

FY18 NOAA/NWS Tsunami Activities Grant Guidance

This is Guidance for grant application development for eligible entities applying for tsunami grants offered by NOAA's National Weather Service for State, Territory, Tribal, and Local Governments, including quasi-government authorities that operate and manage ports and harbors. This Guidance supersedes all past grant guidance for tsunami grants.

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Key dates for the process

November	Webinar(s) on highlights of FY18 NOAA/NWS Tsunami Activities Grants
11/3/2017	Release of Grant Guidance and related documents.
1/12/2018	First draft Project Narrative, Budget Explanation, and Budget spreadsheets (Prime and Subawards) submitted to nws.tsunamigrants@noaa.gov for first-round pre-application technical and administrative review.
01/13-26/2018	Submitted documents screened and comments returned to submitter for review.
2/1/2018	Grant meeting at the NTHMP Annual Meeting. Alignment with goals and objectives of NTHMP Strategic Plan validated. Determination of any "Subcommittee Initiated Activities" will be made and one authorized applicant will include the activity in its pre-application.
2/23/2018	Revised and final Pre-Application package (Project Narrative, Budget Explanation, and Budget spreadsheets (Prime and Subawards) submitted to nws.tsunamigrants@noaa.gov for review by Federal Grant Panel.
02/24-03/23/18	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.
4/3/2018	Grant review panel provides recommendations to NTHMP Chair for review and approval.
4/13/2018	NTHMP Chair provides final sign-off on pre-applications.
4/23/2018	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 Federal Grant Panel and/or the NTHMP Chair may be necessary to determine the final approved amounts of funding for each partner to apply for.
04/23/ - 05/4/2018	Applicants provided feedback on approved activities & tasks with instructions on preparation of final grant application.
Early May 2018	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 Federal Grant Panel with NTHMP Chair recommendation.
05/25/2018	Finalized FY18 grant applications submitted into on-line system by each applicant.
05/29-6/30/18	NWS Tsunami Program creates and uploads supporting documentation for all grants into the on-line system.
July through 08/31/2018	NOAA Grants Management reviews of submissions, including legal review. Applicants asked refining questions. Awards offered in late August, 2018.

Changes for FY18 NOAA/NWS Financial Assistance for Tsunami Activities Grants

Change of Name of Grants

The *Tsunami Warning, Education, and Research Act of 2017* (TWEREA) directs that NOAA provide “technical and financial assistance to coastal States, territories, tribes, and local governments to develop and implement activities under [section 3204 (c)(1) – The NTHMP].” To make it clear, NOAA General Counsel advises that we call the grants “NOAA/NWS Grants for State, Territory, Tribal, and Local Government Tsunami Activities.” For short, we may call the grants “NOAA/NWS Tsunami Activities Grants,” however in formal documents and references, the full name of the grants program will be used. The term “NTHMP grants” will no longer be used because the NTHMP itself does not consider or award grants.

Staff Hours and Positions

Applicant can no longer create general staff position(s), such as “Tsunami Specialist” charged as a single task to a grant. Instead, staff time must be allocated by hours across tasks. Hours may not exceed 2,080 for one person (or a full-time equivalent work-year as defined by the applicant.) If more than 2,080 hours for one FTE to work on tasks is requested, the applicant must justify why more than one FTE is required. Include the justification in the Budget Explanation document (not in the spreadsheet.)

Applicants *are permitted* to create position(s); it is that the hours must be divided across multiple tasks, rather than be lumped into one task. Task assignments for grant-funded people may be shared between Prime applicant and Subaward applicant(s).

After notification of recommended activities to include in the final grant application, applicants may adjust assignments for hours for an employee if task(s) are not recommended for funding, such that a position can still have a fully-assigned full-time equivalency.

2018-2023 NTHMP Strategic Plan

The *2018-2023 NTHMP Strategic Plan* will govern the priorities and strategies for activities to be funded by grants. Even though the new Strategic Plan is in draft during FY18 grant application development, the new Strategic Plan draft should be used to align projects and activities for grant proposals.

Required Endorsement By NTHMP Partners

New for the FY18 grant pre-application cycles (rounds 1 and 2), a [written endorsement](#) with signature is required from both the Emergency Management member and Science member from the applicant’s state, territory, or region. This ensures that both members representing an NTHMP partner assure awareness of all of the activities and budgets within a grant proposal.

Subcommittee Initiated Activities

New for FY18 NOAA/NWS Tsunami Activities Grants are a category of “Subcommittee Initiated Activities.” These are activities that an applicant may include in its grant proposal IF an NTHMP Subcommittee endorses the concept and that applicant’s designation to propose it. Allowable Subcommittee Initiated Activities are listed separately in this document.

New Excluded Items or Activities

For FY18 grants, there are some items or activities for which grant funding may not be requested, as follows:

- Staff time for Coordinating Committee members to participate in NTHMP meetings.

It is expected when accepting a Coordinating Committee appointment that the CC member's time to attend and participate in CC meetings will be covered by the CC member's employer from base funding, and not from grant funds. Applies to CC members only.

- Travel to conferences or meetings that are not specific to a task.

