

FY17 NTHMP Grant Guidance

Guidance for applications for NTHMP grants for the FY17 award year (ver. 1, 11/09/17)

Key dates for the process include:

November	Webinar(s) on highlights of FY17 NTHMP grants
11/09/2016	Release of Grant Guidance and related documents.
1/13/2017	First draft Project Narrative, Budget Explanation, and Budget spreadsheets (Prime and Subawards) submitted to Rocky.Lopes@noaa.gov for first-round pre-application technical and administrative review.
01/14-25/2017	Submitted documents screened and comments returned to submitter for review.
2/2/2017	Grant requestors present information about planned project(s) at the NTHMP Annual Meeting. Alignment with goals and objectives of NTHMP Strategic Plan validated. Possible synergies determined.
2/24/2017	Revised and final Pre-Application package (Project Narrative, Budget Explanation, and Budget spreadsheets (Prime and Subawards) submitted to Rocky.Lopes@noaa.gov for review by Federal Grant Panel.
02/25-03/24/17	NTHMP Federal Grant Review Panel meets to conduct pre-application review. A panel member may communicate with grantee to clarify questions and refine pre-applications if necessary.
4/3/2017	Grant review panel provides recommendations to NTHMP Chair for review and approval.
4/14/2017	NTHMP Chair provides final sign-off on pre-applications.
4/21/2017	NTHMP Chair's recommendations transmitted to NWS AFSD Director for review and approval. He determines the final "top line" for available grant funding. Further meetings with the NTHMP Grant Panel and/or the NTHMP Chair may be necessary to determine the final approved amounts of funding for each partner to apply for.
Early May 2017	NWS Tsunami Program posts funding opportunity notice to grants.gov via RFA in NOAA GrantsOnLine. NWS Tsunami Program communicates with each submitter to inform of recommendations by the Grant Review Panel with NTHMP Chair recommendation.
05/26/2017	Finalized FY17 grant applications submitted into on-line system by each applicant.
05/30-6/30/17	NWS Tsunami Program creates and uploads supporting documentation for all grants into the on-line system.
July through 08/31/2017	NOAA Grants Management reviews of submissions, including legal review. Applicants asked refining questions. Awards offered in late August, 2017.

Use this table to determine permissible and non-permissible activities:

NOTE: TWEA of 2006 is the Governing legislation that applies to the NTHMP grants process.

Allowable NTHMP Grant Activities (TWEA)	Not allowable NTHMP Grant Activities
FTE full or part-time personnel and staff time for Coordinating Committee members. See details on limits in the detailed Guidance.	Construction, real estate, vehicles: none of these items are allowable. No exceptions.
Inputs to inundation models that meet the NTHMP's standard of accuracy	Acquisition of raw data (e.g., bathymetry)
Demonstration of conformity with the standard of accuracy of models	Development of numerical models
Application of tsunami models	
DEM/Grid generation for priorities beyond those established by the MMS	
TsunamiReady [®] support	
Outreach products (no "swag") – printed and electronic materials	Swag: t-shirts, clothing, hats, plaques, mugs, glassware, commemorative items
Accessible knowledge repository	
Workshops and training	
Support educational efforts at learning institutions	
Development of technical training and public education programs	Development of educational curriculum
Decision support tools	
Risk assessments	
Development and integration of tsunami information into outreach products	
Emergency response and recovery plans	
Mitigation tools, programs, and plans	
Risk management activities	Development of risk assessment models (e.g., HAZUS)
Signage	
Development of evacuation maps and other hazard products, e.g., maritime.	
Tsunami evacuation drills, exercises, etc.	
Outreach evaluation/assessment tools	
Integrating other hazard information into evacuation route planning	
Local warning reception and dissemination infrastructure (e.g., sirens)	

Allowable NTHMP Grant Activities (TWEA)	Not allowable NTHMP Grant Activities
Providing guidance for land-use planning	Developing building codes or land-use plans except for pilot studies related to guidelines.
Promoting adoption of tsunami building codes	
Providing guidance for siting and conceptual design of vertical evacuation structures	Anything in the Object Class "Construction," including vertical evacuation structures, berms, roadway strengthening, or any other physical construction-related activities.
Travel to NTHMP meetings for authorized individuals, including Coordinating Committee members and grant-funded staff	
Travel required to accomplish grant-funded tasks.	
Travel to conferences or meetings to present tsunami-specific information.	Travel to conferences or meetings (includes poster sessions) that are not sponsored by the NTHMP or an NTHMP Subcommittee.

