



**UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**



**BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Fire and Aviation Directorate
National Interagency Fire Center
Lead Agency for the Joint Fire Science Program**

Joint Fire Science Program

The Joint Fire Science Program provides funding for scientific studies to address problems associated with managing wildland fuels, fires, and fire-impacted ecosystems.

Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriation Act for FY 1998 and subsequent years
(P.L. 105-83; H.R. Report 105-163)

**PROJECT ANNOUNCEMENT No. FA-FON0013-0003
Graduate Research Innovation (GRIN) Award (1 Task Statement)**

**CFDA No. 15.232
ISSUE DATE: September 27, 2012**

JFSP Funding Opportunity Notice (FON) 2013-3

CLOSING DATE & TIME

November 16, 2012 5:00 p.m. MST

Contact Information:

John Cissel
Program Manager
Phone: (208) 387- 5349
E-mail: jcissel@blm.gov

Becky Jenison
Administrative Analyst
Phone: (208) 387- 5958
E-mail: bjenison@blm.gov

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Table of Contents	2
SECTION I. Funding Opportunity Description	4
A. Legislative Authority	4
B. Project Background Information	4
C. Program/Project Objective	4
D. Statement of Joint Objectives/Project Management Plan	4
E. Period of Project	4
SECTION II. Award Information	4
A. Expected Number of Awards	4
B. Estimated Total Program Funding	4
C. Award Ceiling	4
D. Assistance Instrument	4
SECTION III. Eligibility Information	4
A. Eligible Applicants	4
B. Funding Cooperator	4
C. Cost Sharing or Matching	6
SECTION IV. Application and Submission Information	6
A. Proposal Submission and Agency Contact	6
B. Task Statement	6
1. Graduate Research Innovation (GRIN) Award	6
C. Budget and Funding Policy	7
1. Funding Cooperator	7
2. Indirect Cost	7
3. SBIR Costs	9
4. Salary Policy	9
5. Budget	9
D. Data Management Plan	9
E. Additional Application Requirements	10
1. Proposal Submission	10
2. Contacts	11
3. Confirmation Page	11
4. Attachments	11
5. Data Management Plan	12
6. Budget	12
7. Task Statement Intent	12
8. Format	12

9. Page Limits	12
10. Project Location	12
11. Signatures	12
12. Indirect Costs	12
13. In-Kind Contributions	12
14. Support Letters	12
15. Salary Justifications	12
16. Past-Due Projects	13
SECTION V. Application Review and Evaluation Information	13
SECTION VI. Definitions	14

SECTION I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

- A. Legislative Authority:** Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriation Act for FY 1998 and subsequent years (P.L. 105-83; H.R. Report 105-163).
- B. Project Background Information:** The Joint Fire Science Program (JFSP) is a partnership of six federal wildland management and research agencies with a need to address problems associated with managing wildland fuels, fires, and fire-impacted ecosystems. The partnering agencies include the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service and five bureaus in the U.S. Department of the Interior - Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Geological Survey.
- For further background on the JFSP, those considering submitting proposals are encouraged to visit our website at www.firescience.gov.
- C. Program/Project Objective:** The U.S. Congress directed the Department of the Interior and the USDA Forest Service to develop a Joint Fire Science Program and Plan to prioritize and provide sound scientific studies to support land management agencies. Current priorities are identified as task statements in this Request for Applications (RFA).
- D. Statement of Joint Objectives/Project Management Plan:** The JFSP Governing Board and Program Manager will establish an oversight relationship with the Principal Investigator on each funded project. Projects will be required, at a minimum, to provide a written progress report annually.
- E. Period of Project:** The JFSP Governing Board generally anticipates that individual projects can be accomplished within two years or less.

SECTION II. AWARD INFORMATION

- A. Expected Number of Awards:** Approximately 3-5
- B. Estimated Total Program Funding:** Approximately \$100,000
- C. Award Ceiling:** \$25,000
- D. Assistance Instrument:** To be determined at a later date by the JFSP

SECTION III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants: The JFSP encourages proposals from all interested parties. All selected awardees must provide a valid Dun & Bradstreet number (D&B). You can reactivate or obtain this at <http://www.dnb.com> or by calling 800-333-0505. There is a federal agency link on the Central Contractor Registration system (CCR) at <http://www.ccr.gov>.

