RESTORE Act
Centers of Excellence Research Grants Program

U.S Department of the Treasury
Office of Gulf Coast Restoration

Modified Announcement

Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) Number: GR-RCE-26-001 (Grants.gov Opportunity Listing #GR-RCE-26-001)

Assistance Listing Number (FKA Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number): 21.015

Key Dates: Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis as long as funds are available in an applicant's Trust Fund allocation. This FOA, which originally was to expire on October 31, 2026, has been extended to October 31, 2027. This FOA will either be further extended, or a new FOA may be posted in 2027 as determined necessary by the U.S. Department of the Treasury (Treasury).

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PART I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Legislative Authority

Under the Resources and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourist Opportunities, and Revived Economies of the Gulf Coast States Act of 2012 (RESTORE Act), Pub. L. No. 112-141, § 1602, 126 Stat. 588 (2012), the Gulf Coast Restoration Trust Fund (Trust Fund) was established in the Treasury of the United States. Eighty percent of all administrative and civil penalties paid after July 6, 2012, under the Federal Water Pollution Control Act in connection with the *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill will be deposited into the Trust Fund and invested. The RESTORE Act created five components (grant programs) through which funds will be disbursed, two of which are administered by Treasury's Office of Gulf Coast Restoration.

B. Purpose and Priorities

Treasury is publishing multiple FOAs for its RESTORE Act grant programs. This FOA applies only to the Centers of Excellence Research Grants Program.

Trust Fund amounts are available to establish one or more Centers of Excellence through competitive subawards to nongovernmental entities and consortia in the Gulf Coast Region, including institutions of higher education. Funds may be used to establish Centers of Excellence that focus on science, technology, and monitoring in one or more of the following disciplines as described in the RESTORE Act and Treasury's implementing regulations at 31 CFR § 34.704(b):

1) Coastal and deltaic sustainability, restoration, and protection, including solutions and technology that allow citizens to live in a safe and sustainable manner in a coastal delta in the Gulf Coast Region.
2) Coastal fisheries and wildlife ecosystem research and monitoring in the Gulf Coast Region.
3) Offshore energy development, including research and technology to improve the sustainable and safe development of energy resources in the Gulf Coast Region.
4) Sustainable and resilient growth, economic and commercial development in the Gulf Coast Region.
5) Comprehensive observation, monitoring, and mapping of the Gulf Coast Region.

Eligible applicants issuing subawards to Center(s) of Excellence must establish and implement a program to monitor compliance with their subaward agreements.

PART II. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

A. Total Funding Availability

The total funding available for eligible activities under the Centers of Excellence Research Grants Program is dependent upon amounts available for the eligible entities in the Trust Fund. The amounts available will depend on the Trust Fund balance, any adjustments due to sequestration, pursuant to section 251A of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, as amended, and any adjustments due to obligations and disbursements through grants awarded to eligible recipients.

B. Award Amount

Each of the five eligible applicants may apply for its share of funds, described in Treasury's implementing regulations at 31 CFR § 34.702 as a percentage of the amounts available to them from the Trust Fund are for grants under the Centers of Excellence Research Grants Program. An eligible applicant may apply for up to 100 percent of its current available Trust Fund allocation.

Treasury will notify eligible applicants when any revisions have been made to the Trust Fund allocation tables, which include the amounts currently available and posted on Treasury's RESTORE Act website.

C. Anticipated Award Date

Treasury anticipates awarding a grant within 120 calendars days after receipt of a complete and compliant application.

D. Period of Performance

Eligible applicants may submit one or more applications. Applications should be submitted at least 120 calendar days before the requested start date of the award period of performance.

E. Funding Instrument Type

Treasury will make awards under the Centers of Excellence Research Grants Program in the form of a grant to eligible applicants in accordance with Treasury's implementing regulations at 31 CFR § 34.700 and 31 CFR § 34.701.

PART III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are specified by the RESTORE Act and Treasury's implementing regulations at 31 CFR § 34.702. Only the following entities may apply for a grant under this FOA:

1) The Alabama Gulf Coast Recovery Council or such administrative agent as it may designate.
2) The Florida Institute of Oceanography.
3) The Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority Board of Louisiana, through the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority of Louisiana.
4) The Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality.
5) The Office of the Governor of the State of Texas, or an appointee of the Office of the Governor.

