. Work with your office of sponsored research (or equivalent) to determine the appropriate rate to apply.

Questions about Budget: UC/CSU entities

37. NEW: How do I include student fees in my budget?

Please consult with your sponsored programs office about how the UC would like to represent student fees in your budget. This is dictated by University policy.

38. NEW: What level of detail is required for travel and supplies, when there is much uncertainty about the specific trips and supplies needed? Can we just use an umbrella term, like 'car travel to attend stakeholder workshop' and provide a dollar amount?

Yes an umbrella is ok, but the umbrella should factor in the cost for all staff that you expect to authorize travel for, and if awarded, be prepared to itemize that information when we begin to develop the final agreement. You should include all travel required for the completion of the project, and factor in the unknown travel costs as "unknown travel" that may be requested by the Council, to be negotiated later. Similar to travel, supplies should be listed, and an estimated lump sum can be provided, but be sure to factor in all anticipated costs.

39. How are University transfer agreements treated in the budget?

University transfer agreements between UCs and other UCs or out of State Universities are not considered sub agreements. If you are only charging for honoraria or stipends, these are considered Other Direct Costs in the prime agreement. If you are transferring specific personnel staff as a "transfer," they would be considered personnel and budgeted within the prime's personnel category.

Transfers are <u>only</u> able to occur between a UC and another public educational system where the UC can add them on to their own payroll as an employee.

40. Updated: If a PI at a UC would like to have an international collaborator, is there any way to get them money?

If a UC is the primary contractor, there are 3 options, including adding them as a consultant or a subcontractor to the prime contractor agreement:

1. Consultants are defined as independent consultants not employed by the University of proven profession or technical competence who provides primarily professional or technical advice to the University, and the University does not control the manner, means or methods of their performance. Consultants are not involved in the scientific or technical direction of the project as a whole and usually provide only brief/limited advisory or expert services. The subcontractor would not be considered a consultant if they are doing a portion of the work and not just providing a recommendation or product of the mind.

2. Subcontractors are defined as an entity other than the University who performs a portion of the scope of work and is responsible for programmatic decision making. There are limitations on subcontracts (see question 14), so a large subcontractor budget would have to have a justification or pursue a contract with the Council directly.

3. The primary contractor (if a UC) may propose to include an International collaborators faculty affiliated with a UC or as a UC student to receive an honorarium or stipend from the prime award.

Questions about Budget: Matching Funds

41. NEW: Is there any need to account for the Match within the full proposal budget, and where else (e.g., in the proposal narrative) should we include it?

Do not include matching funds in the budget—this should only include funds you are requesting for the project. Matching funds are encouraged but not required; you should list any matching funds in the Matching Funds template (and elsewhere in the proposal if you like).

42. NEW: Can I use as a match the fact that I don't need to cover my whole salary? If so, how should I present it in the proposal?

Yes. You can represent this in the Matching Funds budget template (budget category is salary; contributor is the institution…etc.). Matching funds are encouraged but not required, and there is no criteria for evaluation based on matching funds.

43. Are Federal and State match sources permitted?

Yes. We encourage both cost share and match. The Council does not have any restrictions on match funding. We ask that applicants indicate whether they have match sources and if they intend to leverage awarded funds as match.

44. UPDATED: Are matching funds required? What do we do for this application section if we do not have any matching funds?

No. Matching funds are encouraged but not required. If there are no proposed matching funds, it is fine to 'mark complete' this application section without uploading a file.

45. Can a proposal build off previous work, include those funds as matching funds, and be referenced in the new proposal?

Yes. Please note that matching funds are not required, but it is good for the Council to have information about any matching funds and previous work that supports your proposal.

46. On the SeaGrant site, matching funds instructions are as follows: Please list the proposed source(s) of Institutional and Other Non-Federal matching funds associated with your proposal on the form provided. Does that mean we cannot claim any "federal" matching funds for supplies/equipment?

Federal matching funds should be included; the instructions have been updated and no longer specify “Non-Federal.”

47. Can matching funds be in kind - for e.g. equipment or labor?

Yes, but matching funds are not a requirement of this Solicitation.

