



# NC Sea Grant: Coastal Resilience Team Competition Request for Proposals

## **Purpose**

North Carolina Sea Grant (NC Sea Grant) is accepting applications for the second **Coastal Resilience Team Competition**. This program provides an opportunity for **teams** of North Carolina-based graduate and undergraduate students to conduct projects that will lead to more resilient habitats and communities within the NC Coastal Plain. Project teams must conduct objective/hypothesis-based research that addresses one **or more** of the following broad focus areas (in no order of importance):

## **Ecosystem Resilience:**

- What are the impacts of higher and/or saltier groundwater levels on forest, agriculture, and/or coastal ecosystems?
- How will changing precipitation patterns impact stormwater management in the coastal zone?
- How will submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) communities in NC respond to climate change?
- What impacts do upstream conditions and management decisions have on downstream ecosystems and functioning?

## **Community Resilience:**

- How can coastal communities prioritize equity and engage underserved populations in planning for and implementing resilience and adaptation efforts?
- How can local decision-making and policy integrate resilience planning?
- What coastal infrastructure is most vulnerable and what can be done to mitigate the risk? How can natural and nature based infrastructure (NNBI) be used strategically for community resilience, and what are the barriers to implementation?

## **Economic Resilience:**

- What aquaculture practices can buffer the industry against disasters and climate change impacts?
- What are the costs to our coastal communities comparing; **a**) climate change planning and investment to proactively prepare for a disaster, and **b**) opting instead for post disaster restoration and rebuilding?
- How will the economic costs of climate change impact our state's coastal communities, and, in particular, and how will it affect different sectors and populations?

**\* Additional research topics that relate to these three focus areas will be considered.**

We **strongly encourage** proposals from Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Minority Serving Institutions, and/or students from traditionally underserved and underrepresented institutions, as well as from project teams that can demonstrate how their work and related outreach will benefit underserved and underrepresented communities.

Proposed work should relate to:

- One of more of the above focus areas



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- NC Sea Grant's Strategic Plan ([go.ncsu.edu/Sea-Grant-Plan](http://go.ncsu.edu/Sea-Grant-Plan))
- NC Sea Grant's commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, justice, and accessibility ([go.ncsu.edu/DEI](http://go.ncsu.edu/DEI))

North Carolina Sea Grant is a multi-campus program within the University of North Carolina system and is part of the national Sea Grant Network ([www.ncseagrant.org](http://www.ncseagrant.org)).

### Project Teams/Eligibility

Project teams should be based around at a minimum a two-member team made up of a **Graduate Student lead**, and an Undergraduate participant. This opportunity is only open to US citizens. Teams may contain additional students, up to a maximum of 4 students. The additional team members may be either graduate or undergraduate students. Only graduate students in good academic standing, attending an accredited North Carolina university or college are eligible to apply. Team members do not have to be located at the same institution. The role of each team member must be clearly outlined as part of the application (see below). NC Sea Grant expects team leads will be **later-career** graduate students to ensure they have the experience needed to oversee the project team and ensure the project is completed

**Deadline: April 3, 2023, at 5 p.m. local time.**

### Award Overview:

- One to two project teams are expected to be funded out of this competition; subject to the availability of funds and the quality of the received applications.
- The performance period will be July 1, 2023, through August 31, 2025.
- NC Sea Grant will provide the winning team/s up to \$10,000 per year for the duration of the project (\$20,000 total funding available per team project).
- Funding will be channeled to the project team members via **student stipends**. How the total stipend amount is to be distributed among the team members is up to the Graduate Student lead. This data should be included on the title page (see below).
- Funding for year 2 is dependent upon successful execution of year one (see reporting requirements below) and NC Sea Grant's receipt of additional federal funds. Year 2 is not guaranteed.
- It will be incumbent upon the Graduate Student lead to ensure the project is completed and that each participant completes their portion. Any team replacements must be coordinated with and approved by NC Sea Grant.
- It is incumbent on the applicant team to obtain all additional institutional (e.g., IRB), state, and federal permits required for conducting the project.

### Application Requirements

All applications must include the following elements:

- A research proposal (described below).



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- A current curriculum vitae (CV) for each member of the project team, limited to 2 pages per CV.
- The lead graduate student's major professor must provide a letter of support outlining the student's qualifications and abilities to undertake/oversee this team project.
- A data management plan, limited to 2 pages.

### Research Proposal Format

To apply, project teams must prepare a proposal. The proposal should be in 12-point, Times New Roman font, with 1-inch margins. Proposals must contain the following seven items. The title page should be the only content on page 1. **Items 2-7 must not exceed 5 pages.**

1. **Title Page:** The title page should include the following aspects:
  - List project title.
  - List all project team members including full contact information.
  - Document the stipend amount that each participant is to receive.
  - Clearly identify the project team graduate student lead.
  - Provide the name and contact information of the graduate student lead's major professor.
2. **Description** of the project including background rationale, relevance of the project to the RFP resilience focal area(s) listed above, **objectives/hypothesis** being tested, and alignment with the funding program's interests as noted above.
3. **Materials and Methods.**
4. Clearly defined **Tasks** and a **Timeline** to complete the tasks.
5. **Roles:** Clear description of the roles/activities each project team member will oversee/conduct. Also include a description of how you plan to maintain communication among the team members during the course of the project.
6. A well described **Outreach/Dissemination Plan.** Who would be interested in the results of this work and how do you plan to share the results of this work with them?
7. A brief explanation for how the stipend money will be used in support of the project.

The proposal may contain a **Literature Cited** section after item 7 above as needed. This section is not included in the page limit.

Up to two additional **stakeholder letters of support** from end-users, and other appropriate parties may be included if they enhance the application.

### Submission

The Graduate Student lead should prepare and submit the application. Application materials must be received **by 5 p.m. on Monday, April 3, 2023. Applications will only be accepted through the [eSeaGrant portal](#).** The portal will walk you through submitting all required



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elements of the proposal. Incomplete or late applications will not be eligible. The portal will automatically close at the deadline.

### **Review Process**

The review panel will be co-chaired by Cayla Cothron and John Fear of NC Sea Grant. Additional participants may include other Sea Grant staff and in-state topic experts. Proposals will be ranked based on their relevance to the identified focus areas (see list above), quality of the proposed science, and adherence to the instructions provided in this request for proposals.

### **Reporting Requirements:**

- 6-month progress reports are required.
- A final report is required prior to the end date of the performance period.
- The winning team/s will also be asked to present their findings to the NC Sea Grant advisory board.
- The winning team/s will also have additional opportunities to disseminate their findings through engagement and product development with NC Sea Grant's communication team.

The 6-month progress reports should be submitted to Cayla Cothron and John Fear via email. The final report will be submitted along with other required reporting metrics into eSeaGrant by the student at the end of the performance period.

Dr. Fear will assist the student with the eSeaGrant reporting access in the last month. The lead graduate student's major professor must agree to ensure all Sea Grant reporting requirements are met.

### **Contact Information:**

**Cayla Cothron**, Coastal Planning Specialist, North Carolina Sea Grant ([cdcothro@ncsu.edu](mailto:cdcothro@ncsu.edu))

**John Fear**, Deputy Director, North Carolina Sea Grant ([jmfear@ncsu.edu](mailto:jmfear@ncsu.edu))