Changes for FY17 NTHMP Grants:

1. Travel to NTHMP Meetings: grants still must cover travel costs to NTHMP meetings.

Due to a restrictive cap on travel required by Presidential Executive Order 13589, NOAA/NWS will still not be able to offer invitational travel to NTHMP Coordinating Committee members whose agencies are recipients of grant funds to attend the NTHMP Annual Meeting (early 2018) and NTHMP Mitigation & Education Subcommittee and Mapping & Modeling Subcommittee meetings (2018).

All NTHMP grantees are advised to include travel to the Annual Meeting for authorized official Coordinating Committee members (if authorized to accept grant-funded travel support), as well as the Emergency Management representative to attend the MES meeting, and the Science representative to attend the MMS Science Collaboration meeting.

We understand that some Coordinating Committee members do not work for an agency that receives NTHMP grant funds. In that case, NOAA/NWS will strive to offer invitational travel for those individuals on a case-by-case basis.

Funding for travel may be requested with these considerations:

- Priority 1a: Travel by two NTHMP Coordinating Committee members to the NTHMP Annual Meeting; Emergency Management member to a separate MES meeting; and Science member to a separate MMS meeting. These meetings will receive the highest priority consideration for funding. Use the standardized travel estimator.
- Priority 1b: Travel as part of executing a task (e.g., travel for a mapping validation, site visit for outreach/education, siren installation, etc.) should be included within the task about that project. Task-related necessary travel is of equal priority to NTHMP CC member travel.
- Priority 2: Travel funds for additional representative(s) from an NTHMP partner (in addition to NTHMP Coordinating Committee members) to attend NTHMP-sponsored meetings. More than one additional person per meeting is not favored.
- Priority 3-NTWC: Travel by one person to Palmer, Alaska, for week-long Tsunami Center Training if offered. Use standardized travel cost estimate provided.
- Priority 3-Pacific: Registration expenses and travel to participate in the PRiMO Conference for NTHMP partners in American Samoa, Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, and Hawaii may be requested separate from travel requests described above. Include a complete estimate of expenses as described above, as well as the estimated registration fee. Include the "earlybird" registration fee per [PRiMO Conference website](#).

Refinement for FY17: funding for registration and/or travel to academic and professional conferences or meetings, such as the Seismological Society of America and American Geophysical Union meetings, are not of the priority to be considered for NTHMP grant funding. Do not include these meetings in your request.

Travel funds for NTHMP meetings and the PRiMO Conference must be listed as discrete and separate items in the Budget Narrative and included on the budget tab of the budget spreadsheet. You can have several "travel-specific tasks" (NTHMP Annual Meeting, NTHMP MES meeting, NTHMP MMS Science Collaboration Meeting).

2. An estimated cost breakdown for each trip regardless of the amount of funding requested is required on the budget estimate spreadsheet. Include name and title of person traveling, number of nights lodging, estimated coach class (or equivalent) airfare OR mileage at current approved mileage rate, GSA-approved or state-approved per diem rates (whichever is less), and reasonable other expenses. *If a budget breakdown for travel costs is not provided, then the travel will not be recommended for funding.*
3. Use the [FY17 NTHMP Grant Project Narrative Template](#), FY17 NTHMP Budget Narrative Instructions that go with the FY17 NTHMP Prime Budget Spreadsheet and FY17 Subaward Budget spreadsheet templates – do not use project or budget templates from past years or other sources.

