

Recompetition of the Climate Science Center Hosting Agreements

BACKGROUND: Each Climate Science Center (CSC) is hosted by a university located in their respective region. Over a three year period (2010-2012), university hosts were selected through a competitive request for proposal process¹ and funded through multi-year cooperative agreements (“hosting agreement”) awarded by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). These agreements have or will be extended to ensure continuity of CSC functions until a re-competition could be conducted to generate new agreements. Thus, the agreements will end in the following years for the eight CSCs:

- Alaska (AK), Northwest (NW), and Southeast (SE): 2017
- North Central (NC) and Southwest (SW): 2018
- Pacific Islands (PI), South Central (SC) and Northeast (NE): 2019

PROCESS & GOALS: The recompetition and selection of CSC hosts will be a *fully competitive* process, open to all universities in the CSC regions (including the current incumbent hosts and consortia members). Proposals for the hosting opportunity will be collected through an open Program Announcement (i.e. Request for Proposals, RFP, see schedule below).

Because the CSC network is relatively new and this is the first round of recompetition for hosting awards, lessons learned are particularly important for informing this RFP process. Criteria used for guiding the recompetition and selection process will also be informed by the external program reviews of the CSCs (see Issue Brief #1).

Important goals for the re-competition include: (1) engendering greater institutional ownership, (2) increasing linkages with departments and faculty relevant to fish, wildlife, and ecosystems impacts and adaptation, (3) continuing training/capacity building but ensuring that graduate students and post-docs work on CSC-priority topics (4) providing minimum administrative and communications support, and (5) including defined outcomes to assure improve accountability tracking..

Proposals will be evaluated by an interagency team in several general topic areas, including: host institutional management and operations (staffing, administrative duties, etc.); institutional coordination between host and consortium university members; science skills and capacity (experience and knowledge of “co-production” principles, availability of scientific technology and assets, etc.); education, training, and capacity building; capacity to provide communication and outreach support; etc.

SCHEDULE: Tentatively:

- April 15, 2016: RFP Release and Begin Accepting Applications for AK, NW, SE Host Awards
- June 10, 2016: RFP Closing Date and Applications Due
- NLT April 15, 2017: New Hosting Agreements in Place for AK, NW, SE CSCs
- April 2017: Release of RFP for North Central and Southwest CSCs
- April 2018: New Hosting Agreements in Place for NC and SW CSCs; Release of RFP for Northeast, South Central and Pacific Islands
- April 2019: New Hosting Agreements in Place for NE, SC, PI CSCs

¹ The University of Alaska was selected on a sole source basis.