Are there any changes in the RFP scope and/or deadline in response to the current COVID-19 situation?

Please find the updated RFP here.

Note that NAAEE anticipates some flexibility may be needed to adjust to the evolving situation around the COVID-19 health emergency. NAAEE will work with the selected consultant to modify the project timeline as needed. Flexibility on the part of the evaluation consultant is appreciated.

Please note that due to the ongoing health crisis we have built some additional time into our award process and are delaying grantee project start dates to allow applicants to adjust project timelines. NAAEE also anticipates grantees will focus on planning and partnership building at the beginning of these projects. Additional changes to project timelines and implementation may occur as the health crisis evolves.

Revised dates for grantee project implementation:

Award start date - 6/1/20
Award end date (unchanged) - 12/31/21

Is there a draft logic model that is currently available to review?

The draft logic model will be available upon request. Please contact T’Noya Thompson, tnoya@naaee.org.
Does NAAEE have specific institutional review board (IRB) requirements?

We don't have any specific IRB requirements. Normal IRB requirements apply.

Is the evaluation consultant required to use Dimensions of Success (DoS)? Are grantees required to use/be trained in DoS?

DoS is not a required tool for the evaluation consultant. However, it is strongly suggested, as the pilot program evaluation used this tool with success. The DoS approach has many advantages, such as the availability of a national data set for comparison, and that it is an observational tool so it does not trigger federal Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) requirements. However, applicants are welcome to suggest alternative approaches.

DoS is also not a requirement or expectation for the grantees. However, some grantees may be interested in completing DoS training. NAAEE may be able to provide opportunities for grantees to be trained at some point during their award period. Where trained DoS observers do exist at the grantee organizations, there is an opportunity to support evaluation capacity building as part of this project by engaging grantee organization staff in the evaluation process and encouraging the use of DoS as a reflection and self-assessment tool. However, this is not a core expectation of the evaluation consultant.

What are the expectations for the number of sites that should be included in the evaluation?

The evaluation consultant should propose a sampling plan that reflects the diversity of the funded projects. Factors to consider include (but are not limited to) geographic distribution, audience (age range, locale, etc.), implementation model (after school or summer), and organization type. To the extent possible, each of the funded geographic regions (maximum of 7: California, Chesapeake Bay, Great Lakes, Gulf of Mexico, Hawaii, New England, Pacific Northwest) should be included in the sample. Not all sites will be evaluated. Once the awards are finalized in mid-May, NAAEE can provide more information about the locations and characteristics of grantee projects to inform a proposed sampling plan. Once a consultant is selected, there will be an opportunity to revise this plan in consultation with project partners.

In addition, if the DoS tool is used, applicants should plan for a minimum of two separate observations (3-5 recommended) at each site included in the evaluation plan. Funded projects are implemented over an extended period of time and include multiple elements addressing different aspects of a NOAA Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience. Multiple observations ensure data can be collected on different aspects of project implementation. Please see section F.3 of the RFP for more details.
Each grantee is required to complete their own project evaluation. What will they be doing? Would we be able to access their evaluation reports, if relevant to our evaluation? What role will the evaluation consultant serve with regard to project-level data collection?

Projects will conduct their own project-level evaluation activities and report on these to NAAEE. Approaches to project evaluation vary widely. Final project evaluation reports will be made available to the evaluation consultant in early 2022 to inform your final evaluation report.

NAAEE will monitor project implementation through semi-annual project progress reports. In these reports, grantees will be asked to provide descriptive information about their project implementation, as well as project outputs. We would like assistance from the consultant in determining what information would be valuable to collect in these reports related to the evaluation, but NAAEE will be responsible for collecting this from grantees directly. See #2 descriptive summary of program outputs and implementation, under F- Scope of Services, in the RFP. The evaluation consultant is asked to use this information to include a summary in the final report of the different approaches to program implementation and the types of activities done.