Examples: AGU Meeting, SSA Conference, IAEM Conference, National Earthquake Meeting, and similar professional conferences or meetings. If participation in meetings and conferences is important to someone, that person's employer should foot the bill. Further, most conferences are multi-hazard with tsunami being only a small part.

- Laptop or desktop computers, LCD projectors, printers, and related computer hardware.

It is expected that these items should be provided from the NTHMP partner's base budget or employer's contribution. Even if equipment is used 100% for tsunami purposes, these items are considered "grant creep" and not a priority for grant funding.

Focus and Purpose of NOAA/NWS Tsunami Activities Grants

The focus for FY18 NOAA/NWS Tsunami Activities Grants is *support and sustainment of activities* described in the NTHMP Strategic Plan. Request only what is needed to sustain current levels of activity toward achieving the NTHMP Strategic Plan's goals and strategies.

The main purposes of these grants per terms of TWERA are to develop and implement activities that—

- promote the adoption of tsunami resilience, preparedness, warning, and mitigation measures by Federal, State, territorial, tribal, and local governments and nongovernmental entities;
- support the development of regional tsunami hazard and risk assessments;
- promote preparedness in at-risk ports and harbors;
- recommended guidance for at-risk port and harbor tsunami warning, evacuation, and response procedures in coordination with the Coast Guard and the Federal Emergency Management Agency;
- support the development of community-based outreach and education programs to ensure community readiness and resilience;
- dissemination of guidelines and standards for community planning, education, and training products, programs, and tools;

- May include--
 - Multidisciplinary vulnerability assessment research, education, and training to help integrate risk management and resilience objectives with community development planning and policies;
 - Risk management training for local officials and community organizations to enhance understanding and preparedness;
 - In coordination with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, interagency, Federal, State, tribal, and territorial intergovernmental tsunami response exercise planning and implementation in high risk areas;
 - Development of practical applications for existing or emerging technologies;
 - Risk management, risk assessment, and resilience data and information services;
 - Risk notification systems that coordinate with and build upon existing systems and actively engage decision-makers, State, local, tribal, and territorial governments and agencies, business communities, nongovernmental organizations, and the media.

Relationship with NTHMP Plans and Guidance Documents

2018-2023 NTHMP Strategic Plan

Activities proposed for grant-funded activities must be tied to one or more goals and/or strategies in the *2018-2023 NTHMP Strategic Plan*. The draft of this new Strategic Plan is available with this Grant Guidance and should be used when developing grant task proposals. The *2018-2023 NTHMP Strategic Plan* will be discussed and approved at the 2018 NTHMP Annual Meeting. Previous versions of NTHMP Strategic Plans should not be used.

Subcommittee Annual Work Plans

Each NTHMP Subcommittee will develop annual work plans (and MMS five-year “vision plan”) during the 2018 NTHMP Annual Meeting. Those work plans may include subcommittee initiated activities (see page 10) on which an applicant will be asked by a subcommittee to take the lead to work on with a grant-funded action.

Because these annual work plans will be developed at the 2018 NTHMP Annual Meeting, it is anticipated that changes to grant proposals for the second round of pre-applications may be made. That is expected and okay.

Further, subcommittee annual work plans can give an indication of higher-priority actions for applicants to consider including in the second round of FY18 grant pre-applications. Grant requests that show a close tie to outcomes indicated in subcommittee annual work plans and MMS vision plan will be more favorably considered.

NTHMP Guidance Documents

TWERA calls for development of Guidance documents that will bring a more consistent, uniform approach to activities such as mapping, modeling, maritime safety, education and outreach, and warning coordination. A subcommittee may request an applicant to take the lead on developing such Guidance. In that case, such a grant request will be favorably considered.

Further, there are some existing Guidance documents that the NTHMP has developed. As noted in the 2017 NTHMP Review, it is suggested that NTHMP partners adopt and implement NTHMP-developed Guidance with the intent to bring a more consistent approach to some actions and activities. Grant requests for "NTHMP Guidance Implementation" will also be favorably considered.

Allowable and Disallowable Activities

Reference: [complete list of "allowable" and "disallowed" activities](#).

Personnel

Hours for FTE full or part-time personnel are allowable. There is a natural limit on FTE hours based on requirements to execute tasks being reasonably explained and within capability of the applicant. All personnel, whether full-time or part-time, must have hours assigned to specific tasks. No "general office hours". May only be requested for 12 months: Sept 1, 2018 to August 31, 2019.

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 the applicant's state/territory/agency as "full time." Total hours per person per task is required; percentages of time are not.

If the applicant agency has a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement and indirect costs are included in the grant application, costs for time/hours for anyone working in a "Finance and Admin" position who writes reports, prepares and reviews bids, makes contract awards, etc., may **not be included**. The F&A costs are included in indirect costs and asking for time for F&A hours would be a double-ask, and therefore excluded.

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.

Provide cost basis for salaries (state hourly salary rate). The base salary and hours for each task must be provided in order for the Grants Officer to determine reasonability of the salary costs.

Personnel costs can be requested for one year (period of performance September 1, 2018 through August 31, 2019). 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.

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.

Fringe benefits

Fringe benefits paid for FTE full or part-time staff are allowable. These benefits must be equal to benefits provided to non-grant-funded staff in the same agency/employer.

Provide the fringe rate and submit a letter or documentation that substantiates the rate.