B. Funding Cooperator: JFSP will enter into only one agreement with the PI institution or the funding cooperator agency. Budgets must be reviewed by your budget contact and your grants and agreements contact prior to proposal submission.

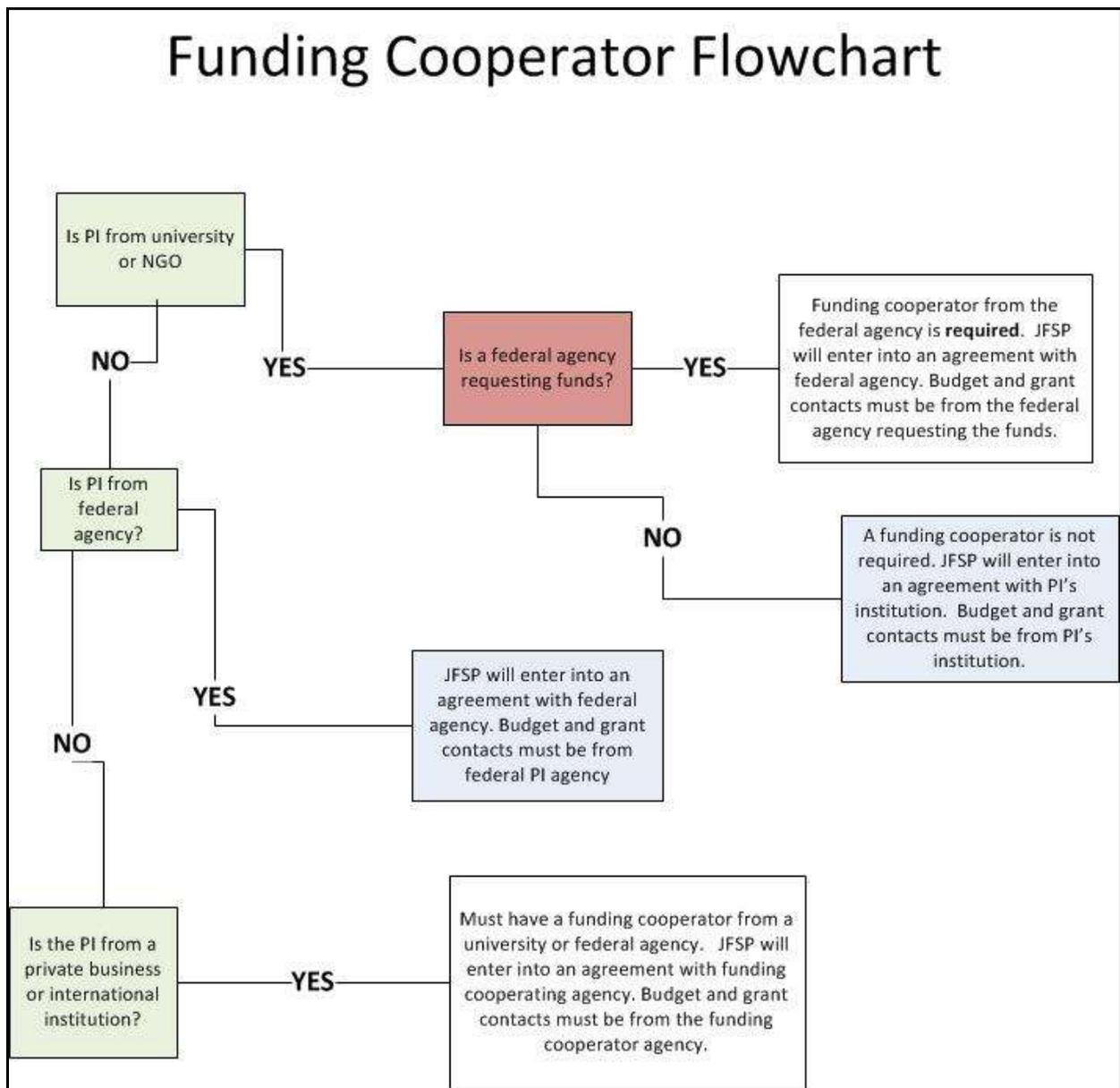
Funds will be awarded through a federal agency, a university, or a non-governmental organization (NGO). Proposals that included budgeted funds to be spent by a federal agency and that do not have a federal PI must list a funding cooperator from the federal agency requesting funds. Similarly, proposals with a university or NGO PI that do not include funding for federal agencies do not need a funding cooperator and funds will route through the PI's institution.

