Funding Decision Process
Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program
May 2018

The Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (the Program) is a state-federal cooperative initiative to improve recreational and commercial fisheries data collection and data management activities on the Atlantic coast. This formal funding decision process has been developed to assist the Program committees in deliberations on funding of proposals intended to enhance timely implementation of the Program. The following process and proposal formats are provided as guidance to Program Partners.

The Coordinating Council has charged the Operations and Advisory Committees to review proposals and make funding recommendations to the Program Director and the Coordinating Council.

General Process for Setting Annual Program Priorities

The "Atlantic Coast Fisheries Data Collection Standards" provides the basic framework for implementation of the program by all Program Partners. The current Strategic and annual Operations Plans will be used to guide the determination of annual priorities.

Steps in the Funding Decision Process
1. Develop annual funding priorities, criteria and allocation targets (maintenance vs. new projects)
2. Issue Request for Proposals (RFP)
3. Review initial proposals
4. Provide initial results to submitting Partner
5. Review and rank final proposals
6. Proposal approval by the Coordinating Council
7. Notification to submitting Partner of funded projects and notification of approved projects to appropriate grant funding agency (e.g. NOAA Fisheries Regional Grants Program Office, "NOAA Grants") by Partner
8. Operation and/or Leadership Team and Coordinating Council review and make final decision with contingencies (e.g. scope of work, rescissions, no-cost extensions, returned unused funds, etc.)

1. Develop Annual Funding Priorities, Criteria and Allocation Targets (maintenance vs. new projects).

Prior to issuing the Request for Proposals, the Coordinating Council will approve the annual funding criteria and allocation targets. These will later be used to rank projects and allocate funding between maintenance and new projects respectively. Starting in FY2016 a long-term funding strategy policy was approved requiring maintenance projects to be subject to a prior two-year average as base funding. A funding decrease will begin after year 4 with funds decreasing 33% each year starting in year 5 with no funding year 7.

2. Issue Request for Proposals

a. An RFP will be sent to all Program Partners and Committees no later than the week after the spring Coordinating Council meeting. The RFP will include the ranking criteria, allocation targets approved by the Coordinating Council and general Program priorities taken from the current Strategic Plan. The RFP and related documents will also be posted on the Program's website. The public has the ability to work with a Program Partner to develop and submit a proposal. All proposals MUST BE submitted either by a Program Partner, jointly by several Program Partners, or through a Program Committee. Principle investigators are strongly encouraged to work with their Operations Committee member in the development of any proposal.

b. All proposals must be submitted electronically to the Program Director, and/or designee, in the following standard format:

> Applicant Name: Identify the name of the applicant organization(s).
>
> Project Title: A brief statement to identify the project.
>
> Project Type: Identify whether new or maintenance project.
> - *New Project – Partner project never funded by the Program. New projects may not exceed a duration of two years. Second year funding is not guaranteed, partners must reapply.*
> - *Maintenance Project – Project funded by the Program that conducts the same scope of work as a previously funded new or maintenance project. These proposals may not contain significant changes in scope (e.g., the addition of bycatch data collection to a catch/effort dealer reporting project). They must include in the cover letter whether there are any changes in the current proposal from prior years, and if so, provide a brief summary of those changes.*

Requested Award Amount: Provide the total requested amount of proposal. Do not include an estimate of the NOAA grant administration fee.

Requested Award Period: Provide the total time period of the proposed project. The award period typically will be limited to one-year projects.

Objective: Specify succinctly the "why", "what", and "when" of the project.

Need: Specify the need for the project and the association to the Program.

Results and Benefits: Identify and document the results or benefits to be expected from the proposed project. Clearly indicate how the proposed work meets various elements outlined in the ACCSP Proposal Ranking Criteria Document (Appendix A). Some potential benefits may include: fundamental in nature to all fisheries; region-wide in scope; answering or addressing region-wide questions or policy issues; required by MSFCMA, ACFCMA, MMPA, ESA, or other acts; transferability; and/or demonstrate a practical application to the Program.

Data Delivery Plan: Include coordinated method of the data delivery plan to the Program in addition to module data elements gathered. The data delivery plan should include the frequency of data delivery (i.e. monthly, semi-annual, annual) and any coordinate delivery to other relevant partners.

Approach: List all procedures necessary to attain each project objective. If a project includes work in more than one module, identify approximately what proportion of effort is comprised within each module (e.g., catch and effort 45%, biological 30% and bycatch 25%).