If benefits exceed 35% of salary, a breakdown of the benefits must be provided with documentation from the employing agency describing how benefits costs were calculated.

Travel

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.

Note: Federal Government employees are not permitted to receive the benefit of grant funds, including travel. If the Science CC member is also a NOAA employee, he/she must obtain travel funds from his/her NOAA Functional Management Center (FMC), such as an NWS Region.

Allowable costs for travel include:

Priority 1: Travel for Coordinating Committee members

- Appointed CC members (who are eligible to use grant funding for travel) to attend the NTHMP Annual Meeting in early 2019.
- The Emergency Management CC member to travel to a meeting of the Mitigation & Education Subcommittee held in summer, 2019.
- The Science CC member to travel to a meeting of the Mapping & Modeling Subcommittee held in summer, 2019.

Terms of travel must comply with state/territory travel rules. This applies only to NTHMP meetings held between September 1, 2018 and August 31, 2019.

A standardized travel cost calculator must be used to provide uniform travel estimates unless otherwise approved by NWS Headquarters.

Priority 2: Travel to accomplish grant-funded tasks

Travel may be POV, state-owned vehicle, rail, ferry, ship, or air. Must comply with state/territory travel rules and rates.

This includes site visits for TsunamiReady® support and evaluations (training, mentoring, signage placement, and TsunamiReady® Supporter recruitment etc.) Grant-funded travel is limited to one person per site visit. Multiple site visits to the same location over time are permitted. Carpooling or ride sharing for more than one person to participate in a single site visit is permitted; air or rail travel by more than one person per site is not permitted.

Priority 3: Travel to Workshops

- PRiMO Conference: Registration fees and travel for one person from American Samoa, CNMI, Guam, and Hawaii to attend the PRiMO Conference in Hawaii, Spring, 2019. This is a Pacific Islands-oriented conference and is not applicable for other U.S. states or territories.
- One MMS science representative to attend one Powell Center tsunami source workshop in Fort Collins, Colorado, per eligible grant applicant.

Travel to any other conferences, meetings, or workshops is not allowed to be charged to NOAA/NWS grants (this includes AGU, SSA, IAEM, Earthquake Conference, state EMA associations, etc.)

Priority 4: Post-Tsunami Survey Team Travel

This section is about travel costs for a post-tsunami survey team for a tsunami impacting a U.S. coastline. Pre-deployment approval is required by the NWS Tsunami Program.

Can be funded if the NTHMP Warning Coordination Subcommittee requests it and an NTHMP partner agrees to organize and manage this activity. Limit: \$25,000. Expenses related for travel and mobilization for a post-tsunami survey team immediately after a qualifying "big event" to collect perishable data as determined by the WCS. Costs for equipment such as cameras, tablets, laptops, webcams, satellite time, and cell phones are not allowed.

Priority 5: Other travel

- Travel support for one NTHMP CC state partner representative to attend the Tsunami Research Advisory Council (TRAC) meeting if held between Sept 1, 2018 and August 31, 2019. The person selected to travel must be an NTHMP Science Member and confirmed by a vote of the NTHMP Coordinating Committee.
- Travel for one person to attend a 1-week long "Tsunami Training" at the National Tsunami Warning Center, Palmer, Alaska, if the training will be offered between September 1, 2018 and August 31, 2019. This is most applicable to NTWC-serviced partner states: AK, CA, OR, WA, Gulf Coast, East Coast. PTWC does not offer equivalent training, so this does not apply to AS, CNMI, GU, HI, PR, or USVI. Additional participants may attend if they can fund travel from another source of funding.

Priority 6: Travel by others to NTHMP meetings

This section is about anyone other than officially appointed Coordinating Committee members to travel to an NTHMP meeting (annual or summer subcommittee meetings). Travel costs are allowed to be requested; however, because this travel is a low priority, these funds will only be considered if funding is available after all other priorities for all other activities are considered.

If travel funds are included in a grant proposal, the funds can be requested for one person (in addition to the CC member) for each meeting.

High-Priority Activities

- Priority 1 and Priority 2 travel (see above)
- Hosting costs for NTHMP meetings

This covers costs for meeting space, rental of audiovisual equipment, and allowable hosting costs.

Finding free meeting space of adequate size is almost impossible in locations where it is affordable to meet. NTHMP partners can propose to host NTHMP meetings and cover allowable hosting expenses in a grant. The selection of location and a host will be decided at the Coordinating Committee meeting held in conjunction with the NTHMP Annual Meeting.

- Produce NTHMP *TsuInfo Alert* newsletter and report archive

This is an activity done by a partner on behalf of the entire NTHMP. The Coordinating Committee will select the partner to do this activity. The selected partner is permitted to include costs (as Primary applicant or on behalf of an approved Subaward applicant) for personnel, fringe benefits, supplies, other direct costs, and applicable indirect costs (if any).

Subcommittee Initiated Activities

The following activities can be requested if an NTHMP subcommittee requests it and an NTHMP partner agrees to do it to serve NTHMP priorities. These over-arching activities generally have higher priority than individual applicant activities for consideration, since they would have a full subcommittee's endorsement.

It is anticipated that these activities may be more costly in the aggregate because they are being done by one applicant on behalf of several.

