

**Texas General Land Office**

Coastal Resources - Oil Spill Prevention and Response

Request for Applications:

Research, Testing, and Development of Oil Discharge Prevention and Response Technology, Training, and Community Outreach

March 2019

# Opportunity Snapshot

Below is a high-level overview of many of the elements of this opportunity. Full information is provided in the funding announcement that follows.

### Purpose

The purpose of this Request for Applications (RFA) is to solicit project applications for research, testing, and development of oil discharge prevention and response technology, oil discharge response training, wildlife and natural resources rescue and rehabilitation, development of computer models to predict the movements and impacts of unauthorized discharges of oil, and other projects that further the purposes of the Oil Spill Prevention and Response Act of 1991 (Texas Natural Resources Code Chapter 40).

### Funds Available

Multiple grants may be funded under this RFA. The GLO anticipates funding a collective $2.5 million for a biennium cycle with a maximum of $1.25 million per year. Most successful applications will be for two-year projects.

### Process

Applicants may respond to this funding announcement by completing an application and budget document. The required documents are available at: http://www.glo.texas.gov/coast/grant-projects/funding/index.html.

### Match

There is no match requirement under this program. However, the GLO will give preference to projects offering matching funds or in-kind matches.

### Project Periods

Projects selected under this RFA will be funded for up to 24 months, from September 1, 2019 through August 31, 2021. The GLO may extend any project for up to two additional fiscal years, upon mutual written agreement of both parties.

### Organizational Eligibility

Applications may only be submitted by Texas state institutions of higher education. Institutions desiring to submit consortium applications should submit both a consolidated application that provides an overview of the entire project and specific application from each institution.

### Contact Information

All requests, questions, or other communications about this RFA should be submitted in writing to the GLO by emailing: [steve.buschang@glo.texas.gov](mailto:steve.buschang@glo.texas.gov).

Table of Contents

[Opportunity Snapshot 1](#_Toc473200053)

[Step 1: Review the Process 4](#_Toc473200054)

[Timeline 4](#_Toc473200055)

[Submission Method 4](#_Toc473200056)

[Step 2: Consider the Requirements 4](#_Toc473200057)

[Organizational Eligibility 4](#_Toc473200058)

[Responsibility 4](#_Toc473200059)

[Available Funding 4](#_Toc473200060)

[Source of Funding. 4](#_Toc473200061)

[Match Requirement 5](#_Toc473200062)

[Budget 5](#_Toc473200063)

[Eligible Costs 5](#_Toc473200064)

[Ineligible Costs and Activities 5](#_Toc473200065)

[Reporting Requirements 5](#_Toc473200066)

[Description of Research, Testing, and Development Areas of Interest 6](#_Toc473200067)

[Step 3: Applying for a Grant 8](#_Toc473200068)

[How to Apply 8](#_Toc473200069)

[Elements of the Application 8](#_Toc473200070)

[Step 4: Funding Decisions and Grant Acceptance 10](#_Toc473200071)

[Selection Criteria 10](#_Toc473200072)

[Announcements 10](#_Toc473200073)

Oil Discharge Prevention and Response Technology

The Oil Spill Prevention and Response Program of the Texas General Land Office (GLO) is requesting applications for funding for research and development activities. This RFA is open to Texas state institutions of higher education only. The Oil Spill Prevention and Response Act (OSPRA), Chapter 40 of the Texas Natural Resources Code, designated the GLO as the lead state agency in preventing and responding to coastal and marine oil spills. As part of its duties under OSPRA, the GLO is accepting funding applications from state institutions of higher education for:

1. **Research, testing, and development of oil discharge prevention and response technology;**
2. **Oil discharge response training;**
3. **Wildlife and natural resources rescue and rehabilitation;**
4. **Development of computer models to predict the movements and impacts of unauthorized discharges of oil; and**
5. **Other purposes consistent with and in furtherance of OSPRA.**

The four-step process to apply for a grant under this program is outlined below:

* **Step One – Review the Process:** Become familiar withthe funding announcement and the process used for this particular program.
* **Step Two – Consider the Requirements:** Consider the eligibility requirements and the requirements of a successful application.
* **Step Three – Apply:** Complete the application and budget documents and submit them to the GLO via email.
* **Step Four –** **Funding Decisions:** Await the funding decision, which is provided through a grant award or other notice from the GLO.