Questions about Budget: Budget Template

48. NEW: Can we upload the official [university/entity] budget, or do we need to transcribe it to the template that is provided on the upload site?

We ask that you use our budget template, transcribed from the official university/entity budget.

49. NEW: What is expected for the justifications for each section or please direct me to the online help? Should we include the justifications on each section (tab) of the budget template?

The expectations for the budget justification are included in the budget template. Fill out each tab in the budget as applicable with the details requested. This serves as the budget justification for the proposal—additional justification will be requested for personnel, subcontractors, etc., if the proposal is selected for an award. There is also an option to upload a separate, supplemental, budget justification. There is no online help section (this is a remnant from other funding calls and was removed).

50. NEW: In Row 21 (Composite tab, non-UC), the overhead rate is applied to non-labor items. We apply our overhead rate to labor items only, and that is how we would report/invoice were we selected. Can we alter your template by moving rows around?

It’s OK to adjust the overhead calculation so it only applies to labor items, and to adjust rows as necessary.

51. NEW: Tasks do not seem to be defined anywhere in the application, such as Task 1 = Data collection, Task 2 = report administration, etc. Is within the budget document the only place these are defined? Should we type in the task names in Column A?

For non-UC/CSU entities, we ask for an hourly breakdown by task, personnel, and Year. Proposed work should be in discrete Tasks (i.e. Task 1: [typically] project administration; Task 2: Field work, etc.). Add a row for each personnel working on the project and specify which tasks (column A) they will work on. These tasks should be identified in the Work Plan.

52. NEW: F1 and F2 (Personnel tab): I know what is included in our benefits calculations and what the rates are. Do we just put in a few words of text in these boxes?

Yes.

53. NEW: F12 (Composite tab) shows that the period from July 2021 – June 2022 is state fiscal year 2021. In our nomenclature, that is FY22. I believe it is the state fiscal year 2021-2022. Is the cell in error and should we change it?

This is not an error; for us the fiscal year label aligns with the enacted (i.e. first) year. There are nomenclature differences for fiscal years among entities, but the date range is what is important.

54. NEW: I believe we are using a consultant, not a subcontractor. Should we delete the rows and pages associated with subcontractors?

Yes.

55. NEW: Do we submit the budget as a PDF? The file isn't formatted to be ready to print to PDF.

Please submit the budget template in Excel format.

56. NEW: Do you have a recommendation for how to show the profit as a line item in the budget table?

It is appropriate to include profit/fees as an indirect cost.

57. NEW: In the Non-UC Budget Template, where should publication costs be listed? Should these be entered under Materials and Supplies? If we have other allowable costs (stakeholder workshops, general services) can those be listed and justified in this tab as well?

Publication costs can be added in the Materials and Supplies section/tab. The Materials and Supplies category is similar to the "Other Direct Cost" for UC budgets, so other allowable expenses can be included there.

58. NEW: Where do we describe each person's role/responsibility? Is this something that you would expect to see in the project narrative? On the CV? Or somewhere else?

The 'Personnel' tab in the budget template includes a field for 'role on project' (column C), which should just be a brief description. The main roles and responsibilities should be clear from the Work Plan; additional budget justification will be requested if the project is selected for an award.

59. NEW: In the budget submission, are we allowed to enter personnel for whom we have not listed as Co-PIs nor submitted CVs?

Yes.

60. NEW: can we group functionally and rate identical personnel on as one line item in the budget rather than providing individual breakdown?

Yes.

61. NEW: In the non-UC budget template, what does the 30% indirect cost include?

The 30% figure in the budget template is just an example—your entity has its own overhead/indirect cost rate. Please inquire with your procurement team about the correct rate to use. See Questions about Budget: Indirect/Overhead Costs and Fringe Benefit Rates.

62. NEW: In the non-UC budget template, how do we represent annual differences in hourly rates in the hourly rate table (starts in row 13 of 'Personnel').

For each year and personnel, add a new row to the Personnel Detail table (starting at row 13) and indicate which year in either columns A, B, or C. In column D “Hourly Rate + Fringe Rate” you can reference the table (i.e. ‘see table’).

63. NEW: How should we include in the rent on the "Composite Budget" tab? May we add a row for an additional indirect cost category?