Only the above-named entities are eligible applicants who may apply for a grant under the Centers of Excellence Research Grants Program. Treasury does not make grants under the Centers of Excellence Research Grants Program directly to other entities or individuals. Interested third parties may contact their state entity listed above to learn more about how the eligible applicants select their Centers of Excellence.

B. Cost Sharing Requirement

There is no requirement for cost sharing for grants under the Centers of Excellence Research Grants Program. Please note that federal grant requirements in the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance), 2 CFR Part 200, effective as of October 1, 2024 (89 FR 30046) applies to the entire grant amount, including the amount of the Centers of Excellence Research grant and the amount of any funds provided by the recipient and/or subrecipient to support the Centers of Excellence Research project.

C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility

Each applicant must complete an Operational Self-Assessment and must update its Operational Self-Assessment annually by June 30 in Treasury's RESTORE Grants Management System (the RGMS) using the RGMS Portal (https://portal.treasury.gov/RGMS). Annual Operational Self-Assessments must be reviewed and accepted by Treasury before a grant is awarded to an eligible applicant under this FOA. The PDF form for the Operational Self-Assessment can be found under Quick Links – Resources on Treasury's RESTORE Act Centers of Excellence website.

PART IV. APPLICATION PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. Application Package

Treasury uses the RGMS to manage the application submission process, and application packages will only be made available through Treasury's RGMS portal (https:/portal.treasury.gov/RGMS). Only eligible applicants, as defined above in **Part III**, and

their designated contractors as appropriate will be able to register with the RGMS. Eligible applicants must register with the RGMS and log in using their login.gov credentials to access the RESTORE Act Centers of Excellence Research Grants Program application package available under the RESTORE Act.

When beginning an application in RGMS, eligible applicants should be sure to select the RESTORE Act Centers of Excellence application package because this package has the correct instructions, forms, and required attachments for applications for grants under this program.

If you are an eligible applicant and require further information, need assistance with the RGMS account registration process, or if you do not have Internet access, please contact Treasury using the contact information provided below in **Part VII Federal Agency Contacts**.

Information also is available on Treasury's RESTORE Act Centers of Excellence website.

B. Content and Form of Application

All applications under this FOA must be completed and submitted using the RESTORE Act Centers of Excellence Research Grants Program application package provided by the RGMS portal. An application must be submitted by the Applicant's Authorized Senior Official, or an individual designated as an Authorized Senior Official, who can legally bind the organization or entity, and who has oversight responsibilities for the administration and use of the Centers of Excellence Research grant funds, and this individual must have an Authorizing Official user role in the RGMS.

The application package will include the required standard forms and specific documentation required by Treasury. All standard forms are available electronically in the RGMS. Applicants must complete all forms in the RGMS application package, and the Applicant's Authorizing Official must sign the certifications electronically.

Information that is not part of a standard form or a Treasury template included in the application package can be provided as part of a separate file attachment that the applicant can upload into the application package in the RGMS.

Any files uploaded into the RGMS application package must contain a valid file format extension in the filename. Any file submitted as part of the RGMS application package that is not in a PDF file format or in another format otherwise specified in this FOA will not be accepted for processing and will be excluded from the application during the review process. The RGMS platform accepts the following file types: PDFs, Microsoft files (word, Excel, PowerPoint) and image files (GIF, JPEG, or PNG). Scanned copies should not be submitted through the RGMS unless the applicant confirms the clarity of the documents. All documents that do not conform to the above specifications will be excluded from the application during the review process.

Completion of the following forms in the RGMS **is required**:

1) Form SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance.

2) Form SF-424A, Budget Information – Non-construction Programs.

3) RESTORE Act Centers of Excellence Applicant Certifications signed by an Authorized Senior Official.

4) SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities. See 31 CFR Part 21 and the RESTORE Act Direct Component Applicant Certifications, Section E – Certification Regarding Lobbying. If applicable, the SF-LLL must be signed via DocuSign by an Authorized Senior Official.

5) RESTORE Act Centers of Excellence Research Grant Program Application Narrative -- The information is required unless it is not applicable to the project, program, or activity. Applicants should review the detailed instructions in the form, the requirements specified in this FOA, and any Treasury guidance for a complete list and explanation of the requirements.

   Centers of Excellence Narrative Form Sections:

   General Information. Identify which scenario applies to this application.