- Travel for Post-Tsunami Survey Team (see travel Priority 4 above).
- Update of existing products or development of new products based on existing sources. Includes identifying and locating the sources; determining a realistic magnitude, epicenter, source size (length and width), displacement/"slip," and other factors of fault/landslide geometry. For probabilistic work, it would also include the recurrence period for various size events on a particular source. May include acquisition of existing paleotsunami deposit data. Maximum allowable cost on grant is \$75,000 (including applicable indirect costs). Full cost breakdown is required. Requires endorsement from the MMS.
- Tsunami Hazard Assessments for sediment transport effects on sandy beaches and dunes (dynamic erosion from tsunami) and in harbors. May be a workshop (travel), pilot study, and production of Guidelines and/or a report for the NTHMP. (Academic journal articles permissible, but submission fees are not fundable by grants.) Requires endorsement from the MMS.
- Develop guidelines to improve community tsunami related planning, education, training, exercises, warning and evacuation products and tools and foster the development of tsunami resilient communities. Requires endorsement from the MMS and/or MES.

- Conduct social science research to develop and assess the effectiveness of education, outreach, community warning and evacuation programs and materials. Requires endorsement from the MES and/or WCS. (Updated 11/08/17)
- Create or analyze existing pilot projects and/or hold workshops to help develop and update guidelines for tsunami inundation models and maps that address preparedness, response, mitigation, and recovery planning. May include, but not limited to: Modeling of tsunamis in a built environment, dynamic erosion of dunes through tsunami sediment transport modeling, tsunami sediment transport effects in ports and harbors, meteotsunamis. May be a workshop (travel), pilot study, and production of Guidelines and/or a report for the NTHMP. Academic journal articles permissible, but submission fees are not fundable by grants. Requires endorsement from the MMS.
- Webcam systems for tsunami activity observation. Can be used for validating tsunami inundation, currents, debris movement and damage effects. May include costs to operate and interconnect existing webcam systems. Does not include purchase or lease of camera equipment, computers, servers, etc. Limit: \$20K. Requires endorsement from the WCS.

Other Allowable Activities

The following activities may be requested based on the applicant's needs, priorities, and capabilities to execute the task completely and on a timely basis. Depending on the activity, costs may be divided among all appropriate object classes: personnel, fringe benefits, task travel, supplies, equipment, subawards, contracts, and other direct costs.

- Undertake tsunami hazard assessments for product updates and development for preparedness response, mitigation, and recovery applications that will provide a direct link to informing emergency manager and public officials. The range of possible tsunami assessments include: 1) developing tsunami inundation/evacuation maps; 2) undertaking related evacuation route modeling; 3) maritime tsunami hazard assessments. Assessments must demonstrate a direct link to mapping of inundation zones and evacuation areas and must be backed up with a request from an emergency manager who serves or supports the geographic areas being assessed. A direct link to informing emergency managers and public officials as well as a demonstration of how an assessment will enhance public safety directly is required.
- Probabilistic tsunami hazard assessments that may be used to help refine and guide tsunami risk and ultimately mitigation applications may be included as long as the required EM backup is provided.
- Conduct outreach activities to improve community tsunami related planning, mitigation, education, training, warning and evacuation and to foster the development of tsunami resilient and TsunamiReady communities. Includes travel to conduct outreach as well as development of outreach materials; kiosks; posters; advertisements (print and radio); printed materials. Development and maintenance of general information-providing website(s) serving a department or agency not permitted. This restriction does not apply to electronic tsunami-related documents libraries or repositories.
- Develop technical and risk education training, exercises, workshops and public education programs designed to enhance the understanding of the concept of tsunami risk management in local communities and organizations. This may include travel, development and production

of materials, delivery of training, and staff time to conduct exercises. May also include travel for selected people to attend centralized location for workshop, training, or an exercise. Also includes venue rental fees and associated costs if free venue is not available. May not include food, snacks, beverages, t-shirts, hats, bags, flashlights, or other give-aways or costs to pay for international travel (such as people from other countries to participate in or evaluate an exercise).

- Development of inundation and evacuation products such as maps and on-line tools that incorporate critical infrastructure and socioeconomic vulnerability where available. May include: collection of data on community critical infrastructure and socioeconomic issues to inform vulnerability or risk analyses; travel and practical application of data management tools; production of evacuation maps; online tools for tsunami planning; pedestrian evacuation analysis. Includes assessing the locations of critical facilities and numbers of people (including specific population groups such as children and people >age 65) in the tsunami inundation zone. Economic/population exposure analyses may utilize HAZUS. This does not include socioeconomic or other areas of specific research, but should indicate leveraging the work of others.
- Provide guidance and technical support for the siting and conceptual design of vertical evacuation structures where models indicate limited or no ability for timely evacuation and protection of life. May include travel to selected communities to conduct meetings or engagement; production of information products; development of guidance other than zoning or permitting, or any regulatory activity.
- Incorporating results of evacuation route planning into products such as outreach materials and tsunami maps. Activities used for multi-hazard applications will only be supported for the percentage that is directly related to tsunami, not other hazards. Applicants will have to provide the math. Cost-leveraging from other funding sources required for non-tsunami work.
- Activities and technical support to promote preparedness in at-risk ports, harbors and waterways. May include travel; cost-effective gathering of data; modeling; production of maps or similar products to inform decision-makers.
- Infrastructure and related technology for effective tsunami warning notification. (Sirens, NOAA Weather Radios, EMWIN, Signage). Activities used for multi-hazard applications should provide cost leveraging (50% or better) for most favorable consideration of a grant request. Requests without cost leveraging will be ranked lowest in funding priority. This is about public alert and warning notification systems only.
- Computer hardware for tsunami modeling. A limited request for hardware, such as memory or nodes required to support tsunami modeling, may be allowed and considered on a case-by-case basis. If used for one or more hazards than tsunami, cost must be leveraged 50% or greater from other resources. No cost leverage required if tsunami only. Limit: \$4,999 per request. Cost in excess of \$4,999 must be covered from other resources. (Allowable amount is capped at \$4,999 so as to avoid recovering the value of depreciation upon grant close-out.)