Geographic Location: The location where the project will be administered and where the scope of the project will be conducted.

Milestone Schedule: An activity schedule in table format for the duration of the project, starting with Month 1 and ending with a three-month report writing period.

Project Accomplishments Measurement: A table showing the project goals and how progress towards those goals will be measured. In some situations the metrics will be numerical such as numbers of anglers contacted, fish measured, and/or otoliths collected, etc; while in other cases the metrics will be binary such as software tested and software completed. Additional details such as intermediate metrics to achieve overall proposed goals should be included especially if the project seeks additional years of funding.

Cost Summary (Budget): Detail all costs to be incurred in this project in the format outlined in the budget guidance and template at the end of this document. A budget narrative should be included which explains and justifies the expenditures in each category. Provide cost projections for federal and total costs. Provide details on Partner/in-kind contribution (e.g., staff time, facilities, IT support, overhead, etc.). Details should be provided on start-up versus long-term operational costs.

In-kind - [1]Defined as activities that could exist (or could happen) without the grant. [2]In-kind contributions are from the grantee organization. In-kind is typically in the form of the value of personnel, equipment and services, including direct and indirect costs.
  [1] The following are generally accepted as in-kind contributions:
  i.   Personnel time given to the project including state and federal employees
  ii.   Use of existing state and federal equipment (e.g. data collection and server platforms, Aging equipment, microscopes, boats, vehicles)

Overhead rates may not exceed 25% of total costs unless mandated by law or policy. Program Partners may not be able to control overhead/indirect amounts charged. However, where there is flexibility, the lowest amount of overhead should be charged. When this is accomplished indicate on the 'cost summary' sheet the difference between the overhead that could have been charged and the actual amount charged, if different. If overhead is charged to the Program, it cannot also be listed as in-kind.

Maintenance Projects: Maintenance proposals must provide project history table, description of completed data delivery to the ACCSP and other relevant partners, table of total project cost by year, a summary table of metrics and achieved goals, and the budget narrative from the most recent year's funded proposal.

Principal Investigator: List the principal investigator(s) and attach curriculum vitae (CV) for each. Limit each CV to two pages. Additional information may be requested.

3. Review initial proposals

Proposals will be reviewed by staff and the Operations and Advisory Committees. Committee members are encouraged to coordinate with their offices and/or constituents to provide input to the review process. Operations Committee members are also encouraged to work with staff in their offices that have submitted a proposal in order to represent the proposal. The review and evaluation of all written proposals will

take into consideration the ranking criteria, funding allocation targets and the overall Program Priorities as specified in the RFP. Proposals may be forwarded to relevant Program technical committees for further review of the technical feasibility and statistical validity. Proposals that fail to meet the ACCSP standards may be recommended for changes or rejected.

4. Provide initial review results to submitting Partner

Program staff will notify the submitting Partner of suggested changes, request responses, or questions arising from the review process (especially if a proposal initially fails to meet ACCSP standards). The submitting Partner will be given an opportunity to submit a final proposal incorporating suggested changes in the same format previously described in Step 2(b) by the final RFP deadline.

5. Review and rank final proposals

The review and ranking of all proposals will take into consideration the ranking criteria, funding allocation targets and overall Program Priorities as specified in the RFP. The Program Director and the Advisory and Operations Committees will develop a list of prioritized recommended proposals and forward for discussion, review, and approval by the Coordinating Council.

6. Proposal approval by the Coordinating Council

The Coordinating Council will review a summary of all submitted proposals and prioritized recommended proposals from the Operations and Advisory Committees. Each representative on the Coordinating Council will have one vote during final prioritization of proposed proposals. Projects to be funded by the Program will be approved by the Coordinating Council by the end of November each year. The Program Director will submit a pre-notification to the appropriate NOAA Grants office of the prioritized proposals to expedite processing when those offices receive partner grant submissions.

7. Notification to submitting Partner of funded projects and submittal of project documents to appropriate grants agency (e.g. NOAA Grants) by Partner.

Notification detailing the Coordinating Council's actions relevant to a Partner's proposal will be sent to each Partner by Program staff.
* Approved projects from non-federal partners must be submitted as full applications (federal forms, project and budget narratives, and other attachments) to NOAA Grants via www.grants.gov. These documents must reflect changes or conditions approved by the Coordinating Council.

- Non-federal partners must provide the Program Director with an electronic copy of the narrative and either an electronic or hard copy of the budget of the grant application as submitted to the grants agency (e.g. NOAA Grants).
- Federal Partners do not submit applications to NOAA Grants.