NTHMP Grant Guidance that has not changed and remains in effect:

4. Personnel/staffing:
 - a. Itemize the number of hours grant staff are assigned to each task in the application. The total number of hours for all staff combined should not exceed 2,080 or whatever is considered by your state/territory/agency as "full time." Total hours per person per task is required; percentages of time are not.
 - b. In the Budget spreadsheets, identify which personnel are assigned to which task and the hours that person will work on that task so that the grant review panel can determine the impact if a position were not funded.
 - c. Provide cost basis for salaries (state hourly salary rate). You must provide the base salary and hours for each task in order for the Grants Officer to determine reasonability of the salary costs.
 - d. Provide the fringe rate and submit a letter or documentation that substantiates the rate.
 - e. Personnel costs can be requested for one year (period of performance September 1, 2017 through August 31, 2018). Personnel requirements for Year 2 of a task with a two-year period of performance must be requested in the next year's grant request if the opportunity is offered. Personnel costs are year-to-year only.
 - f. Tasks that appear to be focused only on providing employment (staff or students) over meeting specific and multiple NTHMP strategies and outcomes rank low priority to recommend for funding.

g. If requesting “staff time” for NTHMP Coordinating Committee members to participate in NTHMP meetings, the maximum hours allowable are:

- Annual Meeting Week: 48 hours
- In-person Subcommittee meetings: 40 hours
- NTHMP Co-Chair duties: 60 hours
- NTHMP conference calls: 12

Note: staff time for permanent or temporary alternates for CC members may not be requested.

5. Grant tasks *that do not include hours by full- or part-time personnel* may have a period of performance for up to 24 months, from September 1, 2017, to August 31, 2019. Applicants have the option of a 12-month period of performance if they wish. The timing of these grants is set so there is not an overlap with previously issued NTHMP grants so as not to oversubscribe any Principal Investigators.
6. Grant tasks for full- or part-time personnel or NTHMP CC member staff time must be for a one-year period of performance. (Sept. 1, 2017 to August 31, 2018).
7. The focus for FY17 NTHMP Grants is *support and sustainment of activities described in the NTHMP Strategic Plan*, but not necessarily for projects that can be completed in one year. Request *only what you need to sustain current levels of activity toward achieving the NTHMP Strategic Plan's strategies and outcomes*.
8. Be very specific about which [NTHMP Strategic Plan](#) strategies and outcomes that proposed project(s) will meet. List all applicable strategies and outcomes that apply.
9. List all activities that can be carried out independently from one another as discrete and separate tasks. Do not write applications where so many activities are intertwined such that if one of the tasks does not get funded, then the rest of the proposed tasks could not begin or be completed. Also, do not lump all activities into one single task with subtasks. Separate discrete tasks into separate task lines.
10. There is no fixed number of tasks that a grantee can request. Consider, however, a reasonable balance of requested funds with the consideration that 11 other entities will also be applying for grants. It is unlikely that all tasks for all requestors can or will be recommended for funding.
11. Carefully review at least the last two Semi-Annual Grant Progress Reports submitted by your agency. Funding has been cut from applications where it appeared that the proposed new work had already been completed and reported. Explain in your Project Narrative how new proposed work builds on previously completed projects.

12. The Grant Review Panel will give more positive consideration to projects that demonstrate collaboration and synergy with other NTHMP-participating states/territories. This is why the presentation at the NTHMP Annual Meeting is so important – to help you identify what other grant requestors are proposing projects where you can collaborate, mutually benefit, and support the overall strategies and outcomes of the NTHMP Strategic Plan. *Collaboration is defined as two or more grantees working on exactly the same project at the same time. For purposes of grant consideration, collaboration does not include merely sharing resources or information with each other.*
13. Funds requested for grant activities must be broken down by Object Class such as personnel, fringe, travel, contracts, equipment, supplies, and other direct costs. See references about how to classify costs by Object Class. You must calculate the funds needed by object class yourself – NOAA/NWS personnel cannot do that for you. However, if during execution of a grant you find that you may need more funds in one object class than another, it is permissible to move funds between classes *except* for funds into and out of the Personnel and Fringe categories. If you must increase expenses for Personnel or Fringe categories later, a formal budget amendment is required.
14. You may include funds for indirect costs IF your agency has an approved National Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) whose period of coverage includes the month on which pre-applications are submitted AND indirect costs are calculated per terms of your agency's agreement which covers personnel, benefits, and sometimes items in other Object Classes (up to certain specified limits). If you claim Indirect Costs, you must submit your agency's NICRA with your pre-application and upload it again when the actual application is submitted in the on-line system.
15. A Grant Review Panel is required by Department of Commerce Grants Policy to review your NTHMP Grant Pre-Application documents. Any panel member may contact you if they have questions about your application. Please answer questions thoroughly and promptly.
16. Do not assume that the members of the Grant Review Panel understand what you have done in the past, how you are organized, or how you conduct your business. More explanatory detail is better than not providing it. Think of it this way, "if I were reviewing this application and didn't know how I do what I do, would I understand what you are proposing to do and why the expenses are at the amounts they are?"
17. The period of performance for these grants is September 1, 2017, through August 31, 2019, a two-year period *except for grant-funded Staff*. If you have specific needs for an adjustment for a later start date, please contact NOAA/NWS Tsunami Program office staff.