Rent is considered indirect and should be included within the one line item for indirect and not by creating two rows of indirect costs. The justification summary can describe those separated costs that are included in the one line item.

64. NEW: As a non-California entity, how should we plan for reimbursement of these travel costs? If the stakeholder meeting will be held in California, is our travel related to this considered “outside the State of California”?

Travel from another state into California is considered ‘out-of-state travel’.

Out-of-state travel expenses should be clearly identified in the proposed budget and budget justification. If travel (out of State or in State) is to be reimbursable, the proposed budget must clearly justify and specify that the rates of reimbursement for necessary traveling expenses. If selected for funding, proposed travel expenses will be reviewed and will require separate written authorization by the Council for out of State travel which will be incorporated into the contract agreement as documentation of approval.

Travel rates are set in accordance with the California Human Resources (CalHR) Travel Reimbursements for similar or exempt employees.

65. Is the budget template based on the PI applicant? If we have a Co-PI from a UC but no one else is, do we use both Excel templates?

Yes, the budget template is based on the primary PI applicant status. There are two budget templates: one for UC/CSU entities, and another for non-UC/CSU entities. If you, as the primary applicant are non-UC, then you use the non-UC/CSU template. If the collaborating entities’ budgets are greater than $50k or 25% of the total budget, then they must also complete a budget. The template that these collaborators use is determined by their entity type (either UC/CSU or not). If the budget is under the threshold, the Co-PI can be included as subcontractors under the prime applicant using the appropriate template based on their entity type.

66. How do you enter the budget values if you have more than one UC/CSU subcontractor?

To add additional subcontractors in the budget template, make a copy of the UC tab (right click "Subcontractor…" tab, select "Move or Copy", check the box "Create a copy", and make sure it is next to the "Subcontractor…" tab). Note that the formula on the Composite Budget will not include that tab and will need to be added manually.

67. UPDATED: Can the budget include graduate student tuition/fee remissions?

If the applicant entity is part of the UC/CSU system, that is allowable. For non-UC/CSU entities, tuition may be charged as an indirect expense under standard State contracting rules. Due to negotiations between the State and UC (AB20), tuition can be included as a direct expense for only UC/CSU entities.

68. If we are planning to use these funds to hire postdocs/research staff, or research assistants, would these individuals become employees of the PI institution (e.g. university) or the Council?

Those individuals would be considered employees of the PI's institution and they will be paid through the PI's institution via the agreement with the Council.

69. What is the difference between a PI, co-PI and the primary contractor?

The primary contractor will be the entity entering into an agreement with the Council and will include the PI who is responsible and accountable to provide project management and oversight and ensure the project is completed as expected. A co-PI is a collaborating investigator who may provide support and report to the PI and may be compensated according to the terms of the agreement. A contractor is the entity under a contract agreement with the Council. The primary contractor can have the PI and a co-PI within the agreement.

Questions about the Project Scope

70. Typically, what level of immediacy of application of a scientific research project are you looking for? Do you encourage submission of projects that lead to scientific developments that can be applied down the line (i.e. stages in a tool or methods development)?

We are generally looking for applicability of research at the ~5-year timescale. However, we do not discourage proposals with longer-term applications. To be within the scope of the Solicitation, the development and application of the tool or methods must be relevant to the Solicitation focus areas.

71. Are projects outside of the Delta/Suisun legal boundaries eligible for funding?

Proposals for projects outside of the Delta or Suisun Marsh will be considered for funding only if the proposal provides clearly articulated and compelling evidence of specific benefits to the Delta and/or a clear link to resource management in the Delta.

72. What are the boundaries of the 'legal Delta"?

The Delta Plan contains a PDF showing the legal boundaries: https://deltacouncil.ca.gov/pdf/delta-plan/figure-1-1-delta-boundaries.pdf. The legal boundary of only the Delta (Shapefile, KML, or spreadsheet) can be found here: https://atlas-dwr.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/57b02f8a5e77465f902376dbd9522585_0. You can also use the Social Vulnerability map: https://deltascience.shinyapps.io/Delta_vulnerability_map/ which contains the legal Delta and Suisun boundaries, counties, watersheds, and cities. This online tool allows you to enter the longitude and latitude of your proposed project and view that location in relation to the legal Delta and Suisun boundaries.