# Step 1: Review the Process

## Timeline

| Below is the anticipated timeline for this application. Action | Date |
| --- | --- |
| Funding Announcement Release | March 13, 2019 |
| Final Date to Submit an Application | April 12, 2019 |
| Funding Notices | May 31, 2019 |
| Earliest Start Date | September 1, 2019 |

## Submission Method

The required application and budget document are available at <http://www.glo.texas.gov/coast/grant-projects/funding/index.html>. The completed documents must be provided as email attachments to [steve.buschang@glo.texas.gov](mailto:steve.buschang@glo.texas.gov). An acknowledgement email will be sent upon receipt.

# Step 2: Consider the Requirements

## Organizational Eligibility

Only Texas state public institutions of higher education are eligible to submit applications. Institutions desiring to submit consortium applications should submit both a consolidated application that provides an overview of the entire Project and a specific application from each institution.

## Responsibility

Applicants must identify a lead investigator or project director and a co-lead investigator or project director to assume management responsibility for the Project. If the principal investigator or project director leaves the Grantee institution or otherwise relinquishes active direction of the Project, the Grantee must notify the GLO Oil Spill Division as soon as possible. The Grantee institution must also name a proposed new principal investigator in writing to the GLO who will, upon the GLO’s approval, become the principal investigator for the Project. Grants may not be transferred.

Grantees must establish written policies or procedures (1) to ensure appropriate officials provide organizational reviews and approvals for the expenditure of funds and (2) for monitoring project performance and adherence to grant terms and conditions.

## Available Funding

Multiple grants may be funded under this RFA. The GLO anticipates funding a collective $2.5 million for a biennium cycle with a maximum of $1.25 million per year. Most successful applications will be for two-year projects.

## Source of Funding.

Any project selected through this RFA will be funded with state funds.

## Match Requirement

There is no match requirement under this program. However, the GLO will give preference to projects offering matching funds or in-kind matches.

## Budget

The GLO has provided a budget document that applicants must complete and submit for an application to be considered under this RFA. The budget document is available at: <http://www.glo.texas.gov/coast/grant-projects/funding/index.html>. Applicants are encouraged to collaborate with other research institutions, industry, and other governmental agencies. Collaborative applications that provide external matching funds or other sources of revenue are also encouraged. Institutions desiring to submit consortium applications must include a summary budget of the project by institution and a separate budget page for each institution. Grantees must obtain the GLO’s prior written approval for budget revisions. The GLO will consider equipment requests included as part of a total application, but will not make awards for equipment alone.

## Eligible Costs

Except the ineligible costs listed below and a maximum indirect rate of 15%, all other costs are deemed allowable and will be considered through the approval process.

## Ineligible Costs and Activities

Grant funds may not be used to support the following services, activities, and costs:

1. Supplanting or use of grant funds to replace any other existing federal, state or local funds;
2. Inherently religious activities such as prayer, worship, religious instruction, or proselytization;
3. Lobbying;
4. Fundraising;
5. Membership dues for individuals;
6. Promotional gifts;
7. Construction, renovation, or remodeling;
8. Medical services;
9. Any other prohibition imposed by federal, state or local law or regulation;
10. Entertainment, including amusement, diversion, social activities, and any associated costs (i.e. tickets to shows or sports events, meals, lodging, rentals, transportation, and gratuities) unless there is a clear programmatic purpose and the GLO approves the costs in writing, in advance;
11. Any portion of an elected or appointed government official’s salary or other compensation; or
12. Foreign travel costs, unless such travel is clearly part of the research and the GLO approves the costs in writing, in advance.

## Reporting Requirements

Grantees must submit a **quarterly report** and a more extensive **annual report** summarizing the Project’s progress and outlining plans for the upcoming year or remainder of the Project. In the fourth quarter of each year, Grantees must submit **both a quarterly report and an annual report**. The format for these reports will be specified at the time the contract is initiated. Within sixty (60) days of the expiration of the contract, the Grantee must file two (2) copies of the final project report with the GLO Oil Spill Division. The final report must contain a summary of progress made, including a list of objectives met, publications of findings, presentations, and patents. The final report must also contain complete accounting information on the final disbursement of funds. At the end of the grant period, unexpended funds will revert to the Coastal Protection Fund.

Grantee must publish or otherwise make publicly available the results of work conducted under the grant in popular media or scholarly journals. Grantees must submit all manuscripts intended to be published in scholarly journals and all abstracts or summaries prepared for oral presentations based on the study to the GLO Oil Spill Division for review and comment prior to publication in media or submittal to a journal or conference authority. Grantees must also submit two hard-copy reprints and an electronic copy to the GLO Oil Spill Division for publication on its website.

