

# COOPERATIVE ECOSYSTEM STUDIES UNIT (CESU) FACT SHEET

This is a guidance document intended to provide assistance to stakeholders on the processes for executing cooperative agreements with the US Army Corps of Engineers through the Cooperative Ecosystems Studies Unit.

## The Benefit:

The Corps utilizes the CESU for multiple benefits to the stakeholder (prices low and services high):

- Specialized Expertise
- Lower Facilities and Administrative Rates (cost-savings)
- Increased Competition
- Continuity
- Quality Project Management

## The Process:

The USACE process from planning to award consists of several stages. The initial stage includes early communication with the USACE PM and a clearly defined Statement of Objectives (SOO) and independent government estimate (IGE). The SOO is a critical part of the process because it lays out the foundation and future of the project. The SOO provides the necessary direction for the project and should contain objectives, deliverables, milestones, deadlines, and a period of performance (several examples are attached for reference). There are examples for a Sikes Act and a Non-Sikes Act SOO demonstrating options for combining work. It is important that the base task be a project that will be funded as written in the SOO.

Combining projects/tasks can increase cost savings and is a benefit for the government. Continuity provides consistency as well as cost savings and can be accomplished by incorporating option years. Option years are for the exact same work that will be accomplished year after year. Six option years are permissible in the SOO. The USACE PM can help provide direction, we are just a phone call away!

## Cooperative Agreement timelines for award:

Type of Action	Time frame*
Competed	85-90
PI Initiated	30-33
Unilateral Mod/Exercising Options	15-20
Bilateral Mod/ Scope Change	60-65

\* Business days not calendar days, from the date all technical documents and funding is received

## Successful Project Tips:

-Early coordination with the program manager/project manager to discuss scope requirements, estimated project costs, and establish communication prior to submittal of funding documents.

-Be prepared to provide all applicable supporting documents relevant to the SOO prior to the request for proposals (RFP) to ensure timely and accurate proposals.

-Non-disclosure agreements must be signed by any installation/base individuals wanting to be a part of the evaluation phases.



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For Open Publication**

Feb 26, 2019