8. Operation and/or Leadership Team and Coordinating Council review and final decision with contingencies or emergencies.
Committee(s) review and decide project changes (e.g. scope of work, rescissions, no-cost extensions, returned unused funds, etc.) during the award period.

Scope of Work Change:
a) Partners shall submit requests for amendments to approved projects in writing to the Program Director. The Coordinating Council member for that Partner must sign the request.
b) When Partners request an amendment to an approved project, the Program Director will contact the Chair and Vice Chair of the Operations Committee. The Program Director and Operations Committee Chairs will determine if the requested change is minor or substantial. The Chairs and Program Director may approve minor changes.
c) For substantial proposed changes, a decision document including the opinions of the Chairs and the Program Director will be sent to the Operations Committee and the ACCSP Leadership Team of the Coordinating Council for review.
d) The ACCSP Leadership Team will decide to approve or reject the request for change and notify the Program Director, who will send a written notification to the Partner's principal investigator with a copy to the Operations Committee.
e) When a requested major amendment is submitted shortly before a Coordinating Council meeting, the approval of the amendment will be placed on the Council Agenda.
f) The Program Director will notify NOAA Grants of any change in scope of work for final approval for non-federal proposals, and the Partner will need to request a Change in Scope through Grants Online. Necessary communications will be maintained between the concerned Partner, the Program and NOAA Grants. Any changes must be approved through the normal NOAA Grants process.

Determination of contingencies for funding adjustments (e.g. rescissions):
The Program Director will be notified by NOAA Fisheries of any federal grant reduction. Such reductions may include, but are not limited to:
- Lower than anticipated amounts from any source of funding
- Rescission of funding after initial allocations have been made
- Partial or complete withdrawal of funds from any source
If these or other situations arise, the Operations Committee will notify partners with approved proposals to reduce their requested budgets or to withdraw a proposal entirely. If this does not reduce the overall requested amount sufficiently, the Director,

the Operations Committee Chair and Vice-Chair, and the Advisory Committee Chair will develop a final recommendation and forward to the ACCSP Leadership Team of the Coordinating Council. These options to address funding contingencies may include:

- Eliminating the lowest-ranked proposal(s)
- A fixed percentage cut to all proposals' budgets
- A directed reduction in a specific proposal(s)

No-Cost Extensions and Unused/Returned Funds:

If additional time is needed to complete the project, Program Partners can request a no-cost extension to their award period. Partners should let the Program know of the need for an additional time and then request the extension as an Award Action Request through NOAA Grants Online at least 30 days before the end date of the award.

In an effort to limit the instances in which funds are not completely used during the award period, draw down reports from the NOAA Grants offices indicating remaining grant balances will be periodically reviewed during each fiscal year.

While effort should be made to complete the project as proposed, if Program Partners find that they will not be able to make use of their entire award, they should notify the Program and their NOAA Federal Program Officer as soon as possible. Depending on the timing of the action, the funds may be able to be reused within the Program, or they may have to be returned to the U.S. Treasury.

Program Partners must submit a written document to the Program Director outlining unused project funds potentially being returned. The Partner must also notify their Coordinating Council member (if applicable) for approval to return the unused funds. If the funding is available for re-use within the Program, the Director will confer with the Operations Committee Chair and Vice-Chair and the Advisory Committee Chair, and then submit a written recommendation to the ACCSP Leadership Team of the Coordinating Council for final approval on the plan to distribute the returned money.

Necessary communications will be maintained between the concerned Partner, the Program, and NOAA Grants office. Any changes must be approved through the normal NOAA Grants process.

Relevant Deadlines

- April
  - Develop annual priorities and funding allocation targets.
- May
  - Distribute request for proposals

- June
  - Proposal submission – Proposals received after specified RFP deadline will not be considered for funding.
- July – August
  - Initial proposal evaluation - recommendations developed by Program staff, and Advisory and Operations Committees.
- August/September
  - Submission of final proposals – final proposals must be submitted electronically to the Program Director, and/or designee by close of business on the day of the specified deadline. Final proposals received after RFP deadline will not be considered for funding.
- September – October
  - Final proposal evaluation - recommendations developed by the Program Director, Advisory and Operations Committees.
- Late October/November
  - Coordinating Council approval of project proposals.

Guidelines

The following guidelines are intended to assist Partners in preparing proposals:

- The Program is predicated upon the most efficient use of available funds. Many jurisdictions have data collection and data management programs which are administered by other fishery management agencies. Detail coordination efforts your agency/Committee has undertaken to demonstrate cost-efficiency and non-duplication of effort.