73. What is the relationship between objectives for the Sacramento River Science Partnership and the Delta SAA action areas 4 and 5?

There are five Science Action Agenda (SAA) action areas; each has several priority Management Needs that correspond with Priority Science Actions. The Sacramento River Science Partnership has added 4 science actions to the Solicitation Focus;

these all correspond to Management Needs in the SAA. These science actions are denoted by an asterisk; see the Solicitation pages 15, 17-18.

74. Regarding the solicitation focus: Science Action Agenda action area #4, is a list of "managed species" available? How important is it that there be a direct connection to the managed species, or can indirect connections also be studied?

“Managed species” refers to species protected under the California Endangered Species Act and the Federal Endangered Species Act. Proposals should consider both direct and indirect relevance to managed species when describing project relevance to Science Action Agenda area #4.

75. Since part of the funds are federal, is it legal to propose a project involving Cannabis?

Yes, projects involving cannabis can be considered. However, projects involving cannabis will not be funded by U.S. Bureau of Reclamation.

Questions about the Application: General

76. The Notice asks for a CV/Resume/Bio and Current and Pending Support from all “Key Personnel.” Who do you consider “Key Personnel”?

Key Personnel include “Investigators,” (i.e., the Principle Investigator and co-Principal Investigators) who have significant roles and responsibilities in the project. “Additional Personnel” do not need to submit CV/Resume/Bios, and can include additional personnel who are not listed as investigators (e.g., Postdoc, graduate student).

77. What information is required in the application?

All required information is outlined in the Proposal Solicitation Notice (https://caseagrant.ucsd.edu/sites/default/files/2021%20Science%20PSN%20Nov9.pdf) and application portal (https://eseagrant2.ucsd.edu/).

78. Can more than one person have access to input information for an application?

Yes, more than one person can have access to input information for the application. To do so please send an email to sgproposal@ucsd.edu requesting a user be added. It is important that only one person create an application for a project; others can be added on as delegates.

Questions about the Application: Project Narrative

79. NEW: The Proposal Narrative organization structure differs slightly between the Proposal Solicitation Notice and the Sea Grant website. Which one should we use?

Please use the Proposal Narrative structure outlined on the Sea Grant webpage.

80. NEW: Is the narrative primarily for more detailed technical/scientific discussion compared to the summary?

Yes.

81. NEW: Can we assume that some of the material in the project rationale included in the summary need not be repeated again in the narrative?

I understand that the page limitation for the narrative is restrictive, but it's better to repeat the project rationale than not provide enough rationale in the narrative. A reviewer may not read the summary closely, for example, and therefore they could miss key information.

82. NEW: The project "narrative" is 12 pages but I don't see a length for the Project Summary. Is this meant to be a one-pager?

The project summary should be a concise description of the proposed research in a form useful to a variety of readers not requiring detailed information. There is no explicit page limit for this section.

83. Are footnotes allowed in the project narrative?

Yes, footnotes are allowed.

84. Is Arial 12 the standard for anything that is to be submitted as a PDF (I noticed it was noted for the Project Narrative)? Additionally, can we include branded title pages, table of contents, etc. for the project narrative outside of the 12-page limitation or do you want only the sections you specify?

Ariel 12 font is not the standard for all application documents, but we recommend that you use Ariel 12 font or similar, for consistency. Branded materials may be used, but will be included within the 12-page limitation for the sections specified.

85. In places like Project Narrative where it says Broader Impacts should be a separate document, does the website allow multiple documents to be uploaded in that area?

Yes, you can upload more than one file. Multiple documents can be uploaded by adding a "New Form" on the eSeaGrant section after uploading the first PDF. Multiple files can also be combined into a single PDF.

86. On the project narrative section there is a page limitation on some of the components but not all. They are all supposed to be combined into the same PDF. Will someone be reviewing the document length, or will the software automatically delete the document if it is longer than 12 pages?

California Sea Grant will manually delete documents longer than 12 pages (Arial font size 12, single spacing, and standard margins (including text, illustrations, charts, tables, and figures). The 12-page limit only applies for the following combined sections of the Project narrative: Introduction and background, Objectives and expected outcomes, Work plan, and Deliverables.