Allowable Activities Funded Through IntraNOAA Transfers

Since NOAA entities (NCEI or PMEL) cannot be paid by an NTHMP partner with NOAA grant funds, the following activities may be requested, and if approved, handled separately outside the grant process.

- Standard DEM/Grid generation developed by NOAA/NCEI for priorities beyond those established by the MMS, and DEM verification. Applicant must demonstrate a link to evacuation map improvements in the Project Narrative. This applies only to DEMs developed by NOAA/NCEI. Development of DEMs by any other entity is not permitted for application of grant funds.
- Certain tsunami modeling or hazard assessments conducted by NOAA's Pacific Marine Environmental Laboratory.

Disallowed Activities

The following activities may not be included in a NOAA/NWS Tsunami Activities grant request:

- Construction

These are non-construction grants. Costs for construction of buildings, berms, towers, or anything similar is prohibited. This restriction applies to vertical evacuation structures, ASCE-7 building changes, and related costs.

- Real estate

Purchase, acquisition, legal and/or agent fees for real estate transactions are prohibited. This includes real estate (property) as well as leased space (office space or buildings.) It does not apply to short-term rental of meeting venues.

- Vehicles or vehicle maintenance

Purchase or lease of new or used vehicles is prohibited. Costs to maintain vehicles is expected to be covered by the vehicle owner. This does not apply to short-term vehicle rentals if no other option for ground transportation is available or cost-effective.

- Legal fees

Costs for attorney or legal fees are prohibited. If legal advice is needed, the applicant's legal advisors should provide this service without charge to grant funds.

- Insurance

Costs for separate site facility insurance and liability policies are prohibited. Insurance included on a rental contract for a venue or vehicle is allowable. Worker's compensation insurance is allowed if included in an agency's fringe benefits package. Separate purchase of worker's comp is not allowed.

- Acquisition of raw data (e.g., bathymetry)

Costs for data acquisition are very high when all costs are calculated. There are reasonable estimation methods available to validate DEM data.

- Development of numerical model

Development costs for numerical models are expensive and beyond what these grants can handle.

- Swag: t-shirts, clothing, jackets, hats, visors, plaques, mugs, glassware, commemorative items

These items are not a priority and there are too many "optics."

- Development of educational curriculum
- Development of risk assessment models (e.g., HAZUS)

Risk assessment models are expensive and have been developed by FEMA.

- Fees for subscriptions to professional journals, association memberships, or article submission fees.

Even if publishing an article related to grant-funded work, professional journal article submission fees may not be paid with tsunami grant funds. These items are expected to be paid for by the individual or employer.

- Developing building codes or land-use plans.

It is allowable to host meetings about these issues and travel to provide subject matter expertise. Grant-funded staff are prohibited from writing policy-level or regulatory codes, plans, or documents.

- International Travel

Travel for anyone to go from or to another country. Exceptions: American Samoa to Samoa travel; change-of-plane stop-overs in another country when traveling from Guam or CNMI to or from U.S. destinations. All other international travel is not permitted. This includes travel within the Caribbean or the Pacific.

- Business or first-class travel

Grant-funded airfare must be for coach or economy class (or equivalent). An upgrade using mileage or other rewards programs is permitted, as long as an upgrade does not incur additional cost to a grant.

- Hotel or meal/per diem costs in excess of published Federal Government rates or state/territory rates (if lower.)

Federal Government hotel and per diem rates are here:

<https://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/100120>

- Time (hours) and benefits for personnel costs associated with preparation of grant applications, forms, spreadsheets, reprogramming requests, and related supporting activities

These costs should be paid by indirect costs allowed through a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement. If there is no NICRA, grant applicants are allowed a flat 10% to cover these indirect costs. It is against Department of Commerce grants policy to pay administrative costs to a department or division within a grant-funded agency or subawardee if there is a NICRA because such costs would be considered a double-payment.

- Overtime, Premium Pay, or Shift Differential

Overtime, Premium Pay, or Shift Differential to a grant-funded FTE individual is in violation of Department of Commerce Grants Policy because it is considered an oversubscription of hours. This applies even if a grant-funded individual works less than a typical FTE 2,080-hour work year.

- Reimbursement of salary/wages and fringe benefits for workshop, training, exercise, or other event attendees.