- All program Partners conducting projects for implementation of the Program standards in their jurisdictions are required to submit data to the Program in prescribed standards, where the module is developed and formats are available. Detail coordination efforts with Program data management staff with projects of a research and/or pilot study nature to submit project information and data for distribution to all Program Partners and archives.

- If appropriate to your project, please detail your agency's data management capability. Include the level of staff support (if any) required to accomplish the proposed work. If contractor services are required, detail the level and costs.

- Before funding will be considered beyond year two of a project, the Partner agency shall detail in writing how the Partner agency plans to assume partial or complete funding, or if not feasible, explain why.

- If appropriate to your project, detail any planned or ongoing outreach initiatives. Provide scope and level of outreach coordinated with either the Outreach Coordinator and/or Outreach Committee.

- Proposals including a collection of aging or other biological samples must clarify partner processing capabilities (i.e., how processed and by whom).

- Provide details on how the proposal will benefit the Program as a whole, outside of benefits to the Partner or Committee.

- Proposals that request funds for Law Enforcement should confirm that all funds will be allocated towards reporting compliance.

- Proposals must detail any in-kind effort/resources, and if no in-kind resources are included, state why.

- Proposals must meet the same quality as would be appropriate for a grant proposal for ACFCMA or other federal grant.

- Assistance is available from Program staff, or an Operations Committee member for proposal preparation and to insure that Program standards are addressed in the body of a given proposal.

- Even though a large portion of available resources may be allocated to one or more jurisdictions, new systems (including prototypes) will be selected to serve all Partners' needs.

- Partners submitting pilot, or other short-term programs, are encouraged to lease large capital budget items (vehicles, etc.) and where possible, hire consultants or contractors rather than hire new permanent personnel.

- The Program will not fund proposals that do not meet Program standards. However, in the absence of approved standards, pilot studies may be funded.

- Proposals will be considered for modules that may be fully developed but have not been through the formal approval process. Pilot proposals will be considered in those cases.

- The Operations Committee may contact Partners concerning discrepancies or inconsistencies in any proposal and may recommend modifications to proposals subject to acceptance by the submitting Partner and approval by the Coordinating Council. The Operations Committee may recommend changes or conditions to proposals. The Coordinating Council may conditionally approve

proposals. These contingencies will be documented and forwarded to the submitting Partner in writing by Program staff.

- Any proposal submitted after the initial RFP deadline will not be considered, in addition to any proposal submitted by a Partner which is not current with all reporting obligations.

Reporting requirements

a) Program staff will assess project performance.
b) The Partner project recipients must abide by the NOAA Regional Grant Programs reporting requirements and as listed below. All semi-annual and final reports are to include a table showing progress toward each of the progress goals as defined in Step 2b and additional metrics as appropriate. Also, all Partner project recipients will submit the following reports based on the project start date to the Program Director:
    a. Semi-annual reports (due 30 days after the semi-annual period) throughout the project period including time periods during no-cost extensions,
    b. One final report (due 90 days after project completion).
    c. Federal Partners must submit reports to the Program Director, and State Partners must submit reports to both the Program Director and the appropriate NOAA Grants office.
c) Program staff will conduct an initial assessment of the final report to ensure the report is complete in terms of reporting requirements. Program staff will serve as technical monitors to review submitted reports. NOAA staff also reviews the reports submitted via Grants Online.
d) Reports shall be submitted using the following format:
    a. Semi-Annual(s) – Progress Reports: (3-4 pages)
        i. Title page - Project name, project dates (semi-annual period covered and complete project period), submitting Partner, and date.
        ii. Objective
        iii. Activities Completed – bulleted list by objective.
        iv. Progress or lack of progress of incomplete activities during the period of semi-annual progress – bulleted list by objective.
        v. Activities planned during the next reporting period.
        vi. Metrics table
        vii. Milestone Chart – original and revised if changes occurred during the project period.
    b. Final Report:
        i. Title page – Project name, project dates, submitting Partner, and date.

  ii. Abstract/Executive Summary (including key results)
  iii. Introduction
  iv. Procedures
  v. Results:
    1. Description of data collected.
    2. The quality of the data pertaining to the objective of the project (e.g. representative to the scope of the project, quantity collected, etc.).
    3. Compiled data results.
    4. Summary of statistics.
  vi. Discussion:
    1. Discuss the interpretation of results of the project by addressing questions such as, but not limited to:
      a. What occurred?
      b. What did not occur that was expected to occur?
      c. Why did expected results not occur?
    2. Applicability of study results to Program goals.
    3. Recommendations/Summary/Metrics
  vii. Summarized budget expenditures and deviations (if any).

