

## **Suggestions for Completing Budget (90-4) and Budget Justification**

**Please format your budget justification to that of the 90-4.**

### **A. SALARIES AND WAGES**

#### **Budget**

Assign personnel to the various categories according to the explanations provided which conform to NOAA/Sea Grant usage on the 90-4 (these definitions do not necessarily conform to usage in your institution). Identify project personnel by position title as indicated on the form. Use accurate current salaries as the basis for calculating salaries and wages for each individual (do not use percentages). If funds are being requested to support a vacant position, so indicate (vac. pos.) and use a salary rate appropriate to the position. Enter months of effort as full-time equivalents (1 FTE = 12 months), regardless of how many calendar months the individual will work on the project for both Sea Grant and matching funds. Entries must be done in separate columns as indicated on the form.

For Salaries and Wages, NOAA Grants Management Division expects the budget justification to address the following questions:

Is each individual identified by position?

Are time commitments such as hours/weeks/months per year for each position?

Are the total charges for each position listed along with an explanation of how the costs were calculated?

Do the combined charges for all activities of any individual exceed 100% of their time including match for the project?

Do the time commitments and charges appear reasonable?

Are all individuals employees of the applicant organization? (If not, explain) Is a cost of living increase built into the budget?

Are salary increases justified for the grant period?

Are any salary/personnel costs unallowable (i.e., Federal Employees or legislative personnel)

### **B. FRINGE BENEFITS**

Fringe benefits are those customarily paid by the grantee institution, following its usual practices in the payment of such benefits.

For fringe benefits, NOAA Grants Management Division expects the budget justification to address the following questions:

Are fringe benefits identified as a separate item?

Are all the elements that comprise fringe benefits indicated? Do the fringe benefits and charges appear reasonable?

Are the total charges for each person listed along with an explanation of how the charges were calculated?

Are fringe benefits charged to federal and matching categories in the same proportion as salaries?

Include a standard statement to the effect "Approved institutional rates"

### **C. PERMANENT EQUIPMENT**

For any item(s) of equipment that has a useful life of more than one year and costing \$5,000 per unit or more, a description of the item and associated costs is required.

For **permanent equipment**, NOAA Grants Management Division expects the budget justification to address the following questions:

Is each item of equipment listed?

If over \$5,000 is there a description of how it will be used in the project?

If over \$5,000 has a lease vs. purchase analysis been completed? Note: Often a lease versus buy analysis is as simple as noting that it must be bought because no one leases it. In this case, the recipient should submit a statement of non-availability stating at least three sources that were contacted about leasing.

If one has not been completed prior to submitting the minibus, it will need to be prepared and submitted through grants online by Connecticut Sea Grant prior to purchase/lease through an "equipment purchase" award action request, if the project is funded.

Does this equipment purchase change the budget? If so, then a rebudget request would need to be submitted to / and then by Connecticut Sea Grant to NOAA GMD, if the project is funded.

For each item of equipment, is the number of units, cost per unit and total cost specified? Is each item of equipment necessary for the successful completion of the project?

Are the charges for each item reasonable and realistic? Are disallowed costs excluded?

Contingencies charges must be excluded! Reasonable miscellaneous can be allowed, but must be justified.

#### **D. EXPENDABLE SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT**

Expendable supplies and equipment must be described according to major categories, e.g., chemical reagents, computer paper and supplies, glassware, lumber, etc. Fuel for boats should be budgeted here rather than under travel. Fuel for vehicles should be budgeted under E. Travel. The justification may be based on historical costs (note as such). For Expendable Supplies and Equipment, NOAA Grants Management Division expects the budget justification to address the following questions:

Are supplies itemized by type of material or nature of expense?

For general office or business supplies, is the total charge listed along with the basis for the charge (i.e. historical use rates)?

For other specific supply categories, is the number of units, cost per unit and total cost specified?

Are the charges necessary for the successful completion of the project? Are the charges reasonable and realistic?

Are disallowed costs (e.g. liquor, entertainment) excluded? Contingencies or miscellaneous charges must be excluded.