Questions about the Application: Time frame

87. Is the deadline for applications February 12, 2021, or has there been an extension due to COVID?

The deadline is still February 12, 2021.

88. What would the start date for funding be?

The funding start dates are between July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022 and the maximum end date is February 1, 2024. The agreement term can end sooner if needed.

89. Is it possible to extend the project beyond the expected completion date?

No. Projects funded by the Council must be completed by February 1, 2024.

90. What is the timeframe for review and decision making on proposals?

LOIs were due (and required) by December 15, 2020. Full proposals are due February 12, 2021. Funding decisions will be announced in May/June 2021.

Questions about the Application: Broader Impacts

91. Are applicants required to use the Delta Adapts Map Tool to demonstrate how their project will affect specific vulnerable communities?

Applicants are not required, though strongly encouraged, to use the Delta Adapts Map tool. Applicants are required to evaluate and describe whether and how their project will benefit a community that is vulnerable in the context of climate change by demonstrating community need or the potential utility of the project's results. The proposed project's broader impact on vulnerable communities will be rated by independent peer reviewers and will factor into overall project scoring (see table on pages 30-31 of the Solicitation Notice).

92. Is "broader impacts," including effects on vulnerable communities relevant for Research projects? For example, if Research projects do not have obvious relevance to "vulnerable communities" would it be outside the scope of the solicitation? Can you expand a bit and give examples of broader impacts - do we need to have agency managers as co-PIs, for example?

Research projects that do not have direct impacts on vulnerable communities are still within the scope of this solicitation. The evaluation of benefits to vulnerable communities is a component of the scoring criteria "Broader Impacts" for both Research and Integrated Socio-Ecological Systems projects. "Broader impacts" are described separately from benefits to vulnerable communities on page 23 of the Solicitation Notice. Note that the scoring criteria (table on pages 30-31 of the Solicitation Notice) includes broader impacts and benefits to vulnerable communities as a single criterion applicable to both Research and Integrated Socio-ecological Systems award types. See section 8.1.5 in the Solicitation Notice for additional information on broader impacts. It is not required to include agency managers as co-PIs. Some examples of efforts to achieve broader impacts include stakeholder and Community Based Organization engagement, community relationship-building, mentoring opportunities for undergraduate, graduate, and postdoctoral researchers, science communication, and community science.

Questions about the Application: Current and Pending

93. NEW: can we upload the official [university/entity] Current & Pending form, or do we need to transcribe it to the template that is provided on eSeaGrant?

For the Current & Pending form we recommend using our template or the online form, but if the university/entity form contains the same information, it can be used.

94. NEW: Some of the key personnel on our project are not academics, but work for CA state agencies and NGOs. They will submit CVs, but do they need Current & Pending statements?

If the agency and NGO personnel are going to receive funds from the award, they should complete a Current and Pending Support (they could be working on multiple other projects, even if salaried). The intent is to make sure they are not over-committed.

95. NEW: Unlike other sections in the proposal, most fields in this Current & Pending Support section are not marked as required. Does this mean that the only required document/answer pertains to potential overlap between DSP and Prop 1 submissions?

The reason these fields are not required is because you can either enter information into the application's web form or upload a document with the information using the template provided. The Current and Pending information requested is required.

96. UPDATED: Does the current and pending support apply only for Delta related projects or for all projects each Investigator is working on?

The current and pending support applies to all projects that the investigators (e.g., all PI and Co-PIs) are working on. It was incorrectly stated in Webinar #2 that the Current and Pending requirement only applies to the main PI.

Please include all Delta and non-Delta projects proposal in Delta Science Solicitation submissions as "Pending" projects to demonstrate that project leads will not be overcommitted across all projects.

Your Delta Science proposal (and proposals for other funding opportunities) should be included as 'Pending'.

97. What's the difference between current and pending support and matching funds?

Matching funds are funds from other sources that you're going to put toward this new proposal/project. Current and pending support includes all projects in which the PI is a funded participant. Projects with matching funds <u>and</u> unrelated projects should be included in the current and pending support. Matching funds are not required.

