



NORTH CAROLINA SEA GRANT

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REQUEST FOR FULL PROPOSALS

March 11, 2019

TO: Deans, Directors, Department Heads and Faculty
FROM: Susan White, Executive Director, North Carolina Sea Grant
SUBJECT: **Full proposals sought for 2020–2022 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 2020–2022 Omnibus Funding Cycle, which runs from Feb. 1, 2020, through Jan. 31, 2022. 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:

- **Healthy Coastal Ecosystems;**
- **Resilient Communities and Economies;**
- **Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture; and**
- **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 and watersheds. Please refer to the NCSG Strategic Plan for 2018–2021 (go.ncsu.edu/NCSeaGrantPlan2018) to help you ensure your project ideas align 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. A list of NCSG staff and their expertise is available on the NCSG website (ncseagrant.ncsu.edu/about-us/our-team/).

Projects supported by NCSG can run for one or two years, and thus can begin on Feb. 1, 2020, or Feb. 1, 2021. 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 (go.ncsu.edu/ncesg). To access everything needed to submit a full proposal login to eSeaGrant and click “Add Proposal.” A complete application package includes:

- **signed full proposal narrative,**
- **CV for each project participant (2-page limit),**
- **current and pending support for each participant**
- **budget and budget justification forms,**
- **project time line, and**
- **a data management plan (2-page limit).**

Note: projects to-be-funded also will be required to fill out an abbreviated environmental compliance questionnaire. This is not required at the submission stage.

University-approved and signed copies of your full proposal narratives must be submitted using the supplied full proposal narrative form. This form can be found within the eSeaGrant system. 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 adhere to formatting instructions and that lack campus approvals and signatures will not be eligible for funding.

Deadline for full proposals is **5 p.m. on April 29, 2019**. The portal will automatically close after this time. Please do not wait to the last minute to start your application process and/or submit your materials. We will not be able to extend the deadline for anyone for any reason.

Review Criteria

Sea Grant uses a five-point rating system for all proposals: Excellent: top 10% (exhibits outstanding quality/relevance); Very Good 75-90%: (above average quality/relevance); Good: 50-75% (routine/average quality/relevance); Fair: 25-50% (marginal quality/relevance); Poor: bottom 25% (missed the mark, has major deficiencies, not relevant).

Full proposals will allow applicants to fully describe their ideas, methods and deliverables. Full proposals will be reviewed by at least three out-of-state peer reviewers as well as NCSG staff and advisors. This review stage evaluates full proposals against the following criteria:

- Relevancy/Need (Will the project help address a high priority coastal issue? Is this work needed?) 30%;
- Technical/Scientific merit (Are the proposed methods appropriate and scientifically valid to complete the work? Are clear objectives/hypothesis present? Is the project innovative?) 30%;
- Transferability/Outreach (Is it clear the results of the work will be provided to end-users through an appropriate medium to be shared broadly, and do they want them?) 30%;
- Qualifications of the applicants (Is the project team qualified to do the work?) 5%; and
- Budget (Are the requested funds appropriate for completion of the proposed work?) 5%.

A scientific review panel — consisting of researchers and other experts from outside North Carolina with expertise in disciplines broadly represented by the proposals under consideration — will evaluate proposals and peer reviews, then recommend proposals for funding to NCSG leadership. NCSG will submit the final list of projects recommended for funding to the National Sea Grant College Program based on the full review process, panel recommendations, available funding and current program priorities. 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 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 ratio (\$2 federal to \$1 state). Indirect charges are allowed. All funding is reliant upon NCSG receiving federal funds that currently have not yet been appropriated. As such, no funding can be guaranteed. 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 is available at ncseagrant.ncsu.edu/core-funding.

Funding Schedule (Omnibus Cycle 2020-2022) (subject to change)

Nov. 28, 2018	Preproposal call released
Jan. 14, 2019	Preproposals due (relevance reviews obtained)
March 11, 2019	Full proposal encouragements sent
April 29, 2019	Full proposals due (peer reviews obtained)
July 29, 2019	Peer reviews sent to technical panel
Week of Aug. 12, 2019	Technical committee meets to rank full proposals
Sept. 3, 2019	PIs sent funding decision
Oct. 4, 2019	Revised proposals due
Oct. 11, 2019	Final proposals given to the Fiscal Officer for Omnibus submission
Feb. 1, 2020	New projects start