   Section A. Existing Centers of Excellence. See Question A.1 on the Narrative Form in the application package for specific requirements.

   Section B. New/Additional Center(s) of Excellence. See Questions B.1 – B.2 on the Narrative Form in the application package for specific requirements.

   Section C. Recipient Information. See Question C.1 on the Narrative Form in the application package for specific requirements.

   Section D. Center of Excellence Information. See Questions D.1 – D.5 on the Narrative Form in the application package for specific requirements.

   Section E. Program Details. See Question E.1 on the Narrative Form in the application package for specific requirements. Provide a scope of work that includes specific tasks, milestones, and related timeframes for the entire project period. This should include the applicant's administrative and oversight tasks and the Center(s)' science, technology, and monitoring tasks in the selected eligible discipline(s). The budget justification should relate each budget category listed in the SF-424A to the specific tasks identified in the proposed scope of work. The budget justification should provide specific justification for all budget categories that apply, including an explanation of the necessity, allowability, reasonableness, and allocability of proposed costs. Review the Budget Justification Guidance on the RGMS / Treasury's RESTORE Act Centers of Excellence Resources webpage for further details regarding the specific budget categories and guidance for how to complete a budget justification.

6) RESTORE Act Environmental Compliance Form. If specific research efforts have been identified at the time of application, then the applicant must identify the environmental laws that may apply to those efforts and the environmental

documents that may be required.

7) RESTORE Act Application Milestones and Performance Measures Form – The applicant must identify and list the milestones and performance measures that will be used to track progress on completing the award scope of work and demonstrate project or program outcomes.

8) Title VI of Civil Rights Act of 1964 Narrative Form. See the Title VI Narrative Form in the application package for specific requirements. Treasury will accept a Title VI compliance form recently prepared and submitted (within one calendar year) to another Federal agency. If any information required by Treasury is not included in the other agency's Title VI compliance form, the missing information must be submitted with the application for the Title VI Narrative to be considered a complete response. If any item listed in the Title VI Narrative is not relevant to the project for which federal financial assistance is requested, the information should be marked as "not applicable."

The following item **may be required** to be submitted with the application package:

9) A current federally approved Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) or election to use the de minimis rate, if indirect costs are included in the budget. See Question 19 on the Narrative Form in the application package for specific requirements and review the Budget Justification Guidance on the RGMS and/or posted on Treasury's RESTORE Act Centers of Excellence Resources webpage for further details.

More information on application policies and requirements is available on Treasury's RESTORE Act Centers of Excellence Grant Program website.

C. Unique Entity ID (UEI) and System for Award Management (SAM/SAM.gov)

1) All applicants must have a Unique Entity ID (UEI) generated in the System for Award Management (SAM/SAM.gov) in accordance with 2 CFR § 25.200(b)(3). This UEI should be entered in the block with the applicant's name and address on the cover page of the application, block 8c on the Form SF 424, Application for Federal Assistance. The name and address in the application should be exactly the same as the name and address associated with the applicant's UEI. Applicants should obtain their UEI immediately to ensure all registration steps are completed prior to submitting an application.

2) All applicants must be registered in SAM.gov. Registering for an account via the SAM.gov website is a separate process from submitting an application to Treasury for a grant. After your entity is successfully registered in SAM.gov, your UEI will be automatically generated and viewable in the SAM.gov workspace. Applicants are encouraged to register early. Applicants must maintain an active registration with SAM at all times, prior to submitting an application, and throughout the entire period of performance of an award. Applicants are required to renew their registration with SAM annually. Failure to renew a SAM registration prior to

application submission may prevent an applicant from being eligible to receive a grant under the Direct Component program. Certifications in SAM.gov have now replaced the SF-424B Assurances as part of the application. Applicants, assigned via the SAM.gov entity administrator, can access the subaward reporting capabilities in SAM.gov as required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA). Prime recipients must maintain a current registration in SAM.gov, and may enter into subawards and contracts only with entities that have a UEI from SAM. Organizations must report executive compensation as part of their registration profile in SAM.gov by the end of the month following the month in which an award is made, and annually thereafter based on the reporting requirements of the FFATA of 2006, Pub. L. No. 109-282, as amended by the Government Funding Transparency Act of 2008, Pub. L. No. 110- 252, § 6202, 122 Stat. 2387 (2008), and as amended by the Digital Accountability and Transparency Act (DATA Act) of 2014, Pub. L. No. 113-101, and implemented by 2 CFR Part 170.