Any publication funded through this RFA must include the following acknowledgement:

*“This material is funded by the Research and Development program of the Texas General Land Office Oil Spill Prevention and Response Division under Grant No. \_\_\_.”*

## Description of Research, Testing, and Development Areas of Interest

The following are general areas of focus for research and development that the GLO is currently interested in funding. This list is not exhaustive, and applications may be submitted for other similar projects, as the GLO recognizes that important scientific and technological discoveries may occur in pursuit of other subjects that would benefit oil spill response performance. The GLO encourages applications regarding any concept or idea that would enhance oil spill prevention and response capabilities, though emphasis will be placed on current areas of focus.

**Oil Spill Detection and Environmental Data Collection:**

Research and development of more accurate and effective methods of obtaining "real time" or "near real time" remotely sensed data. Areas of interest include:

* Developing data collection technologies that will operate twenty-four (24) hours a day in any weather;
* Developing new technologies, including hardware and software systems, for use with developing UAV/drone systems for use in field data collection, environmental data collection, and dissemination of this data for all aspects of spill response and preparedness;
* Developing technologies for detecting and mapping submerged oils over a range of turbidity conditions;
* Modeling the fate and degradation of residual oils and tarballs in the environment;
* Developing computer models that predict the movement and fate of surface and subsurface oil spills;
* Developing in-situ sensor technologies to determine the movement and fate of surface and subsurface oil spills and sea conditions for oil spill response operations;
* Developing, improving, or validating fate and forecast models that assimilate near real time data from remote sensing (satellite, airborne, and ship-based) and in-situ sensors (drifters, current meters, wave gauges, stream gauges, etc.);
* Developing new technologies, including hardware and software systems, involving in-situ oil sample analysis for use in chemical field data collection, environmental data collection, and dissemination of this data for all aspects of spill response and spill identification; and
* Researching oil spill susceptibility.

**Testing of Chemical Countermeasures:**

Applicants should propose research into testing National Contingency Plan (NCP) currently authorized chemical countermeasures, including efficacy, toxicity, and fate. Current areas of focus are on surface washing agents and sorbent materials, though others may qualify. Use of oils and species common to the open waters and bays of the northwestern Gulf of Mexico should be utilized whenever possible. Areas of interest include:

* Effectiveness testing at laboratory, meso, and field scales;
* Associated acute, chronic differing effects studies utilizing oils (transported or produced) and species common to the open waters and bays of the northwestern Gulf of Mexico;
* Delivery systems; and
* Modeling the fate and degradation of dispersed oil and the constituents of other chemical countermeasures.

**Data Development, Collection and Decision Support:**

Applicants should propose the development or improvement of new and current GIS datasets and information that support oil spill contingency planning and time critical decision-making. Areas of interest include:

* Improved GIS data sets characterizing the environmental sensitivity of shorelines and habitats;
* Improved GIS data sets of biological resources at risk;
* Improved GIS data sets of infrastructure useful to spill response;
* Improved/faster methods for characterizing shorelines, habitats, and the distribution of biological resources at risk, and the use of the existing data in a response;
* Improved tools for accessing decision support resources (GIS applications, environmental data website interfaces, etc.); and
* Development of a background level hydrocarbon data set for coastal waters, and sediments, including marsh, sand beaches, bay and nearshore benthos environments.

**Outreach and Education:**

Applicants should propose methods to publicize accurate information regarding oil spill response practices, research, capabilities, and limitations to reduce or respond to inaccurate or misleading reporting and social media coverage. Areas of interest include:

* Improving effectiveness of response using, and in response to, social media campaigns; and
* Producing informational videos highlighting spill response capabilities for education/outreach purposes targeting schools, coastal communities, and decision-makers.

**Program Income**

Applicants must agree to comply with all state rules and regulations for program income and agree to report all program income generated through project activities. Applicants must also agree to report program income to the GLO through a formal grant adjustment, to secure approval prior to use of the program income, to use program income only for allowable costs, and to expend program income immediately after GLO’s approval of a grant adjustment and prior to requesting reimbursement of GLO funds. For the purposes of this program, the deduction method applies. Program income includes intellectual property developed as a result of a selected and funded project.

# Step 3: Applying for a Grant

## How to Apply

Applicants must complete the required application and budget document and submit both via email to [steve.buschang@glo.texas.gov](mailto:steve.buschang@glo.texas.gov).

## Elements of the Application

**Cover Sheet**

Applications must include a cover sheet providing the title, duration, funds requested, principal investigator, co- or other investigators, institution affiliation, and contact information.

**Project Summary**

Applications must include a project summary page detailing the benefits of the proposed project to the oil spill response program and community, and describe the project’s proposed activities and deliverables. The summary must state the objectives and methods to be used, and address the practical merit and potential impacts of the proposed activity.