Reimbursing an agency or individual for salary, wages, and fringe benefits -- such as a workshop attendee from a local government -- is not permitted because it is a violation of Department of Commerce Grants Policy. People may not be paid to participate in workshops, training, or exercises. Presenters or trainers who are grant-funded may be paid straight time only if the event is included as an approved grant task.

- Staff time for Coordinating Committee members to participate in NTHMP meetings.

It is expected when accepting a Coordinating Committee appointment that the CC member's time to attend and participate in CC meetings will be covered by the CC member's employer from base funding, and not from grant funds. Applies to CC members only.

- Travel to conferences or meetings that are not specific to a task.

Examples: AGU, SSA, IAEM, National Earthquake Meeting, and similar professional conferences or meetings. If participation in meetings and conferences is important to someone, that person's employer should foot the bill. Further, most conferences are multi-hazard with tsunami being only a small part. Travel to conferences to make presentations is considered "grant creep."

- Laptop or desktop computers, LCD projectors, printers, and related computer hardware.

It is expected that these items should be provided as in-kind support from the NTHMP partner's base budget/employer's contribution. Even if equipment is used 100% for tsunami purposes, these items are considered "grant creep."

General Grant Guidance

Use these documents:

- [FY18 Grant Project Narrative Template](#)
- [FY18 Prime Budget Spreadsheet](#)
- [FY18 Subaward Budget Spreadsheets](#) (as needed)
- [FY18 Budget Explanation](#)
- For second round of the pre-application process: (1) [Forced choice priority ranking of tasks](#) and (2) [applicant NEPA statement](#).

Do not use project or budget templates or spreadsheets from past years or other sources.

A “forced-choice” priority from 1 to (end) of all tasks and subtasks is required in MS-Word format. No priority may be equally ranked. Without a forced-choice priority ranking, the Federal Grant Review Panel may impose cuts that are inconsistent with the applicant’s priorities. Submit this priority ranking with the second pre-application round. Do not re-submit it with the final application.

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, 2018, to August 31, 2020. 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 grants so as not to oversubscribe any Principal Investigators.

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.

A grantee may request up to 12 tasks. Consider, however, a reasonable balance of requested funds with the consideration that a total of 12 entities will be applying for grants. It is unlikely that all tasks for all requestors can or will be recommended for funding.

Carefully review at least the last two Semi-Annual Grant Progress Reports submitted before. Funding has been cut from applications where it appeared that the proposed new work had already been completed and reported. Explain in the Project Narrative how new proposed work builds on previously completed projects.

The Grant Review Panel will give more positive consideration if leveraging of resources is demonstrated. For example, if an agency applies funding for a project from other resources, and grant funding is a contribution to the effort, describe that. More favorable consideration for a request is also given if a soft-match is required with another entity, such as provision of labor to install signage or a siren tower by a local or state public works (or similar) department. Indicate any soft-match requirements in the FY18 NTHMP Budget Explanation document.

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. The applicant must determine the funds needed by object class. However, if during execution of a grant the grantee finds that more funds in one object

class are required than in another, it is permissible to move funds between classes except for funds into and out of the Personnel and Fringe Benefits categories. If expenses for Personnel or Fringe categories must be increased later, a formal budget amendment is required.

Indirect costs may be requested IF the applicant 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 the agency's agreement which covers personnel, benefits, and sometimes items in other Object Classes (up to certain specified limits). If Indirect Costs are claimed, the agency's NICRA must be submitted with the pre-application and again when the final application is submitted on-line.

A Grant Review Panel appointed by NWS Management and/or the NTHMP Chair will review Grant Pre-Application documents. Any panel member may contact the applicant if there are questions about the application. Please answer questions thoroughly and promptly.

Do not assume that the members of the Grant Review Panel understand what has been done in the past, how the agency is organized, or how business is conducted. 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 is being proposed to do and why the expenses are at the amounts they are?"

The period of performance for these grants is September 1, 2018, through August 31, 2020, a two-year period except for grant-funded Staff and most travel (except task travel). If there are specific needs for an adjustment for a later start date, please contact NOAA/NWS Tsunami Program office staff.

If the applicant has an existing grant whose performance end date is beyond August 31, 2018, then please be careful not to over-obligate personnel & fringe benefit 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 recommended for funding.

If there is an ongoing grant where this new grant will overlap an existing grant, be careful not to propose 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.

Make sure that the dollars match exactly in the Project Narrative and the Budget Spreadsheets. NOAA/NWS or the Grant Review Panel may not reconcile differences and may choose the lower of amounts if given a choice.

Round all numbers up to the nearest whole dollar. Do not include decimals.

Grants to Indian Tribes

Federally recognized Indian Tribes that have land subject to tsunami inundation are eligible to apply for a NOAA/NWS Tsunami Activities Grant. A Tribal representative should send an email to nws.tsunamigrants@noaa.gov to request application instructions and documents. [More information is at this link.](#)

Subawards to local governments and quasi-government authorities

A local government is defined as a county, municipality (borough, city, town, township, or village). Local Government status extends to “quasi-Government” entities like a Port Authority that operates harbor and/or port operations.

Local governments and quasi-government authorities that have areas they manage or are responsible for that are subject to tsunami activity must contact their respective state’s grant [Principle Investigator \(list here\)](#) to discuss how a local project can be considered for inclusion in the state or territory’s grant application.