Questions about the Application: Title Page

98. NEW: What do we list for "approval date", "protocol #" and "pending"?

The 'approval date,' and fields you mentioned are only for projects involving animal testing. These can be left blank if there is no animal testing involved in your work.

99. NEW: How are 'person months' defined on the title page? Is this time spent on the proposed activity or just the time as described in the budget request?

You should put the total time (in months) that you (the PI) anticipate spending on the proposed project.

100. NEW: Should the "Project Lead" on the title page for each institution be the Lead PI from DSC perspective (i.e., same Project Lead on all Title Pages), OR the PI at each institution (i.e., different Project Lead for each Title Page).

The Project Lead should be the PI at each institution.

101. Who needs to be the "Institutional Representative" on the title page of the proposal?

The Institutional Representative should be the authorized signatory for contractual purposes at the institution. Each institution with a budget >$50k or 25% of the budget should submit a unique title page (in addition to a separate budget), with the same project title. All title pages should be combined into a single PDF.

Questions about the Application: Suggested Reviewers

102. NEW: In the potential reviewer list, there is a space to type in folks with whom we have a COI. Should my co-PI and I combine our lists and paste them in? For NSF proposals, this is usually an excel spreadsheet that we upload.

Please combine your lists and add them to the eSeaGrant form box #6. You can add your names above each list to label them. We don't have an option to upload spreadsheets for this section.

103. NEW: Can someone writing a letter of support also be a reviewer?

If someone is writing a letter of support for your proposal, they cannot also review your proposal. However, you can still provide their name because it might be useful to have their expertise for reviewing other proposals.

104. Can suggested reviewers be from within the same Agency/group as the applicant?

Yes, just know that if we decide to use them to review, they will be marked as a conflict of interest for your proposal, but could be used to review other proposals.

105. Can suggested reviewers be from outside of the US?

Yes, potential reviewers can be based internationally.

Questions about the Application: Permits

106. NEW: Is there any flexibility in the IRB requirements prior to funding? Is it possible to begin work on the natural science components of the proposal and pursue IRB approval at a later date, but before any recruitment or engagement activity begins?

Yes, there is some flexibility for this IRB requirement. As you suggest, you could begin work on the natural science components and we could add a contract deliverable for IRB approval as a prerequisite for to work related to human subjects. If you think it is feasible within the project start/end dates, then we could accommodate this strategy.

107. NEW: Can costs associated with IRB review be included in the project budget?

Personnel and permit costs associated with IRB review can be included in the proposal budget. However, the budget request may not be approved and the Council may remove ineligible costs for reimbursement from the budget of a project selected for funding.

108. How much detail is needed for the environmental questionnaire if the same material is included already in the other two parts of the proposal?

The environmental questionnaire is meant to be a stand-alone document; therefore, you can keep the same level of detail (i.e. copy and paste) information about the project used in the other parts of the proposal.

109. Should additional permits that may be required for conducting field studies be included apart from the environmental permits questionnaire while submitting the full proposal?

Yes, please provide copies of all required Federal, state, or local permits, authorizations, waivers, or determinations that you have secured, and/or notifications of permit applications that are pending. This is requested within the Environmental Compliance Questionnaire.

110. Who do we need to contact to obtain permits for fieldwork?

Projects must comply with all applicable state, tribal, and federal environmental laws and regulations, including the Delta Reform Act. Applicants are responsible for obtaining all permits necessary to complete project work. Scientific studies that involve the collection of fish, wildlife, or endangered or rare plants must have a valid Scientific Collecting Permit or plant Voucher Collection Permit.

111. If our project will not require any environmental permits, are we still required to complete the form?

Yes, an Abbreviated Environmental Questionnaire is required with each application.

112. If a human-subjects research project is proposed by an organization that is unaffiliated with an Institutional Review Board (IRB), is there another method you'd expect to see for expressing the appropriate protections for participants?

For nonexempt research involving human subjects (or exempt research that requires limited IRB review) that takes place at an institution for which an IRB not operated by that institution exercises oversight, the institution should partner with another organization operating an IRB (or an independent or commercial IRB); the institution's reliance on the IRB for its research oversight must be documented. This documentation must include the responsibilities of each entity to ensure compliance with the requirements of the common rule (83 FR 28497).