18. If you have an existing grant that was extended and whose end date is beyond August 31, 2017, then *please be careful that you do not over obligate personnel costs for the Principle Investigator or other staff paid through the grant's personnel/fringe object classes*. Obligations of personnel by more than 100% time could be cause for tasks within an application not to be funded.
19. If you have an ongoing grant where this new grant will overlap an existing grant, be careful about what you propose so you are not proposing to do "old" work under the "new" grant. Everything proposed in the "new" grant must be a new activity and not duplicated or carried forward from a previous grant – again, only if active periods of grants overlap.
20. Make sure that the dollars add up exactly the same in the Project Narrative and the Budget Narrative. NOAA/NWS or the Grant Review Panel may not reconcile differences for you and may choose the lower of amounts if given a choice.
21. Round all numbers up to the nearest whole dollar. Do not include decimals.
22. Other Documents Referenced/Required
 1. [NTHMP Strategic Plan 2013 – 2017](#)
 2. [FY17 NTHMP Grant Project Narrative Template](#)
 3. [FY17 NTHMP Grant Budget Narrative Instructions & Explanation Template](#)
 4. [FY17 NTHMP Grant Prime Applicant Budget Spreadsheet](#)
 5. [FY17 NTHMP Grant Subaward Budget Spreadsheet](#)
 6. [NEPA Checklist – Applicant Certification](#)
 7. Reference – [classification of costs by Object Class](#)
 8. Reference – [NOAA Grants Management general budget guidelines](#)
See <http://nws.weather.gov/nthmp/grants/reference.html>
23. If you have questions, please contact:

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General caveat: there are many factors governing grants being made available for FY17. Factors beyond control of the NOAA Tsunami Program may cause a reduction in available funds, non-approval of funds for certain tasks, or cancelation of the grants program.

Lexicon of terms, abbreviations, and acronyms:

AFS, AFSSO: [Analyze, Forecast, and Support \(Office\)](#): the parent structural entity under which the NWS Headquarters Tsunami Program falls. The Director of the AFSSO has final approval authority of NTHMP grant recommendations. The NWS Chief Financial Officer has final authority to commit NTHMP grant funds.

Application: A formal entry of required forms and files that compose an entire grant package for submission to NOAA via grants.gov in response to a Request for Application.
CC: NTHMP Coordinating Committee.

DOC: Department of Commerce. The parent Department of NOAA and 11 other [bureaus and offices](#).

Federal Grant Review Panel: a team of three Federal agency representatives appointed by the Chair of the NTHMP. This team reviews grant pre-applications, scores them, and makes recommendations for projects and tasks to be funded.

GMD: NOAA Grants Management Division. A cross-NOAA office that administers grant actions including review of applications, legal review, issuance of grant awards, review and approval of reprogramming requests, and operates NOAA GrantsOnLine.

NICRA: Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement. This is a formal document that provides information on what indirect costs are allowable, at what rates, and against certain object classes of expenses.

NOAA: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the parent agency of the National Weather Service and [six staff offices and six line offices](#).

NOAA GrantsOnLine: an on-line grants management portal operated by NOAA GMD. All grant actions must be conducted via this portal once a grant is awarded.

NWS: National Weather Service. This is the agency where the Tsunami Program is placed. The Tsunami Program supports the NTHMP and serves as the overall NTHMP Grant Program Officer.

Program Office: Tsunami Program technical staff are located in the "Program Office" at National Weather Service Headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland. There are four Program Office staff.

Pre-application: draft Budget Narrative, Budget Spreadsheet, and Project Narrative files. Only these three files compose a pre-application for an NTHMP grant.