Further information and instructions can be provided by emailing nws.tsunamigrants@noaa.gov.

Procedures for using grant templates

Project Narrative

The Project Narrative should describe the applicant’s goals and provide details on tasks being requested and why each task is important to the applicant.

A standard Tsunami Activities Grant Project Narrative Template is required. Do not use previous versions of any other Project Narrative prepared for past years.

Do not convert the document to PDF on submission for various stages of the review process.

Budget Spreadsheet (prime and subawards)

A NOAA-developed budget spreadsheet provides the method to indicate cost estimates for each task of the application. Instructions on using the budget spreadsheet are provided. Read the instructions! It is essential that the spreadsheet be completed accurately and completely. The budget spreadsheet is a required component of a grant application.

Subaward partners may complete individual budget spreadsheets to provide cost estimates for task(s) that the partner will be doing. The primary applicant will import the data from the subaward spreadsheet into the Prime applicant spreadsheet to have a full picture of all costs by task and object class.

Do not convert the document to PDF on submission for various stages of the review process.

Budget Explanation

Most of the budget details in the spreadsheet are self-explanatory. However, some items may need to have better definition, explanation, or detail. Use the Budget Explanation document to add context and explanations where necessary.

When finalizing the budget explanation, please remove instructions.

Do not convert the document to PDF on submission for various stages of the review process.

Review Process

Pre-Application Round 1

The first round of grant pre-application documents is due on or before January 12, 2018.

Send these documents in their native format (do not convert to PDF):

- Project Narrative
- Budget Spreadsheets (prime and subawards)
- Budget Explanation
- Any applicable NICRAs

Send these documents via email to: nws.tsunamigrants@noaa.gov. The first-round of pre-applications due on or before January 12, 2018.

Do not include any other documents for this review, such as the NEPA statement, budget justifications or bid quotes, forced-choice ranking, or so forth.

Pre-Application Round 2

The second round of grant pre-application documents is due on or before February 23, 2018.

It is anticipated that the tasks, descriptions, and budgets may change between the first and second round of pre-applications, especially after any subcommittee initiated activities are added after the 2018 NTHMP Annual Meeting.

Send these documents in their native format (do not convert to PDF):

- Project Narrative
- Budget Spreadsheets (prime and subawards)
- Budget Explanation
- "Forced-choice priority ranking"
- any NICRA(s) that may have changed.
- CVs or resumes of all grant-funded personnel (prime AND subawards)
- NEPA Statement
- If requesting equipment at \$5,000 or more, a "lease-vs-purchase" analysis is also required. If a lease is not available, say that.

Email all documents as attachments to an email sent to: nws.tsunamigrants@noaa.gov

These are the documents that enter Federal Review. Please make sure the documents are complete and free of errors. Applicants will not be able to correct errors after submission. If an error or oversight was made, a task may not get recommended for funding.

Federal Grant Panel Review

The National Weather Service and/or NTHMP Chair appoints a panel of people who are not applicants for grants, yet are intimately familiar with the NTHMP, its members, grant applicants, Principle Investigators, tsunami science, and emergency management interests on tsunamis.

The Federal Review Panel will closely review all documents for each applicant. The Panel is charged to make recommendations to NOAA/NWS Management on what tasks for each applicant should be funded. The Panel considers the "fit" with allowable activities, NTHMP Strategic Plan, NTHMP Subcommittee Work Plans, NOAA priorities, and the applicant's past performance.

The Panel has wide latitude to consider content of proposals and may contact an applicant with questions during the Federal review process.

The Federal review process continues through March, 2018.

NWS Management Review

The Federal grant panel will make recommendations for activities and tasks included in grant pre-applications to Management of the National Weather Service. Ultimately, NWS Management decides on activities that applicants will be instructed to include in a final FY18 NOAA/NWS Tsunami Activities Grant application.

When NWS Management confirms and approves grant activities, staff of the NWS Tsunami Program Office will inform each applicant what was approved within the applicant's proposal. The applicant will be instructed to prepare a final grant application.

During construction of a final grant application, an applicant may be permitted to make adjustments for personnel, fringe benefits, and other object classes as may be warranted in the situation where not all tasks included in the pre-application process were approved by NWS Management that possibly could result in an hours deficit for a grant-funded FTE individual.

Final grant applications will be completed on-line via grants.gov in response to a Request for Application posted in May. Instructions for applicants will be provided.

Once again, please do not convert MS-Word and Excel files to PDF format as attachments to the grants.gov application.

Include only these documents as attachments in the final application:

- Project Narrative (MS-Word)
- CV/Resume of Principle Investigator(s) and any grant-funded staff, including those working on subawards
- Budget Spreadsheet for Prime applicant (Excel)
- Budget Spreadsheet(s) for Subaward participants (Excel)
- Budget Explanation (MS-Word)
- NICRA(s) for Prime and Subaward participants (if applicable) in PDF format
- SF424 Application for Federal Assistance (on-line automated form)
- SF424a Budget Information – Non-construction Programs
- SF424b Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (on-line automated form)
- CD511 Certification Regarding Lobbying

Do not include:

- NEPA Statement (that is submitted only during the second round of pre-applications)
- Forced-choice task priority list (only during second round of pre-applications)
- Budget estimates or bid quotes from vendors
- Any other miscellaneous grant documentation, including annual reports, photographs, illustrations, or anything else not specifically required or requested.

