Community Collaborative Research Grant (CCRG) Program
2021-2022 Request for Proposals

North Carolina Sea Grant (NC Sea Grant) — in partnership with the North Carolina Water Resources Research Institute (WRRI) and the William R. Kenan Jr. Institute for Engineering, Technology and Science (KIETS), based at North Carolina State University — is pleased to announce the 2021-2022 Community Collaborative Research Grant (CCRG) Program. This program seeks to address important coastal challenges and state-wide water resource issues.

Due Date: 5 p.m. Eastern, February 4, 2022

Proposed projects must justify how the work would be relevant to the missions and current strategic plans of NC Sea Grant (go.ncsu.edu/Sea-Grant-Plan) and/or WRRI (http://go.ncsu.edu/wrri_sp).

The NC Sea Grant Strategic Plan defines four focus areas: healthy coastal ecosystems; sustainable fisheries and aquaculture; resilient communities and economies; and environmental literacy and workforce development. WRRI focus areas eligible under this RFP include: stormwater management; drinking water, wastewater, and water infrastructure; groundwater and surface water; and watershed management. KIETS is interested in strategies and solutions that can mitigate or reverse the negative effects of climate change through technical, managerial, policy-related or economic approaches that, if adopted, offer the promise of impactful progress that will help North Carolina deal with this challenge.

CCRG requires research approaches that couple the local knowledge of community stakeholders with academic experts. While members of the public may have local knowledge of their own communities and environments, they oftentimes do not have the scientific, technical or policy expertise to characterize the problem fully and craft science-based solutions. Conversely, academic experts may be knowledgeable about scientific principles and potential solutions required to mitigate the problem, but lack the social and historical perspective that will aid in crafting solutions to meet the expectations of community members. This type of collaborative research — requiring the linkage of local knowledge expertise with university researchers — has a proven track record in developing new tools and solutions in resource management.

Proposals should align with North Carolina Sea Grant and the North Carolina Water Resources Research Institute's vision for diversity, equity, inclusion, justice, and accessibility (go.ncsu.edu/DEIJA). The programs strongly encourage proposals from persons in traditionally underserved and underrepresented communities, including rural areas of North Carolina, as well

as proposals that demonstrate how projects and related outreach will benefit those communities. Recognizing that some student, faculty and community partners have historically been underserved and under-targeted with research opportunities, and often are underrepresented in the sciences, we encourage submissions by and/or collaborations with one or more of the following: African American, Hispanic and Native American partners, Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs); and Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs).

Eligibility
Proposals must significantly involve North Carolina local knowledge experts who are involved with or are knowledgeable of coastal and/or water resource issues the project will address.

Proposals also must include concise project objectives or research questions.

A two-person team with one scientific expert and one local knowledge expert must lead each project. These roles may include faculty from North Carolina-based institutions of higher learning (e.g., college, university, or community college), staff from local and/or state governmental entities in North Carolina, staff members of non-government organizations based in N.C. offices, N.C. business owners, and private N.C. residents. Additional team members can be listed as other participants.

Federal government and Sea Grant/WRRI employees are not eligible to receive funding, but may participate as unfunded collaborators. Liability insurance coverage is required to receive funding.

Proposal Development
Proposals should be collaborative and represent a process that utilizes the scientific and local knowledge experts throughout the entire project.

We encourage applicants to consult with NC Sea Grant/WRRI staff members for assistance in proposal development. Our staff can provide early feedback on a project idea and help to identify project team members. Contact information for Sea Grant/WRRI staff members are available at: *http://ncseagrant.ncsu.edu/about-us/our-team/* and *https://wrri.ncsu.edu/contact-us/staff/*

Applicants must detail how they will transfer their findings to community and academic stakeholders.

Funding Availability
Awards will range between $5,000 and $25,000 with an estimated 2 to 10 awards per year, depending on the availability of funds and quality of the received proposals. Indirect costs may **not** be charged. Matching/in-kind funds are not required but are encouraged.

Investigators may only propose one-year (12 months maximum) projects. Projects should be planned with a **May 1, 2022 start date**. PI teams may be asked to alter proposed start dates and budgets to align with funding levels/priorities.

Individuals may be lead PI or co-PI on **only one proposal** but can be participants on multiple proposals.

Application Process
All proposals must be submitted via the online proposal management portal *eSeaGrant*. Access *eSeaGrant* at **go.ncsu.edu/ncesg**.

The application form (available below) must be used for proposal preparation.

The *eSeaGrant* portal will provide a location to submit all required application elements. Required elements are:
- Completed application form
- 2-page resumes/CVs for all project participants
- Project budget and budget justification
- University-affiliated PIs also must include a cover page signed by their respective sponsored programs office.

Proposals should be succinct but sufficiently detailed for review by peers, potential users of results, and program advisors. Narrative text should be typed in at least an 11-point font with 1-inch margins. Items one to 19 of the application form, when completed, can be a maximum of **four** single-spaced pages. Items 20 to 23, (budget, budget justification, suggested reviewers, and references) do not count toward the four-page limit. Letter(s) of support documenting the need for the project or important collaborations do not count toward the four-page limit. Additional supplemental materials (diagrams, photos, etc.) are acceptable only if they enhance the project explanation, and similarly, do not count toward the four-page limit. These should be included as an appendix to the application form if needed.

All proposals must be received by 5 p.m. Eastern on February 4, 2022, at which time the portal will automatically close. Late proposals will not be accepted for any reason. We are unable to accept emailed, faxed, and mailed proposals.

Notification of Proposal Award
Notification of funding decisions are expected on or near April 25, 2022.

Review Procedures
Anonymous peer reviews will be conducted for all applications. All proposals will be reviewed for scientific and technical merit, and the ability to address one or more of the specific focus areas. Project quality will be assessed on the following criteria, each carrying equal weight:
- Appropriateness of the project team, with science and local-knowledge experts clearly identified.
- Execution of project planned in a collaborative fashion: science and local-knowledge experts working in tandem throughout the project to complete project activities.
- Addresses one or more of the RFP focus areas, is relevant to the Sea Grant/WRRI/KIETS missions and interests, and aligns with the Sea Grant/WRRI vision for diversity, equity, inclusion, justice, and accessibility.
- Methods appropriate to complete proposed work.
- Includes innovative ideas, approach, and/or potential findings.
- Project results obtainable within one year.
- Evaluation metrics appropriate to judge the project's success.

- Robust plan to communicate project results to academic and community stakeholders.
- Documentation that end-users want the results of the project.
- Reasonableness of budget for work proposed.

Based on peer reviews, the most meritorious proposals will be run through a technical panel of experts that will make funding recommendations. Final funding decisions, including the level of funding for each project is at the NC Sea Grant/WRRI director's discretion.

For additional Information about the CCRG:
If you have questions, contact John Fear, deputy director of NC Sea Grant and WRRI, at *jmfear@ncsu.edu*. Email is best initial contact at this time, and then a phone or video call can be scheduled.

Questions about the eSeaGrant portal or budget questions can be directed to Mary Beth Barrow, fiscal officer for NC Sea Grant and WRRI, at *mebarrow@ncsu.edu*.

Examples of previously funded projects can be found here:
https://ncseagrant.ncsu.edu/news/2021/07/new-collaborative-community-research/

Attachment: Funding application