3) Treasury cannot make a grant to an applicant who has not obtained a UEI and does not maintain an active registration in SAM.gov. See 2 CFR § 25.205(a).

D. Submission Dates and Times

Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis as long as funds are available in an applicant's Trust Fund allocation. Applications should be submitted at least 120 calendar days before the requested start date of the award. This FOA, which originally was to expire on October 31, 2026, has been extended to October 31, 2027. This FOA will either be further extended, or a new FOA may be posted in 2027 as determined necessary by the U.S. Department of the Treasury.

E. Intergovernmental Review

Applications under this program are not subject to Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs." Please check box "C" on item 19 of the SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance because Review by State under Executive Order 12372 does not apply.

F. Funding Restrictions

1) Pursuant to the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR § 200.458, Treasury will not allow reimbursement of costs incurred before an award is made unless an applicant demonstrates that the costs were incurred directly pursuant to the negotiation and in anticipation of the award, and that the costs were necessary for the efficient and timely performance of the scope of work. Such costs are allowable only to the extent that they would have been allowable if incurred after the date of the award, and only with Treasury's written approval. All costs incurred before Treasury issues the grant to the recipient is at the recipient's risk. Any pre-award costs should be requested as part of an application under this FOA. The applicant must clearly describe the proposed pre-award costs in the scope of work and budget justification

and provide a compelling justification as to why Treasury should approve them. Applicants considering including pre-award costs in an application should contact Treasury as soon as possible to discuss them.

2) Proposal costs of the current accounting period normally should be treated as indirect costs per 2 CFR§ 200.460. Applications including proposal costs as direct costs should provide a detailed justification as to the appropriateness of charging the proposal costs directly to the prospective award.

3) As noted in the RESTORE Act Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions and Program-Specific Terms and Conditions on Treasury's RESTORE Act Centers of Excellence Resources webpage, the following costs are unallowable unless approved in writing by Treasury:

    a. Construction, including the alteration, repair, or rehabilitation of existing structures.

    b. Facilities costs that are allowable as indirect costs in a federally approved negotiated indirect cost rate.

    c. Acquisition of land or interests in land.

G. Other Submission Requirements

All applications must be submitted via the RGMS platform, and applications can only be submitted by an Authorized Senior Official who is either (a) the Applicant's highest official, or (b) an individual that has been designated by the Applicant's highest official, in writing, as an Authorized Senior Official for the purposes of submitting application to Treasury's Office of Gulf Coast Restoration. In either case, the individual submitting the application on behalf of the Applicant in RGMS must have an Authorizing Official RGMS user role. The individual acting in the Authorizing Official role in the RGMS will be prompted to sign the SF-424, SF-LLL, certifications, and other documents requiring a signature via DocuSign, and it is this individual's signature that will display in all signature blocks.

For questions regarding the applicability of specific RESTORE Act requirements and/or technical guidance regarding how to answer particular application questions, Applicants should contact their assigned Awards Program Analyst (APA) at Treasury.

For questions regarding system access or navigation, or to report bugs in the RGMS, applicants should contact the RGMS Help Desk by email at RGMShelpdesk@treasury.gov.

PART V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

A. Evaluation Criteria

This is a non-discretionary grant opportunity. Each application will be evaluated for completeness and conformance with the RESTORE Act, Treasury's implementing regulations at 31 CFR Part 34, the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR Part 200, and Treasury's program policies.

Treasury also will evaluate each applicant's ability to administer a grant successfully, using information sources such as, the Operational Self-Assessment, audit reports pursuant to the Single Audit Act and 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart F, and OMB-designated repositories of government-wide eligibility qualification or financial integrity information.

B. Review and Selection Process

Treasury will perform an initial eligibility review of applications as they are submitted. Treasury also will assess each application for completeness and compliance with the RESTORE Act, Treasury's implementing regulations, 31 CFR Part 34, applicable federal statutes, regulations, and Treasury's program policies. Applications will be selected for funding if they fulfill all application requirements and funding is available in the applicant's Trust Fund allocation.

C. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

Successful applicants will be announced and awarded a grant on a rolling basis as their applications are reviewed and approved.