All proposals with a PI from other organizations, e.g., states or private business, or have any international funding, must also identify a funding cooperater to receive and process the funds. If the funding cooperater is from the Forest Service, the cooperater must be from a Forest Service research station. The grant contact and budget contact must be from the funding cooperater’s institution.

Proposals where the PI or funding cooperater is an employee of a university or NGO will be funded directly by an award document (e.g., a cooperative agreement) between JFSP and the PI’s institution. The institution will be required to respond to a second non-competitive posting on grants.gov to initiate funding.

Upon receipt of a fully executed award document, the institution receiving funds from JFSP will be responsible for all sub-award transactions to cooperaters or contractors related to the project. The end date and indirect costs for all sub-awards must match the end date and indirect costs in the original funding award document.

(See funding cooperater flowchart below)



C. Cost Sharing or Matching: This program has no matching requirements. However, in-kind contributions are desired and are an evaluation factor.

SECTION IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. Proposal Submission and Agency Contact

All proposals must be submitted by 5:00 p.m. November 16, 2012, using the electronic submission process provided on the JFSP website (www.firescience.gov). Proposals should not be submitted in Grants.gov. There will be no exceptions to this closing date and time.

All proposals must meet all requirements in this FON (see especially Section IV. E below). Proposals that do not meet all requirements in this section will not be considered for funding.

Proposals must be submitted for the appropriate task statement being addressed. The proposal will be reviewed and its merits judged in the context of this one task statement only.

Questions should be directed to:

Administrative questions:

Becky Jenison, Administrative Analyst
Joint Fire Science Program
National Interagency Fire Center
3833 S Development Ave
Boise ID 83705
Phone: 208-387-5958
Email: bjenison@blm.gov

Task statement questions:

John Cissel, Program Manager
Joint Fire Science Program
National Interagency Fire Center
3833 S Development Ave
Boise ID 83705
Phone: 208-387-5349
Email: jcissel@blm.gov

B. Task Statement

1. Graduate Research Innovation (GRIN) Award

In partnership with the Association for Fire Ecology, the Joint Fire Science Program (JFSP) invites current MS and PhD graduate students enrolled in US colleges or universities in the fields of wildland fire and related human dimensions and ecological sciences to apply for a Graduate Research Innovation (GRIN) award. The purpose of these awards is to enhance graduate student's exposure to and interaction with fire and fuels managers, to develop appreciation and understanding of fire and fuels managers information and research needs, and to augment already planned research to develop information and/or products useful to managers. JFSP recognizes that graduate students of today are the managers, scientists, and leaders of tomorrow. These awards allow graduate students to conduct research that will supplement and enhance the quality, scope, or applicability of their thesis or dissertation, and to build skills needed for independent inquiry.

Proposals must describe new, unfunded work that extends ongoing or planned research that is the subject of a thesis or dissertation that has been approved by the graduate student's advisory committee.

Proposals must be directly related to the mission and goals of JFSP to be considered. Applicants are encouraged to search the JFSP website (www.firescience.gov) to learn more

about the scope of JFSP activities. In addition, proposals must directly address one of the following topics:

- Climate change and fire (e.g., fire behavior, fire effects, fire regime)
- Fuel management effectiveness and effects (e.g., treatment longevity, T&E or invasive species, carbon balance, pile burning, mastication treatments, WUI issues)
- Smoke or emissions assessments
- Social issues and fire (e.g., community preparation, transfer and use of science, public perceptions)

Proposals on other topics will not be reviewed.

Proposals must be authored by the student and must be reviewed and submitted by the student's advisor, who acts as the formal Principal Investigator (PI) for the project. **A letter of recommendation from the student's advisor is required, and must indicate that student's thesis/dissertation topic has been approved by the student's advisory committee.** If the student can not complete the project, the student's advisor (project PI) must return unspent funds to JFSP. The student must be listed as a Student Investigator on the proposal.