113. Is IRB certification required prior to application (if applicable)?

No, but it must be acquired (if applicable) prior to the creation of an agreement.

114. What do I need in order to study Delta smelt?

Proposals for Delta smelt projects that include incidental take are unlikely to be considered for funding unless the project team has a current take permit with USFWS; projects involving captively-reared Delta Smelt should demonstrate engagement with the Culture and Supplementation of Smelt (CASS) interagency team. Applicants are encouraged to collaborate with existing projects/PIs that already have take coverage.

Questions about the Letter of Intent

115. NEW: How do we go about changing our PI from what was listed on the LOI and ensure all automated communication going forward is sent to the newly named PI?

Email Proposal Account Seagrant: sgproposal@ucsd.edu and let them know. They will set this up for you.

116. Can a lead PI submit more than one LOI? If a lead PI submits a letter as PI, can they be Co-PI on other letters?

Applicants may submit more than one Letter of Intent (LOI), but a maximum of one award will be made to an individual lead PI. PIs may be listed as co-PIs on other awarded projects if the total combined effort is less than or equal to 100% (see page 19 of the Solicitation Notice).

117. Can the PI and Co-PI order and responsibility be changed between the LOI and the final proposal?

Yes, if they are at the same institution and the scope of the project doesn't change dramatically.

118. Can co-PIs be added to the proposal after the letter of intent deadline?

Yes, co-PIs can be added or changed in the proposal after the LOI stage.

119. Can the lead-PI institution change between LOI and the final proposal?

Yes, the lead-PI institution can change between the LOI and the proposal if the proposed work does not change significantly. To do this, send an email to sgproposal@ucsd.edu to designate a new primary contact for the proposal.

120. Can applicants change the proposal category type (Research or Integrated Socio-Ecological Systems) between the LOI and full proposal?

We are not categorically opposed to a change in the proposal category type between the LOI and the submission of a full proposal. if you think there is a strong chance that the project will evolve into an Integrated Socio-Ecological Systems, it would be most helpful if you classify it as such in the LOI. To support the basic intent of the LOI, which is to identify the expertise we will need among proposal reviewers, we request that the project title and the general topics covered in the projects stay generally consistent between the LOI and the proposal submission.

121. Does literature cited count towards the 2-page limit of the LOI?

Information in excess of two pages will not be considered and literature cited is not a required element of the Letter of Intent. If you want literature cited to be part of your Letter of Intent, then it must be within the 2-page limit.

122. Is it possible to submit a proposal that draws on two different LOIs?

It's fine to submit two LOIs, as long as you only end up submitting one full proposal for the project in question.

123. Can a single institution potentially receive funding for more than one proposal if the lead PIs are different?

Yes. The limitation is only for individual PIs, not institutions.

124. Do we have to identify the ballpark budget at the time of submitting the LOI?

Yes, we are asking to see ballpark budgets when you submit the LOI. It can be approximate, and you aren't "held" to this number when you submit the full proposal. This helps us get an idea of the total request. Partner entities must indicate on the Letter of Intent if their budget exceeds $50k or 25% of the total budget.

125. Will Letters of Intent be evaluated, and full proposals invited or is it a two-step application with a LOI and proposal required?

Letters of Intent are required but will not be evaluated; it is a two-step application. Applicants will not receive feedback on their LOI. The main purpose of the LOI is to help us gauge the number of full proposals to expect and to plan the independent peer review process.

126. Are the LOIs going to be available to the public after submission?

LOIs will not be posted online after submission.

127. How much detail is required in the LOI for identifying relevant SAA action areas?

Not much detail (i.e. one to two sentences) is expected given that LOIs are limited to two pages.

