

PHYTOPLANKTON CARBON SOLUTIONS PROGRAM

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Last updated: October 6, 2026

This FAQ document is intended to provide prospective applicants with additional information about the program and its funding opportunities. It addresses common questions related to proposal requirements, project scope, funding, and the application process. Applicants should also review the relevant Request for Proposal (RFP) and application materials, as those documents contain the official requirements and guidance for each funding opportunity.

If you have additional questions that are not addressed in this FAQ, please submit them to oceanspcs@edf.org. We review questions on an ongoing basis and update this FAQ regularly as new questions arise. We encourage applicants to check back periodically for the latest information.

General (RFP process)

1. Where can I find PCS funding opportunity documents, including Letters of Intent (LOIs) and Requests for Proposals (RFPs)?

Answer: All information and materials related to the PCS funding opportunities, including RFPs, LOIs, application templates, and program updates, are available on EDF's PCS funding webpage: <https://www.edf.org/edfpcsprogram>

We encourage applicants to check the webpage regularly, as new information, resources, and updates may be posted throughout the application process. If you have any questions, please send them to oceanspcs@edf.org.

2. RFP #1 deadline is October 12th, 2026 - will it be the same for the other RFPs?

Answer: The Letter of Intent (LOI) for RFP #1 is due Monday, October 12, 2026, at 11:59 p.m. ET. Applicants invited to submit a full proposal will be notified of the RFP #1 proposal deadline.

Deadlines for other RFPs may vary. Please visit the PCS funding webpage for the most current information on application timelines and key dates.

Project Scope

3. Do you anticipate funding only one award, or would you also consider smaller scope proposals that advance some, but not all, of the three stated objectives? Example: A proposed project contributes to objective 1 and parts of objective 3.

Answer: For RFP#1, our intention is to fund one project that addresses all of the stated objectives. However, if you feel that your work speaks to a particular aspect of the stated objectives, please feel free to submit an LOI, flagging where you would need to bring in additional expertise or dimensions. We will be reviewing these submissions to see if there are ways to bring together different research strengths, which could entail a suggestion to consider partnering with another team based on their submission to the LOI and their strengths and focal areas.

4. Is it necessary to have collaborators from different geographical locations? Would it be viewed negatively if the consortium consisted of partners from only one center or country?

Answer: We are looking for a diversity of perspectives and geographies so we will be looking at diversity as a specific criteria in the evaluation process. As noted in [RFP #1: Characterization of Critical Uncertainties for Ocean Iron Fertilization](#): "*The project team will be evaluated based on the collective expertise, collaborative approach, and demonstrated ability to execute the proposed work. Team structure will also be considered, including the extent of international collaborations, career stage diversity, early career researchers in substantive rather than nominal roles, and representation of and beyond the established marine CDR research community.*"

5. Will RFP #4 have the same geographic focus (Southern Ocean + subtropical) as RFP #1?

Answer: The Southern Ocean and subtropical regions are primary regions of interest for the PCS Program given the theoretical effectiveness of OIF in those regions and their contrasting environmental, biogeochemical, and social contexts. Given this, these two regions remain geographic focus areas for RFP #4. However, proposals addressing other geographies, or a combination of these and other geographies, are also welcome and will be considered. LOIs and proposals submitted to RFP #4 should clearly articulate why and how research conducted in the proposed geographies aligns with the objectives and scope of the RFP, and how they will contribute to advancing the program's research goals and decision making within the stage gate structure.

6. What types of institutions (e.g., academic, government, nonprofit) are eligible to lead a proposal?

Answer: Eligible lead institutions include academic institutions, research organizations, and nonprofit organizations. Teams may include members affiliated with non-research institutions (e.g., consulting, marine industry). However, funds may not be used to support commercial PCS activities or activities tied to carbon credit transactions.

7. Is team composition fixed after the LOI stage, or can composition evolve?

Answer: Team composition may evolve throughout the LOI and proposal submission stage. Acknowledging that developing partnership takes time, we expect team information submitted during the LOI stage to be an initial idea, and that teams will evolve as a result of further discussion and feedback from PCS leadership for LOIs that are invited

to progress to the full proposal stage. Team composition for funded projects may also evolve but plans for changes will need to be submitted to EDF for review with appropriate justification.

Financial

8. For RFPs #1 and #3, are listed budgets the total budgets for all awards or the anticipated budget per award?

Answer: The amount listed for each RFP represents the maximum funding available under that opportunity. The number of awards will vary by RFP (see the individual RFP documents for details) and will be determined by EDF following proposal review. For example, RFP #1 is expected to fund one project with up to \$1.3 million. For RFPs that support multiple awards, the combined value of all awards will not exceed the maximum funding amount listed for that RFP.

9. Are non-US institutions eligible to apply for this funding? For example: Is a UK university eligible to submit a proposal as the lead institution, and can a researcher based at such an institution serve as the lead PI/project lead?

Answer: We are open to receiving proposals from non-US institutions. Investigators from non-US institutions may serve as PI and be designated as a lead in the team's leadership structure.

10. Can funds be awarded directly to non-US institutions, and/or are there any restrictions on the proportion of project funding that may be allocated to non-US partners.

Answer: Funds can be awarded directly to non-US institutions, pending completion of EDF compliance review and vendor setup. There are no restrictions on the proportion of project funding allocated among partners in the project team. EDF requests detailed information about partners. However, funds may not be used to support commercial PCS activities or activities tied to carbon credit transactions.