Funds are intended for student use and support. Funds can not be used for faculty salary. Funding can be used to conduct a significant field or laboratory data collection campaign; a comprehensive synthesis, modeling, or data analysis; or to develop an appropriate application or tool for fire and fuels managers. Appropriate budget items include: graduate student stipend, field or laboratory assistance, research equipment or materials, and travel. Funds cannot be used for student tuition. Each award is capped at \$25,000, including university indirect costs as limited in the proposal instructions.

Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of their scientific merit, the credentials of the applicant, the extent to which the proposed work extends or enhances an approved thesis or dissertation, and the relevance of the research to JFSP goals. Review may be conducted in two stages. If so, applicants may not receive detailed review comments if their proposal is not forwarded for a second-stage review.

Recipients of the GRIN award are expected to produce at least one peer-reviewed publication or a management tool based on the funded project. Awardees are expected to present their work at one regional, national, or international fire conference or workshop. The awardee is also expected to write a final report for the JFSP prior to the project end date. These are one-time awards, and no supplemental funds will be granted.

C. Budget and Funding Policy

1. Funding Cooperator

Proposals may require a funding cooperator. See Section III.B above.

2. Indirect Costs

The JFSP Governing Board recognizes the need of agencies and organizations participating in the program to recover reasonable indirect costs. However, cost effectiveness of the individual projects is a determining factor in the final selection process. Indirect rates for JFSP proposals are limited to a maximum of twenty (20) percent of the direct costs. The maximum indirect rate that a

funding cooperating institution may charge for pass-through costs is ten (10) percent. Proposals with indirect rates higher than twenty (20) percent will not be considered. Proposal funding through a federal funding cooperator must reflect either the prevailing indirect rate for the cooperating federal agency or the JFSP maximum limit of twenty (20) percent, whichever is less. Pass-through costs are charged only by the PI institution or funding cooperator institution for administrative costs associated with managing sub-agreements. Pass-through costs are limited to ten (10) percent of the sub-agreement direct charges.

Each institution is allowed to charge no more than twenty (20) percent indirect charges on their direct charges.

(See indirect cost example below)

Indirect costs example

Scenario

- The PI is from a university or federal agency (lead institution)
- Co-PI is from a cooperating university or NGO (cooperating institution)
- The calculated expenses in the budget for the lead institution are \$200,000 (salary, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, etc.)
- The calculated expenses in the budget for the cooperating institution are \$40,000

Calculation of indirect costs

1. Cooperating institution

Maximum allowed indirect costs (20%)

$$\$40,000 * 0.20 = \$8,000$$

Total budget for cooperating institution

$$\$40,000 + \$8,000 = \$48,000$$

Note: If there are multiple cooperating institutions this calculation would apply to each institution.

2. Lead institution

Maximum allowed indirect costs (20%) on own budget

$$\$200,000 * 0.20 = \$40,000$$

Maximum allowed pass-through indirect costs (10%) on cooperating institution budget

$$\$48,000 * 0.10 = \$4,800$$

Total budget for lead institution

$$\$200,000 + \$40,000 + \$4,800 = \$244,800$$

3. Total budget = $\$244,800 + \$48,000 = \$292,800$

Points of emphasis

- Lead institutions can include pass-through costs for each cooperating institution in their budget
 - Pass-through costs are calculated based on the total budget for each cooperating institution, including the indirect costs calculated by the cooperating institution
 - Cooperating institutions do not include pass-through costs in their budgets
 - Institutions should use their negotiated indirect cost rates with their cooperating institutions, but cannot exceed JFSP maximums
-

3. SBIR Costs

Certain proposals may be required to pay a percentage of the project's costs into the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program. Proposals where the funds are transferred to a Forest Service institution and subsequently award a portion of the total budget to a non-federal entity through a sub-agreement or sub-contract may be required to pay 2.5% of the total funds awarded externally to the SBIR program. Check with your budget contact to determine if this applies to your proposal.

4. Salary Policy

Only students can request salary support in GRIN proposals. Salary support for student advisor is not allowed.