#### **E. TRAVEL**

The budget narrative is required for all travel.

For Travel, NOAA Grants Management Division expects the budget justification to address the following questions:

For foreign and domestic travel, is each trip listed along with the destination, estimated mileage, method of travel and estimated cost (train, airfare, car, etc.), cost per mile and duration, number of travelers, per diem rate for meals and lodging? Include estimated registration fee.

If actual trip details are unknown, what is the basis for the proposed travel charges? Is the requested travel directly relevant to the successful completion of the project? Are the travel charges reasonable and realistic?

Note: Funding for unknown foreign travel may be approved but the travel itself is not authorized until an award action request is submitted by Connecticut Sea Grant and approved by NOAA GMD. If federal funds are requested to support foreign travel, all travelers must comply with the Fly America Act and use a domestic carrier, even if the cost is greater.

### **G. OTHER COSTS**

For Other Costs, NOAA Grants Management Division expects the budget justification to address the following questions:

Are items listed by type of material or nature of expense?

For each charge, is the number of units, cost per unit and total cost specified? Are the charges necessary for the successful completion of the project?

Are the same charges listed elsewhere? Are the charges reasonable?

**Are disallowed costs (e.g. liquor, entertainment) excluded?**

Are charges which duplicate indirect cost items excluded?

For G.6., Sub award, NOAA Grants Management Division expects the budget justification to address the following questions:

**Is each sub award listed as a separate item? (Separate 90-4 budgets and budget justifications are required for sub awards regardless of the dollar value.)**

Are the products/services to be acquired described along with the applicability of each to the project?

Do the costs appear reasonable and realistic? Are any sole source contracts contemplated? If yes, is a sole source justification included with the application which describes why the proposed sole source entity is the only source capable of meeting the applicant's project needs?

Are disallowed costs excluded?

Contingencies or miscellaneous charges must be excluded.

Are there contracts with non-US organizations?

### **H. INDIRECT COSTS**

Indirect Cost is the institution's negotiated Facilities and Administrative (Indirect) cost rate and its

relation to those elements of the proposed grant budget to which that rate is to be applied.

An institution will identify the direct costs to which indirect costs can be applied. An explanation for all indirect costs must be included in the budget justification.

If indirect costs are allowed on federal funds, then it is allowed on the matching funds. Unrecovered indirect cost may be included as part of cost sharing and matching.

### **MATCHING FUNDS**

A 50 percent match of the federal funds (i.e., one dollar of match for every two dollars of federal money received) is required on all Sea Grant proposals unless otherwise specified. It is not necessary that every individual project within it has 50% match, as long as the overall minibuss application has 50% match.

Note that it is important to track match contributions carefully to be able to demonstrate sources and amounts if audited. Any match contributions identified by investigators are subject to federal audit that may result in additional costs to the institution.

Match may be in the form of selected "in-kind" services or additional funds from a specified institution, agency, industry, or nonfederal program as long as your institutional grants office approves. No funds from federal entities can be used as match.

***For Matching Funds, NOAA Grants Management Division (GMD) expects you to consider the following questions:***

Is a match (non-federal share) required for this program?

If yes, does the application meet the matching requirements?

Are the sources of match clearly identified? (i.e. cash or in-kind)

Does the application provide adequate documentation to support in-kind contributions?

Does the application exclude matching contributions, cash or in-kind, used for other programs? Does the application exclude federal funds used as match?

Are all matching contributions necessary for accomplishing the project? Are all matching contributions in compliance with federal cost principles?

Note: The recipient **must use the indirect rate submitted with the application or upon award for the entire award period unless approved by the Grants Officer.**

For indirect costs, NOAA Grants Management Division expects the budget justification to address the following questions:

Are indirect costs requested?

Is the correct rate being used? (If a lower rate than is authorized in the indirect cost rate agreement is being proposed you must explain why your organization is deviating from the approved rate.)

Is the rate applied to the correct base? Are charges which duplicate direct costs excluded? (If no, explain/revise.)