



## NORTH CAROLINA SEA GRANT

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### REQUEST FOR FULL PROPOSALS

March 1, 2021

TO: Deans, Directors, Department Heads and Faculty  
FROM: Susan White, Executive Director, North Carolina Sea Grant  
SUBJECT: **Full proposals sought for 2022–2024 North Carolina Sea Grant support**

North Carolina Sea Grant (NC Sea Grant) continues its two-stage request for proposal (RFP) process for the 2022–2024 Biennial Competitive Research Funding Cycle, which runs from Feb. 1, 2022, through Jan. 31, 2024. During the second stage of this process, we are accepting full proposals until **Apr. 19, 2021**. **Only those PI teams that submitted a preproposal are eligible to submit a full proposal.**

#### **Program Background**

NC Sea Grant is one of 34 Sea Grant programs within the National Sea Grant College Program. The National Sea Grant College Program is housed within the Office of Ocean and Atmospheric Research, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and the U.S. Department of Commerce. The National Sea Grant College Program champions diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) by recruiting, retaining and preparing a diverse workforce, and proactively engaging and serving the diverse populations of coastal communities. Sea Grant is committed to building inclusive research, extension, communication, and education programs that serve people with unique backgrounds, circumstances, needs, perspectives, and ways of thinking. We encourage applicants from all backgrounds to apply for this competitive research opportunity.

NC Sea Grant supports a multidisciplinary, integrated program of applied research, outreach, and education that addresses coastal and marine issues important to the state of North Carolina. NC Sea Grant 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. Please refer to the NC Sea Grant Strategic Plan for 2018–2023 ([go.ncsu.edu/Sea-Grant-Plan](https://go.ncsu.edu/Sea-Grant-Plan)) to help you ensure your project ideas align with these focus areas.

Successful NC Sea Grant projects are based on clear, testable questions/hypotheses. Inventory and monitoring-only projects, as well as methods development projects, are not appropriate for

this funding. NC Sea Grant encourages multi-campus submissions, projects that foster graduate and undergraduate training, and that align with NC Sea Grant’s vision statement for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion ([go.ncsu.edu/DEI](https://go.ncsu.edu/DEI)).

We encourage proposals from investigators at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs), and/or from traditionally underserved and underrepresented communities; research teams that include co-leadership and strong collaboration with investigators affiliated at HBCUs, MSI, and/or underrepresented and underserved communities; and projects that include training for undergraduate and/or graduate students at HBCUs, MSIs, and/or underrepresented and underserved communities.

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 NC Sea Grant staff to help develop their proposal and outreach ideas. A list of NC Sea Grant staff and their expertise is available on the NC Sea Grant website (<https://ncseagrant.ncsu.edu/about-us/our-team/>).

Projects supported by NC Sea Grant run for two years, with an expected start date of Feb. 1, 2022. Funds are awarded on a yearly basis and are dependent upon the availability of federal funds, which have not yet been appropriated.

## **Eligibility Information**

**Only principal investigators (PI) who submitted preproposals are eligible to submit full proposals.** PIs must be affiliated with an academic institution of higher education in North Carolina. PI teams that were not encouraged to submit full proposals still can do so. However, discouragement represents the collective opinion of NC Sea Grant 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 NC Sea Grant-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](https://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 (includes your university’s letter of intent),**
- **CV for each project participant (2-page limit),**
- **current and pending support for each participant**
- **budget and budget justification forms,**
- **project time line,**

- a data management plan (2-page limit), and
- a completed abbreviated environmental compliance questionnaire.

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, and also below this announcement on the NC Sea Grant website.

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](http://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 19, 2021**. 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 external peer reviewers. 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 external researchers and other experts 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, and must be split evenly at \$60,000 per year. 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, start date, and budgets so that their projects align with available funding levels.

### **Questions**

If you have questions, contact NC Sea Grant Deputy Director John Fear ([jmfear@ncsu.edu](mailto:jmfear@ncsu.edu)). You also may contact me at [snwhite3@ncsu.edu](mailto:snwhite3@ncsu.edu). Phone and Zoom conversations also can be arranged if needed. This proposal call is available at [ncseagrant.ncsu.edu/core-funding](http://ncseagrant.ncsu.edu/core-funding).

### **Funding Schedule** (subject to change)

Nov. 09, 2020	Preproposal call released
Jan. 11, 2021	Preproposals due
Jan – Feb 2021	(relevance reviews obtained)
March 1, 2021	Full proposal encouragements sent
April 19, 2021	Full proposals due
Apr – June 2021	(peer reviews obtained)
July 12, 2021	Peer reviews sent to technical review panel
Week of Aug. 2, 2021	Technical review panel meets to recommend full proposals
Aug. 30, 2021	Funding decisions distributed
Sept. 30, 2021	Revised proposals due
Feb. 1, 2022	New projects start