e) A project approved on behalf of a Program Committee will be required to follow the reporting requirements specified above. The principle investigator (if not the Chair of the Committee) will submit the report(s) to the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee for review and approval. The Committee Chair is responsible for submitting the required report(s) to the Program.

f) Joint projects will assign one principle investigator responsible for submitting the required reports. The principle investigator will be identified within the project proposal. The submitted reports should be a collaborative effort between all partners involved in the joint project.

g) Project recipients will provide all reports to the Program in electronic format.

h) Partners who receive no-cost extensions must notify the Program Director within 30 days of receiving approval of the extension. Semi-annual and final reports will continue to be required through the extended grant period as previously stated.

i) Partners that have not met reporting requirements for past/current projects may not submit a new proposal.

j) A verbal presentation of project results may be requested. Partners will be required to submit copies of project specifications and procedures, software development, etc. to assist other Program Partners with the implementation of similar programs.

Programmatic review

Project reports will inform Partners of project outcomes. This will allow the Program as a whole to take advantage of lessons learned and difficulties encountered. Staff will provide final reports to the appropriate Committee(s). The Committees then can discuss the report(s) and make recommendations to modify the Data Collection Standards as appropriate. The recommendations will be submitted through the Program committee(s) review process.

<u>BUDGET GUIDELINES & TEMPLATE FOR PROPOSALS</u>

All applications must have a detailed budget narrative explaining and justifying the expenditures by object class. Include in the discussion the requested dollar amounts and how they were derived. A spreadsheet or table detailing expenditures is useful to clarify the costs (see template below). The following are highlights from the NOAA Budget Guidelines document to help Partners formulate their budget narrative. The full Budget Guidelines document is available at:
http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/ob/grants/budget_narrative_guidance-04.09.2015.pdf

Object Classes:
a. Personnel: include salary, wage, and hours committed to project for each person by job title. Identify each individual by name and position, if possible.
b. Fringe Benefits: should be identified for each individual. Describe in detail if the rate is greater than 35 % of the associated salary.
c. Travel: all travel costs must be listed here. Provide a detailed breakdown of travel costs for trips over $5,000 or 5 % of the award. Include destination, duration, type of transportation, estimated cost, number of travelers, lodging, mileage rate and estimated number of miles, and per diem.
d. Equipment: equipment is any single piece of non-expendable, tangible personal property that costs $5,000 or more per unit and has a useful life of more than one year. List each piece of equipment, the unit cost, number of units, and its purpose. Include a lease vs. purchase cost analysis. If there are no lease options available, then state that.

e. Supplies: purchases less than $5,000 per item are considered by the federal government as supplies. Include a detailed, itemized explanation for total supplies costs over $5,000 or 5% of the award.

f.Contractual: list each contract or subgrant as a separate item. Provide a detailed cost breakdown and describe products/services to be provided by the contractor.   Include a sole source justification, if applicable.

h. Other: list items, cost, and justification for each expense.

i. Total direct charges

j. Indirect charges: If claiming indirect costs, please submit a copy of the current approved negotiated indirect cost agreement. If expired and/or under review, a copy of the transmittal letter that accompanied the indirect cost agreement application is requested.

k. Totals of direct and indirect charges

Example budget table template. Budget narrative should provide further detail on these costs.

Description	Calculation	Cost
Personnel (a)		
Supervisor	Ex: 500 hrs x $20/hr	$10,000
Biologist		
Technician		
Fringe (b)		
Supervisor	Ex: 15% of salary	$1500
Biologist		
Technician		
Travel (c)		
Mileage for sampling trips	Ex: Estimate 2000 miles x $0.33/mile	$660
Travel for meeting		
Equipment (d)		
Boat	Ex: $7000, based on current market research	$7000
Supplies (e)		
Safety supplies		$1200
Sampling supplies		$1000
Laptop computers	2 laptops @$1500 each	$3000
Software		$500

Contractual (f)		
Data Entry Contract	Ex: 1000 hrs x $20/hr	$20,000
Other (h)		
Printing and binding		
Postage		
Telecommunications charges		
Internet Access charges		
Totals		
Total Direct Charges (i)		
Indirect Charges (j)		
Total (sum of Direct and Indirect) (k)		

Appendix A: Ranking Criteria Spreadsheet for Maintenance and New Project

Ranking Guide – Maintenance Projects:

Primary Program Priority	**Point Range**	**Description of Ranking Consideration**
Catch and Effort Biological Sampling Bycatch/Species Interactions Social and Economic	0 – 10 0 – 10 0 – 6 0 – 4	Rank based on range within module and level of sampling defined under Program design. When considering biological, bycatch or recreational funding, rank according priority matrices.
Data Delivery Plan	+ 2	Additional points if a data delivery plan to Program is supplied and defined within the proposal.