Stipends are normally funded, but **tuition fees will not be funded.**

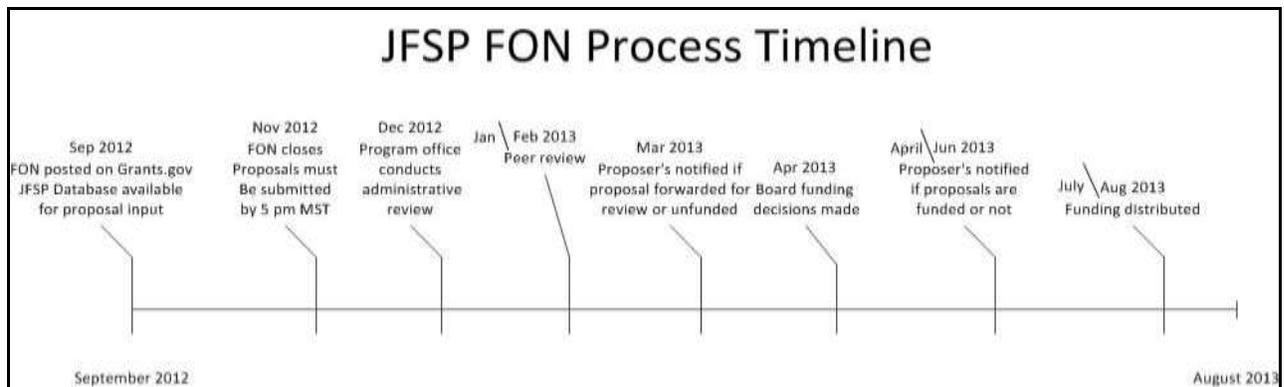
5. Budget

Budgets must be reviewed by your budget contact and your grants and agreements contact to ensure all costs have been included and the budget is correct. JFSP will not provide additional funds to cover errors discovered after the proposal submission deadline.

Proposals will be funded via Inter-agency agreement or cooperative agreement (with the exception of proposals with BLM PI's or funding cooperators).

Funding is usually distributed in late summer; please plan budgets accordingly

(See proposal timeline below).



D. Data Management Plan

It is the intent of JFSP that all data collected or generated through JFSP funds are of high quality and made freely available to others within a reasonable time period. JFSP recognizes that preparation of data and metadata for publication is a time consuming process. Adequate funds to support this work should be included in proposal budgets.

DMPs must be attached as a separate document and are limited to two pages maximum. DMPs will be considered in the proposal review process.

DMPs must contain the following (see DMP template and instructions for further detail):

- Description of data type, scale, resolution, and format for all data to be submitted to a data repository
- Steps used to process and quality assure the data
- Specific data repository intended for long-term data storage
- Metadata language used to describe the data
- Provisions for data access and necessary limitations to protect sensitive data
- For modeling studies, only data generated for model input should be included in the DMP.

All collected or generated data should be evaluated for errors, and subjected to data proofing and validation procedures.

Investigators must select a data repository well suited for long-term archival, publication, and data sharing of data collected or generated through JFSP funding. JFSP recommends use of the Forest Service R&D data archive (<http://www.fs.usda.gov/rds/archive/Default.aspx>). If you would like to discuss the archive's services, please contact archivist Dave Rugg (drugg@fs.fe.us) or associate archivist Laurie Porth (lporth@fs.fed.us).

Submission of data sets and metadata will be required at the time of final report submission. JFSP will review the data and metadata to ensure that all required information is provided (including a pointer in the metadata to the location of the data). After successful review, the metadata will be provided to the Forest Service R&D data archive (<http://www.fs.usda.gov/rds/archive/Default.aspx>), which will provide the central metadata catalog for all JFSP projects. The PI is responsible for keeping the metadata in the official catalog current over time.

PIs can limit release of data sets for up to two years following submission of the final report. At the end of this period, all data sets will be made publicly available. All extensions of this deadline require extenuating circumstances and approval by the JFSP Program Manager.

E. Additional Application Requirements

Proposals must meet all of the following requirements to be considered. Incomplete proposals will not be considered. There will be no exceptions to either the submission deadline or other submission requirements. If you have questions about these requirements, please contact the JFSP Program Office for clarification (Becky Jenison 208-387-5958, or John Cissel 208-387-5349).

1. Proposal Submission

Proposals must be submitted electronically via the JFSP website (www.firescience.gov). Proposals should not be submitted in Grants.gov. Hard copy, email, or facsimile proposals will not be accepted.

