



NORTH CAROLINA SEA GRANT

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REQUEST FOR FULL PROPOSALS

March 20, 2017

TO: Deans, Directors, Department Heads and Faculty
FROM: Susan White, Executive Director, North Carolina Sea Grant
SUBJECT: **Full proposals sought for 2018–2020 North Carolina Sea Grant support**

Program Background

North Carolina Sea Grant (NCSG), one of 33 Sea Grant programs within the National Sea Grant College Program, has initiated the request for proposal (RFP) process for the 2018–2020 Omnibus Funding Cycle, which runs from Feb. 1, 2018, through Jan. 31, 2020. The National Sea Grant College Program is housed within the Office of Ocean and Atmospheric Research, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), U.S. Department of Commerce.

NCSG submits a two-year institutional proposal to the National Sea Grant College Program in NOAA. Research proposals included in this institutional application go through rigorous peer and programmatic reviews. Only the most competitive proposals that fit the NCSG strategic plan will be included in the institutional proposal for submission to the National Office.

NCSG supports a multidisciplinary, integrated program of applied research, outreach and education that addresses coastal and marine issues important to the state of North Carolina. NCSG strives to fund applied research within four focus areas:

1. **Healthy Coastal Ecosystems;**
2. **Resilient Communities and Economies;**
3. **Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture; and**
4. **Environmental Literacy and Workforce Development.**

Proposed work must clearly align with one or more of these focus areas, be based within North Carolina, and target issues important to North Carolina's coastal region. **Attachment 1**, the draft NCSG Strategic Plan for 2018–2021, will help you align your project with these focus areas.

Successful NCSG projects are based on clear, testable hypotheses. Inventory and monitoring-only projects are not appropriate for this funding. NCSG encourages multi-institutional submissions, and projects that foster graduate and undergraduate training. Full proposals should be succinct, but sufficiently detailed for review by peers, potential users of results and program advisors.

Projects also must include a detailed outreach plan describing how results will be transferred to appropriate stakeholders. Projects that do not clearly identify users of results will not compete well. Applicants are highly encouraged to reach out to NCSG staff to help develop their proposal and outreach ideas. **Attachment 4** provides a list of NCSG staff and their expertise.

Projects supported by NCSG can run for one or two years, and thus can begin on Feb. 2, 2018, or Feb. 1, 2019. Proposals may request up to \$120,000 in federal funds for the two-year funding period. One-year projects may only request \$60,000. Matching dollars are required for this program at a 2:1 rate (\$2 federal to \$1 state). Funds are awarded on a yearly basis and are dependent upon the availability of federal funds. Currently, federal funds in support of this request for proposals have not been received. All NCSG-supported projects are subject to online annual progress reports and submission of a written final project report.

Eligibility Information

Only principal investigators (PI) who submitted preproposals are eligible to submit full proposals. PI teams that were not encouraged to submit Full proposals still can do so. However, discouragement represents the collective opinion of NCSG and our advisors that those submissions have a very low probability of being funded. Applicants with poor prior performance in completing progress and final reports on previous NCSG-funded projects may be deemed ineligible even if their current submission receives favorable reviews.

Application Process

Full proposals will be submitted using the same proposal-management system portal used during the preproposal stage. A complete application package includes:

- **Signed full proposal narrative,**
- **CV for each project participant,**
- **Budget and budget justification forms,**
- **Project time line, and**
- **A data management plan.**

University-approved and signed copies of your full proposal narratives must be submitted using the supplied full proposal narrative form (**Attachment 2**). The project time line should be submitted on the supplied time line form (**Attachment 3**). The system will prompt you to input the remaining elements of the application package. (See instructions.) Letters of support from stakeholders (if appropriate for your project) may be submitted through the portal as part of your application. Stakeholder letters must be received prior to the submission deadline. All attachments and instructions can be downloaded from ncseagrant.ncsu.edu/core-funding. Proposals that do not utilize these forms or that lack campus approvals and signatures will not be eligible for funding.

NCSG is using a new proposal management system for this Omnibus cycle at go.ncsu.edu/ncesg. PIs may need to update their login credentials to comply with new system security requirements. The system will direct you through this process if required. Once logged in, click on the “Instructions PDF” link under “NCSG 2018-2020 Omnibus Call (Full proposal) call.” The instructions will guide you through the rest of the submission process.

Deadline for full proposals is **5 p.m. on May 8, 2017**. Proposals must be submitted using the provided form (**Attachment 2**). Because this is a new system, please do not wait to the last minute to start the process and/or submit your materials. We will not be able to extend the deadline for anyone for any reason, including for technical issues associated with this new proposal management system. The NCSG Omnibus Funding schedule can be found in **Attachment 5**.

Review Criteria

Full proposals must meet peer review by out-of-state experts, NCSG advisors, potential users of results, and NCSG extension specialists. Projects will be evaluated for technical/scientific merit, outreach plan, relevance to North Carolina coastal issues, PI/co-PI qualifications, data management and budget. In addition, a scientific review panel — consisting of researchers and other experts from outside North Carolina with expertise in those disciplines broadly represented by the proposals under consideration — will consider the external reviews and then recommend proposals to NCSG leadership.

From that set, NCSG management will select the proposals to be included in our institutional proposal to the National Sea Grant Program Office. The selection will reflect the full review process, panel recommendations, available funding, current program priorities, and management’s judgment of what constitutes the strongest and most comprehensive suite of research projects that will be of greatest benefit to the state’s coastal resources and stakeholders. The National Office reviews and provides final approval on the projects to be funded.

Applicants should be aware that not all highly rated projects will be funded. NCSG does not have enough funding to cover all the outstanding applications that we receive.

Available Funding

NCSG expects to fund up to 10 two-year research projects in this Omnibus cycle. The maximum federal request per project is \$120,000 over the two-year project period. Matching dollars are required for this program at a 2:1 rate (\$2 federal to \$1 state). Indirect charges are allowed. At the time of this RFP, NCSG has not received guidance from NOAA on our Omnibus award. As such, no funding can be guaranteed, and all funding levels, including the maximum amount per project and the number of projects, are subject to change. Applicants may be asked to revise scopes of work and budgets so that their projects align with available funding levels.

NCSG **will not** conduct a separate graduate student competition as part of this Omnibus Funding Cycle. As such, investigators submitting Full proposals should include graduate student support as part of their project budget, if such funding is desired.

Questions

If you have questions, contact NCSG Deputy Director John Fear at jmfear@ncsu.edu or 919-515-9104. You also may contact me at snwhite3@ncsu.edu or 919-515-2455. This full proposal call, application instructions and attachments are available at ncseagrant.ncsu.edu/core-funding.

5 Attachments

Revised 3/20/17