Project Quality Factors	**Point Range**	**Description of Ranking Consideration**
Multi-Partner/Regional impact including broad applications	0 – 5	Rank based on the number of Partners involved in project OR regional scope of proposal (e.g. geographic range of the stock).

> yr 2 contains funding transition plan and/or justification for continuance	0 – 4	Rank based on defined funding transition plan away from Program funding or viable justification for continued Program funding.
In-kind contribution	0 – 4	1 = 1% - 25% 2 = 26% - 50% 3 = 51% - 75% 4 = 76% - 99%
Improvement in data quality/quantity/timeliness	0 – 4	1 = Maintain minimum level of needed data collections 4 = Improvements in data collection reflecting 100% of related module as defined within the Program design. Metadata is provided and defined within proposal if applicable.
Potential secondary module as a by-product (In program priority order)	0 – 3 0 – 3 0 – 3 0 – 1	Ranked based on additional module data collection and level of collection as defined within the Program design of individual module.
Impact on stock assessment	0 – 3	Rank based on the level of data collection that leads to new or greatly improved stock assessments.

Other Factors	Point Range	Description of Ranking Consideration
Properly Prepared	-1 – 1	Meets requirements as specified in funding decision document Step 2b and Guidelines
Merit	0 – 3	Ranked based on subjective worthiness

Ranking Guide – Maintenance Projects: (*to be used only if funding available exceeds total Maintenance funding requested*)

Ranking Factors	Point Range	Description of Ranking Consideration
Achieved Goals	0 – 3	Proposal indicates project has consistently met previous set goals. Current proposal provides project goals and if applicable, intermediate metrics to achieve overall achieved goals.

Data Delivery Plan	0 – 2	Ranked based if a data delivery plan to Program is supplied and defined within the proposal.
Level of Funding	-1 – 1	-1 = Increased funding from previous year 0 = Maintained funding from previous year 1 = Decreased funding from previous year
Properly Prepared	-1 – 1	-1 = Not properly prepared 1 = Properly prepared
Merit	0 – 3	Ranked based on subjective worthiness

Ranking Guide – New Projects:

Primary Program Priority	Point Range	Description of Ranking Consideration
Catch and Effort Biological Sampling Bycatch/Species Interactions Social and Economic	0 – 10 0 – 10 0 – 6 0 – 4	Rank based on range within module and level of sampling defined under Program design. When considering biological, bycatch or recreational funding, rank according priority matrices.
Data Delivery Plan	+ 2	Additional points if a data delivery plan to Program is supplied and defined within the proposal.

Project Quality Factors	Point Range	Description of Ranking Consideration
Multi-Partner/Regional impact including broad applications	0 – 5	Rank based on the number of Partners involved in project OR regional scope of proposal (e.g. fisheries sampled).
Contains funding transition plan / Defined end-point	0 – 4	Rank based on quality of funding transition plan or defined end point.
In-kind contribution	0 – 4	1 = 1% - 25% 2 = 26% - 50% 3 = 51% - 75% 4 = 76% - 99%
Improvement in data quality/quantity/timeliness	0 – 4	1 = Maintain minimum level of needed data collections 4 = Improvements in data collection reflecting 100% of related module as defined within the Program design.

		Metadata is provided and defined within proposal if applicable.
Potential secondary module as a by-product (In program priority order)	0 – 3 0 – 3 0 – 3 0 – 1	Ranked based on additional module data collection and level of collection as defined within the Program design of individual module.
Impact on stock assessment	0 – 3	Rank based on the level of data collection that leads to new or greatly improved stock assessments.

Other Factors	Point Range	Description of Ranking Consideration
Innovative	0 – 3	Rank based on new technology, methodology, financial savings, etc.
Properly Prepared	-1 – 1	Meets requirements as specified in funding decision document Step 2b and Guidelines
Merit	0 – 3	Ranked based on subjective worthiness