- Proposers must have a JFSP database login and password to submit a proposal. Requests for access will be processed in approximately 24 hours.
- Only the PI can submit the proposal.
- Proposals can be saved in the JFSP system and submitted prior to the closing date and time. Submitted proposals can be reverted back to final draft by the PI prior to the

closing date. If you revert a proposal back to draft you must resubmit the proposal before the closing date and time.

- The JFSP proposal submittal system will not allow proposals to be submitted after the closing date and time.

2. **Contacts**

Proposals may be required to have the following contacts (see Section VI. Definitions to understand the role of each contact) assigned to a proposal:

- Principal Investigator (required, only one Principal Investigator can be assigned)
- Student Investigator (required)
- Funding Cooperator (may be required, see Section III.B. funding cooperator)
- Budget Contact (required)
- Grants and Agreements Contact (required)
- Co-PIs and Collaborators (options)

3. **Confirmation Page**

When you submit your proposal you will receive a confirmation page. We highly recommend that you save or print this page for your records.

You should receive an email from the JFSP Program Office letting you know that your proposal has either been forwarded for review, or rejected for not meeting administrative requirements. If you do not receive this confirmation page you have not submitted your proposal correctly. If you do not receive this email by the end of December, you should fax or email your confirmation to Becky Jenison at bjenison@blm.gov or fax: 208-387-5960.

4. **Attachments**

All required documents and required templates must be attached before the proposal is submitted. All attachments except the budget must be attached as a pdf document; the budget template is in an Excel format. Attachments over the page limit cannot be submitted.

All information in a template must be included as part of that attachment and must be within the page limit. Extraneous materials (e.g., extra graphs and text) are not permitted and will not be reviewed.

Required attachments for all proposals

- Proposal body
- C.V.s (Student: two- page maximum, Advisor and Co-PI(s): one- page maximum)
- Budget spreadsheet (Excel spreadsheet, includes a separate worksheet for each institution requesting funding)
- Budget narrative (bullet statements explaining specific budget assumptions and costs)
- Data management plan (see below)

Additional attachments

- Letter(s) of support (optional, but recommended)

- Salary justification (may be required, see below)
- Specific to a task statement (check the applicable task statement for additional requirements)

5. Data Management Plan

All proposals are required to submit a Data Management Plan (DMP) using the instructions, template, and example provided (See Section IV. D above).

6. Budget

Budget summary numbers must be input in the JFSP database on the budget tab. The budget detail must be attached on the attachments tab using the spreadsheet template provided. Proposals cannot be submitted without completing these required fields and attachments.

7. Task Statement Intent

Proposals that do not clearly and directly meet the intent of the task statement selected will not be considered for funding. Please make sure you are submitting your proposal for the correct task statement.

8. Format

Proposals not following the required template will not be considered. Proposals must use an 11 point font or larger. Additional guidance is included in the beginning of each template.

9. Page Limits

Attachments exceeding the page limit cannot be submitted. Page limits may vary by task statement and attachment; check the page limit in the template and JFSP database for each specific task statement. Everything in the template is included in the page limit.

10. Project Location

Project location fields must be completed on the location tab for a proposal to be successfully submitted. Instructions are listed on the project location tab.

11. Signatures

Handwritten signatures are not required. When Principal Investigators (PIs) submit proposals they will be prompted to input their password. By typing in the password and submitting a proposal, PIs are certifying that all contacts on the proposal have reviewed the proposal and understand what their role requires.

12. Indirect Costs

Proposals must follow JFSP indirect cost guidelines. (See Section III.B above)

13. In-Kind Contributions

See Section III.C above.

14. Support Letters

Support letters are encouraged, but not required. Support letters are useful if they show understanding of the proposed work and the author articulates how the work will benefit them. Support letters that appear to be ghost-written by the PI or are form letters are much less useful. If submitted, letters must be combined into one pdf document and attached on the attachments tab. Support letters sent by hard copy or email directly to JFSP will not be considered.

15. Salary Justifications

Salary justifications may be required (see Section IV. C above).

16. Past-Due Projects

No proposals will be considered if the work includes a PI or Co-PI who is a PI or Co-PI on a JFSP project that is past due as of the closing date of this announcement. See the JFSP website for the complete JFSP past-due and extension request policy.