**Description**

Applications must include a description of the proposed research, testing, or development. This section should be double spaced and include the following subsections:

* 1. **Research, Testing, and Development of Oil Discharge Prevention and Response Technology and Training.** State the research objectives of the applications and explain their importance. The objectives should be clearly stated in the specific terms by which the success of the project can be measured. In addition, the objectives should be made visually distinct (e.g., indented, bold lettering) from the narrative. Describe the existing research and technology base that supports the proposed work. Explain the relationship between the work proposed under this application and other funded research projects managed by the investigator(s). Describe any other research already concluded in the project area. Detail how the Project will compliment, or add to, existing knowledge. Applications should clearly state how reaching the research objective would benefit the GLO and the oil spill response community.
  2. **Methodology**. Provide details of experimental methods and procedures used to meet the stated objectives. Include information about methods and techniques to facilitate the GLO’s evaluation of the application’s merits. Outline specific milestones and provide an itemized schedule (timeline) for the Project through completion. In addition, describe the means (i.e., evaluation criteria) by which the GLO can confirm the Project has accomplished the objectives.
  3. **Deliverables**. State explicit deliverables and outcomes of the proposed work. This may include manuscripts, reports, training materials, educational curricula, workshop planning and conduct, etc. Provide a concise statement of the proposed content and purpose of each deliverable.
  4. **Research personnel, roles and responsibilities**. Succinctly describe the investigators who will work on the proposed Project, their specific qualifications, and how they will be organized. Indicate whether the Project will be staffed using currently employed personnel or whether personnel will be recruited and hired to work on the Project.
  5. **Institutional commitment and sources of additional support**. Describe facilities, services and other institutional resources that will support the proposed work. Describe applicant’s plan to maximize the value of the GLO grant funds by obtaining additional support from other public and private sources. If support by an industry collaborator is contemplated, describe the nature and amount of that support. Describe the institutional commitment to the Project.
  6. **Value Added**. If the Project has “value added” possibilities outside oil spill prevention and response, provide a brief explanation of such benefits.
  7. **Budget Justification**. Provide a brief justification of all major budget elements.
  8. **Bibliography**. Cite relevant work that has been conducted in the area of the proposed Project.

**Budget**

Applicants must submit a detailed budget for the proposed Project on the budget document provided by the GLO. Other formats will not be considered a completed application. The budget must be broken out by specific line items. Categories and examples are provided in the GLO budget document. For selected Projects, the grant contract number and the budget line items must be referenced when invoicing the GLO. The budget must also identify any major subcontractors the applicant intends to utilize in performing fifteen percent (15%) or more of the Project and whether the applicant holds any financial interest in the subcontracting entity.

**Timeline**

The application must include a project timeline that specifies when major activities will begin and objectives will be completed. If a timeline cannot be met for a selected Project, the Grantee must notify the GLO in writing immediately, and provide a proposed alternate timeline.

**Investigators**

Applicants must submit a resume/CV for the principal investigator or project director and each co-principal investigator or project director with the application. These documents should be two pages maximum, per individual. Include a list of selected publications by each investigator or project director from the last five years, using the standard bibliographic style of listing the senior author first. Additional materials may be included as necessary.

**Experience**

Provide information on current and pending support on oil spill related projects. Indicate on the experience table if the proposed research, testing or development was previously funded by another agency.

**Formatting**

In addition to the GLO application and budget documents, applicants may include appendices or attachments. Referenced supporting documentation must be provided with the application, with specific references made to the tab, page, section, and/or paragraph where the supporting information can be found. If a letter of transmittal is included with the application, it should not contain information necessary for the evaluation process as it will not be reviewed for that purpose.

# Step 4: Funding Decisions and Grant Acceptance

## Selection Criteria

The GLO will evaluate applications through an internal, and if applicable, external, peer review process. A number of criteria will be used in the review. For example, applications will be evaluated on scientific merit and soundness as well as clear and useful milestones or deliverables. The GLO will also consider the likelihood that the application will improve the capability, knowledge, and technology necessary to prevent, respond to, and clean-up spills of crude oil and petroleum products in coastal environments, offshore environments, marine shorelines, estuarine waters, and marshes. The GLO will consider the clarity of budget and capability or qualifications of the listed investigator(s). This section represents a sample of criteria and is not an exclusive list.

## Announcements

After the GLO makes final funding decisions, each applicant will receive either notification of rejection of proposal, a preliminary decision notification, or final grant award notice. The award will provide all of the conditions and requirements of the grant.