D. Review of the Responsibility and Qualification Records (formerly known as Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS) Data) in SAM.gov

Treasury, prior to making a grant with a total amount of Federal share greater than the Simplified Acquisition Threshold currently set at $350,000, is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the responsibility and qualification records accessible through SAM.gov (currently FAPIIS). See 41 USC § 2313(e)(2)(A).

Each applicant, at its option, may review information in the responsibility and qualification records accessible through SAM.gov and comment on any information about itself that a Federal agency previously entered and is currently in the responsibility and qualification records accessible through SAM.gov. Treasury will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in the responsibility and qualification records, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in 2 CFR § 200.206.

E. Appeals

If an application for a grant under the Centers of Excellence Research Grants Program is not approved, the applicant may appeal Treasury's disapproval of the application. For more information on the appeal process, please contact Treasury's Office of Gulf Coast Restoration by email at restoreact@treasury.gov.

PART VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. Award Notices

Treasury will notify applicants of application determinations via email, either directly from Treasury or via email notifications issued through the RGMS. Treasury will provide successful applicants with a Notice of Award. Applicants must formally accept the award within 30 calendar days of approval, via the RGMS, in order for the award to become legally binding. Awards must be accepted by the Authorizing Official enrolled in the RGMS.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Awards made under this FOA are subject to the RESTORE Act, Treasury implementing regulations at 31 CFR Part 34, the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR Part 200, effective as of October 1, 2024 (89 FR 30046), other applicable executive orders, federal statutes, regulations, and Treasury's program policies. This is a non- exhaustive list. The RESTORE Act Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions and Program-Specific Terms and Conditions for awards made under this FOA are posted on Treasury's RESTORE Act Centers of Excellence Resources webpage.

1) Lobbying Restrictions at 31 CFR Part 21.
2) Government-wide Debarment and Suspension Requirements at 31 CFR Part 19.
3) Government-wide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace at 31 CFR Part 20.
4) Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act and its implementing regulations at 2 CFR Part 170.
5) Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR Part 200, effective as of October 1, 2024 (89 FR 30046) and any Treasury regulations implementing these requirements.
6) Award Term for Trafficking in Persons at 2 CFR Part 175.
7) Treasury's Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 implementing regulations at 31 CFR Part 28.
8) Treasury's Title VI of the Civil Rights Act implementing regulations at 31 CFR Part 22.
9) Treasury's Age Discrimination Act of 1975 implementing regulations at 31 CFR Part 23.

Special award conditions may be applied, as applicable, to an award made under this FOA.

C. Reporting

Applicants who receive awards will be required to file the SF-425 Federal Financial Report. Performance reporting also is required via the SF-PPR, the RESTORE Act Status of Performance Report, and the RESTORE Act Milestones Report. Recipients that use award funds to purchase equipment and/or supplies must file an SF-428 Tangible Personal Property Report, SF-424B Final Report, and SF-428-C Disposition Request/Report when required, as specified in the RESTORE Act Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions and Program-Specific Terms and Conditions. The RESTORE Act Status of Performance Report and the RESTORE Act Milestones Report may be found on Treasury's RESTORE Act Centers of Excellence Resources webpage. All financial and performance reports must be filed semi-

annually via the RGMS during the grant award's period of performance, unless a special award condition specifies more frequent reporting or if Treasury otherwise revises the program reporting requirements and specifies a different reporting interval. All financial and performance reports must summarize activities undertaken during the reporting period by the recipient and any subrecipients, as well as summarize cumulative activities undertaken since the period of performance start date by the recipient and any subrecipients (if applicable). There is no cost sharing requirement for Treasury's RESTORE Act grant programs. However, if cost-share funds are included in the approved award budget, the SF-425 must reflect the cumulative status of the amount of the Centers of Excellence Research grant and the amount of any funds provided by the recipient and/or subrecipient to support the Centers of Excellence Research project to capture the financial status of the grant as of the end of the reporting period. The cost-share must be reported in the Recipient Share section of the SF-425 form. The Operational Self-Assessment form must be updated annually no later than June 30 of each calendar year for the duration of the RESTORE Act Center of Excellence Research grant.

PART VII. FEDERAL AGENCY CONTACTS

For questions regarding this FOA, please contact the Office of Gulf Coast Restoration by email at restoreact@treasury.gov.

Information is also available at Treasury's RESTORE Act Centers of Excellence Research Grants Program website.