SECTION V. APPLICATION REVIEW AND EVALUATION INFORMATION

Overview

Proposals will be reviewed in stages:

1. JFSP Program Office – Administrative requirements and task statement intent
2. Peer Review – Relevancy, technical merit, products, and feasibility. Note: peer review may be conducted in two stages. If so, applicants may not receive detailed review comments if their proposal is not forwarded for a second-stage review.
3. Governing Board Review – Funding decisions
4. Statistical Review (optional) – Adequacy of study design and analysis methods

Review Criteria

Student Qualifications

- Academic (Note: undergraduate and graduate GPA must be on the student's C.V.)
- Work experience
- Research experience

Scientific Merit

- Potential contribution to scientific understanding
- Merit of hypothesis, question, or objective
- Well described and appropriate methods
- Creativity

Management Relevance

- Utility of results to managers
- Communication with managers

Linkage to Ongoing or Planned Thesis or Dissertation

- Ongoing or planned thesis or dissertation clearly described
- Proposed work extends and enhances thesis/dissertation

Feasibility

- Administrative adequacy
 - Budget
 - Skills and qualifications
 - Probability of success
 - Barriers
 - NEPA
- Collaboration
 - Manager/scientist and scientist/scientist partnerships
 - Local management commitment

SECTION VI. DEFINITIONS

Funding Opportunity Notice (FON): The official label for the Joint Fire Science Program method of requesting project proposals. The FON includes task statements for which proposals are sought, instructions for proposal submission, and related information.

Principal Investigator (PI): The individual identified in a proposal who is the research lead for the project. This individual is responsible for coordinating all research related activities and will be the primary science contact for the project. In addition the PI is responsible for communicating and coordinating with Co-PIs and others on the research team. The PI is responsible to JFSP for completion of the project.

Funding Cooperator: The funding cooperator receives funds from JFSP and is responsible for distributing funds to other cooperators. A funding cooperator is only required if the PI is non-federal and a federal institution is requesting funding, or if the work is being completed through a private business, or requests international funding. The funding cooperator is responsible for coordinating with the PI, the grants and agreements contact, and the budget contact on administrative activities for this project. The funding cooperator will be one of the primary contacts for the project and should stay informed and involved in project activities.

Budget Contact: Budget contact must be from the institution receiving funds from JFSP. This person is responsible for ensuring the budget details are correct prior to proposal being submitted and agrees to receive funds and facilitate the transfer of funds, if necessary. Budget contact must be from the institution receiving funds from JFSP. If a federal agency is requesting funds the budget contact must be from the federal cooperating agency.

Grants and Agreements Contact: Person from institution receiving funds from JFSP that is responsible for facilitating the receipt of funds and the execution of any agreements or contracts necessary for a proposal if it is selected for funding. If a federal agency is requesting funds the grants and agreements contact must be from the federal cooperating agency.

Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI): The individual(s) identified in a proposal who will work with the research lead on the project and makes a substantial contribution to the project. Co-PIs are responsible for communicating and coordinating with the PI.

Indirect Costs: Those costs that are a percentage of the total cost used to pay for overhead/administrative costs attributable to a specific research project. Examples include the costs of operations and maintenance such as janitorial, phone, and clerical services. The Joint Fire Science Program recognizes two types of indirect costs: 1) “in-house” costs incurred by the agency, institution, or unit completing the research; and 2) “pass-through” costs associated with sub-awarding project funds to another agency, institution, or entity for the purpose of completing research or science delivery.

Joint Fire Science Program Governing Board: An appointed 10-person Board representing the JFSP partnering agencies. The Board provides strategic direction and oversight to JFSP, identifies important research questions, selects proposals for funding, supervises the JFSP Program Manager, and conducts related business.

Science Exchange and Application: The exchange of information, materials, models and other research deliverables to end users, along with adequate information and training to apply the

deliverables. Examples of active methods include workshops, training sessions, guided field tours, conferences, meetings, and symposia. Examples of passive methods include published papers and websites. A combination of active and passive methods is preferred. Collaboration with the regional JFSP Knowledge Exchange Consortia is recommended.

Task Statement: A specific area of interest identified in the FON, for which project applications are sought.