The final grant application package is due via grants.gov on or before Friday, May 25, 2018. Incomplete applications or late may result in a rejection and halt further consideration.

NOAA Grants Management Review, including NOAA General Counsel Review

After grant application packages are submitted, the NWS Tsunami Program Office reviews each one to ensure that it matches what was approved during the pre-application and Federal Grant Review process. Any discrepancies may result in the entire application being rejected from further consideration.

Additional documentation that is required within NOAA is prepared and added to the on-line applicant file by the NWS.

When the entire package is complete, the NWS will transmit the application package approval to NOAA Grants Management Division for its review.

NOAA Grants Management Division will review all details of the application. GMD review includes review by NOAA General Counsel.

A NOAA Grants Specialist may contact an applicant's representative for further clarification and to address questions that come up during GMD review. Prompt reply to questions is important, because each day of delay may cause a delay in issuing a grant award.

When GMD review is complete but before final award notification, GMD is required by Congress to notify the constituent's Congressional representatives (both in the House of Representatives and the Senate) and the Office of the Governor of a state or territory for a minimum of a three-day advance notification period.

Once the advance notification period has passed, GMD will authorize the NOAA ASAP (Automated Standard Application for Payment) system to obligate the grant funds. Once the steps of ASAP fund obligation are complete, then the Primary Contact for Award (as indicated on the NOAA GrantsOnLine System) is sent an award notification.

Note: the Primary Contact for Award may not be the Principle Investigator(s). The Primary Contact for Award is an individual who is authorized by the applicant's agency to obligate and expend funds.

The award must be accepted formally in the NOAA GrantsOnLine system before public notice of a grant may be announced within or external to the applicant's agency.

Period of Performance

It is anticipated that NOAA/NWS Tsunami Activities grant tasks will be able to be completed in a 12-month period, between September 1, 2018, and August 31, 2019. *These are NOT two-year grants.*

Most grants have a performance period through August 31, 2020. This allows for some activities that may take a little more time to complete. Examples may include installation of a siren system where acquisition, permitting, and installation takes more than 12 months; execution of a grant-funded event in the 13th or 14th month following award before a subaward MOU for a next grant can be executed; or when an understandable delay in execution of a planned task may occur, such as when a hurricane, tropical cyclone, or earthquake disrupts usual operations.

However, as stated above, these are NOT two-year grants. Most tasks should show full completion after 12 months, not 50%.

“No-cost extensions” are not allowed on grants with a 24-month performance period.

Personnel

As noted earlier in this Guidance, personnel and fringe benefit costs may only be budgeted for and expended during the 12 months between September 1, 2018 and August 31, 2019. Costs for personnel may not extend beyond the first 12 months so as not to conflict or oversubscribe the next grant for the FY19 cycle.

Travel

Costs for travel for Travel Priorities 1, 3, 5, and 6 may be requested only for the period between September 1, 2018, and August 31, 2019 (12 months).

Task-related travel (Priority 2) may extend into the second year of a grant performance period if the task were delayed for understandable and necessary reasons.

Travel for a Post-Tsunami Survey Team (Priority 4) may also extend into the second year of a grant performance period if a major event that required deployment of a survey team did not occur during the first 12 months.

Reference documents

- 2018-2023 NTHMP Strategic Plan (draft or final)
- FY18 Grant Project Narrative Template
- FY18 Grant Budget Spreadsheet Instructions
- FY18 Budget Explanation/Backup
- FY18 Grant Prime Applicant Budget Spreadsheet
- FY18 Grant Subaward Budget Spreadsheet(s)
- NEPA Checklist – Applicant Certification (for second round of pre-applications only)
- Forced-Choice Priority Task Ranking (for second round of pre-applications only)
- Reference – classification of costs by Object Class
- Reference – NOAA Grants Management Budget Guidance

See <http://nws.weather.gov/nthmp/grants/reference.html>

Questions / Contact Information

If there are questions, please contact:

Rocky Lopes, (301) 427-9380 Rocky.Lopes@noaa.gov
Lewis Kozlosky, (301) 427-9730 Lewis.Kozlosky@noaa.gov

General caveat: there are many factors governing grants being made available for FY18. Factors beyond control of the NWS 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

See also: [Glossary of NOAA Grants Terms and Acronyms](#)

AFS, AFSO: Analyze, Forecast, and Support (Office): the parent structural entity under which the NWS Headquarters Tsunami Services Program falls. The Director of the AFSO has final approval authority of grant recommendations. The NWS Chief Financial Officer has final authority to commit 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 NOAA/NWS Tsunami Activities Grants Program Officer.

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

Pre-application: Prime Budget Spreadsheet, Subaward Budget Spreadsheet(s), Budget Explanation/Support document, Project Narrative files, and any applicable Indirect Cost Rate Agreements (Prime and Subawardees). Also, for the second-round of grant pre-applications, an additional MS-Word file showing a forced-rank priority for each task and subtask is required. These files compose a complete pre-application for a grant.