Questions about the CDFW Proposition 1 Solicitation

128. What is the difference between the 2021 Delta Science and CDFW Proposition 1 Solicitations?

The Council and CDFW's Proposition 1 Delta Water Quality and Ecosystem Restoration Grant Program are providing concurrent funding opportunities with slightly different timelines, requirements, and focus areas. Both solicitations are seeking proposals that relate to the Action Areas identified in the 2017-2021

Science Action Agenda (https://scienceactionagenda.deltacouncil.ca.gov/). Applicants must apply to both solicitations to be considered for both opportunities. CDFW Proposition 1 solicitation is funded by Proposition 1 bond funding and will create grant agreements for their awards, where the Council's solicitation is funded by state and federal funding and will create contract agreements for successful awards. The two Agency Programs will evaluate applications separately during the review process but will coordinate regarding final funding decisions. In the Current and Pending Support section of the application, include whether the applicant intends to apply for both programs (mark as 'pending'). For more information about the CDFW solicitation, visit: https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Watersheds/Restoration-Grants.

129. Can you elaborate on how the selection process is being coordinated with that of the upcoming CDFW Prop 1?

Each program will review proposals separately and independently. Coordination will occur prior to the final funding decision to ensure that high-scoring proposals submitted to both programs are funded by the appropriate program.

Other Questions

130. NEW: How do I account for previous copyrighted works related to, but not part of, the proposal?

Work under this proposal on the copyrighted portions of the project could be funded by a match from that subcontractor, with requested funds only going toward the public, open-source deliverables.

131. NEW: Is the document "GTC 04/2017" incorporated in the terms and conditions for this proposal solicitation? The entire Exhibit C has an asterisk in "Delta Science T and C".

The GTC 04/2017 is incorporated by reference as Exhibit C into the Council's terms and conditions, "Delta Science T and C".
Recipients of Council Agreements must be able to comply with the Council's contract Agreement terms and conditions based on their entity type. All entities (besides University of California or California State Universities) must agree to the Council's Agreement provisions including terms and conditions (Exhibits C, D and E). Funding will be provided by a successfully negotiated contract Agreement with the

Council; some Agreements may include funding provided by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation.

132. NEW: Is there a specific format for letters of support?

No, we do not have a specific format for letters of support.

133. How can I submit my question?

Please send questions related to the Proposal Solicitation Notice to DeltaScienceSolicitation@deltacouncil.ca.gov. For questions about the eSeaGrant website, please send questions to sgproposal@ucsd.edu. Questions will also be accepted during 2 optional online webinars and via email until February 3, 2021. Check the website for more information: https://caseagrant.ucsd.edu/grants-and-funding/2021-delta-science-awards

134. Related to the web interface- does the diversity questionnaire refer to the PI only? I noticed it only lets you pick one age category, one disability status, etc.

The setting has just been changed so you can submit more than one. Please only have this filled out for the PI and any Co-PIs.

135. How are "social-ecological" projects going to be equitably evaluated, given this new call and the diversity of projects you might receive?

These ISES proposals will be evaluated by reviewers with the appropriate expertise/experience that reflects the inter-disciplinary nature of the project.

136. How do we obtain prior approval of out-of-state travel?

Out-of-state travel requirements should be clearly identified in the proposed budget and budget justification. If travel (out of State or in State) is to be reimbursable, the proposed budget must clearly justify and specify that the rates of reimbursement for necessary traveling expenses.

If selected for funding, proposed travel expenses will be reviewed and will require separate written authorization by the Council for out of State travel which will be incorporated into the contract agreement as documentation of approval. No travel outside the State of California shall be reimbursed unless prior written authorization is obtained from the agency.

Travel rates are set in accordance with the rates specified by either the UC's Travel Regulations for UC entities, or for all other entities by the California Human Resources (CalHR) Travel Reimbursements for similar or exempt employees.

137. What is the historic funding rate and approximate dollar range of proposals that have been funded by this program?

This solicitation (2021 Delta Science) follows the 2019 Delta Science solicitation, which is the only other recent solicitation. Therefore, historic dollar ranges and funding rates may not be very informative for prospective applicants. Please see the Delta Science Program Proposal Solicitations webpage for more information: https://deltacouncil.ca.gov/delta-science-program/delta-science-proposal-solicitations.

138. How many LOIs were received for each award type?

We received 134 LOIs for this Solicitation; for Research Awards, we received 115 LOIs requesting an average of $500k. For Integrated Socio-Ecological Systems Awards, we received 19 LOIs requesting an average of $1.1M.