



## **2022-2024 Biennial Request for Proposals**

<http://www.seagrants.umaine.edu/funding>

**Deadline for Pre-Proposals:**

**Wednesday, February 24, 2021, 5:00 p.m.**

**Deadline for Full Proposals\*:**

**Monday, May 17, 2021 5:00 p.m.**

**\*Note: Full proposals will only be considered if applicants have submitted a pre-proposal  
Late applications will not be considered.**

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## A. Introduction

The Maine Sea Grant College Program invites pre-proposals for research projects to be funded in the period February 2022 through January 2024. Maine Sea Grant is a state-federal partnership based at the University of Maine and sponsored by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the State of Maine. Maine Sea Grant is administered by the University of Maine, but the research competition is open to faculty and staff at any public or private research or higher education institution within the state of Maine. The mission of Maine Sea Grant is *to support the responsible use and conservation of coastal resources in order to sustain thriving coastal communities and ecosystems*. Through our biennial request for proposals, we strive to sponsor a diverse research portfolio that links the scientific capacity of Maine with the needs of coastal stakeholders and advance Maine Sea Grant's mission.

Maine Sea Grant seeks to foster the highest quality marine research with a strong likelihood of societal impact in Maine, so only the most creative and rigorously conceived proposals will receive consideration. We seek to support projects developed through meaningful engagement with coastal or marine stakeholders and focused on research questions that are responsive to the needs of Maine's communities. We accept proposals aligned with any part of our [current strategic plan](#). We strongly encourage projects that will advance Maine's capacity for adaptive coastal resource management and public policy in response to climate-driven ecosystem change. Proposals that explicitly link with strategies and actions described in the [Maine Climate Council's Four-Year Plan for Climate Action, Scientific Assessment of Climate Change and Its Effects in Maine](#), or report [Assessing the Potential Equity Outcomes of Maine's Climate Action Plan: Framework, Analysis and Recommendations](#) will receive additional merit during the review process.

Maine Sea Grant's funding programs are highly competitive, with each preproposal being reviewed by an in-state stakeholder panel; and each submitted full proposal being reviewed, in writing, by a minimum of three peers, with final review of the full proposal, previous reviews, and PI rebuttals by a separate ad-hoc external peer-review panel. Pre-proposal and full proposal review processes are free from conflicts-of-interest. Maine Sea Grant routinely receives numerous excellent proposals and available funds are never sufficient to support all of them.

The National Sea Grant College Program champions diversity, equity, and inclusion by recruiting, retaining and preparing a diverse workforce, and proactively engaging and serving the diverse populations of coastal communities. Maine 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 of all ages, races, ethnicities, national origins, gender identities, sexual orientations, disabilities, cultures, religions, citizenship types, marital statuses, educational levels, job classifications, veteran status types, and income, and socioeconomic status types to apply for this competitive research opportunity.

## B. Funding Levels and Duration

Proposed research activities may be one or two years in duration, for the period between February 2022 and January 2024. Assuming no changes in the federal Sea Grant appropriation and the requirements of the non-research components of the Maine Sea Grant program, an estimated **\$600,000** will be available to support research projects over the two-year funding period. Maine Sea Grant will consider funding proposals up to \$150,000. Maine Sea Grant intends to fund as many excellent proposals as is possible within budgetary constraints; **projects with smaller requests and those that show strong leveraging of Sea Grant funding are encouraged**. Total two-year requests over \$150,000 in Sea Grant funds (including all direct and indirect costs) will not be considered. Sea Grant funding requires a 50% non-

federal match; all pre-proposals must indicate source and level of available non-federal match. Proposals without sufficient match will not be considered.

### C. Maine Sea Grant Strategic Goals & Objectives

Maine Sea Grant requests competitive research proposals that align with our strategic goals (outlined below), integrate across Sea Grant’s functional areas of research, education, and outreach (extension and communications), and display a strong promise for meaningful societal impact and application. Collaborations with industry, state and regional agencies, and other research institutions are encouraged. All proposals must clearly identify how the proposed research applies to one (or more) of Maine Sea Grant’s strategic goals and objectives. Investigators are encouraged to explicitly describe how understanding, tools, and data products generated in their projects will lead to measurable progress toward these priorities.

We strongly encourage projects that will advance Maine’s capacity for adaptive coastal resource management and public policy in response to climate-driven ecosystem change. Proposals that explicitly link with strategies and actions described in the [Maine Climate Council’s Four-Year Plan for Climate Action](#), [Scientific Assessment of Climate Change and Its Effects in Maine](#), or report [Assessing the Potential Equity Outcomes of Maine’s Climate Action Plan: Framework, Analysis and Recommendations](#) will receive additional merit during the review process.

**Maine Sea Grants strategic plan for 2018 – 2023 with goals & objectives can be found here:** (<https://seagrant.umaine.edu/resource/strategic-plan-2018-2023-december-2020-version/>)

#### Maine Sea Grant Strategic Goals for 2018 – 2023

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Healthy Coastal Ecosystems</b></p>	<p><u>Goal:</u> Maine people will understand the links between healthy ecosystems and resilient communities, and take action to ensure the long-term health of coastal resources</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Resilient Communities</b></p>	<p><u>Goal:</u> Maine’s coastal communities will draw upon relevant science and their assets to recover from, adapt to, prepare or, and mitigate the environmental, economic, and social/cultural vulnerabilities they have identified and prioritized</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Safe &amp; Sustainable Seafood</b></p>	<p><u>Goal:</u> Maine’s wild harvest and aquaculture sectors and the communities that depend on them are economically viable and environmentally sustainable.</p>

<b>Communities Responding to a Changing Climate</b>	<u>Goal:</u> Maine communities, businesses, and individuals understand the risks and opportunities that result from a changing climate, and develop effective strategies that enhance preparedness for and resilience to uncertainty and change in environmental conditions
<b>Environmental Literacy &amp; Workforce Development</b>	<p><u>Goal 1:</u> Maine’s environmentally literate public can use scientific knowledge to identify questions, draw evidence-based conclusions, and make decisions about issues that affect the ecological health, economic vitality, and resilience of Maine’s coastal communities and ocean-related resources</p> <p><u>Goal 2:</u> Maine will have a diverse workforce skilled in disciplines critical to the ecological health, economic vitality, and resilience of Maine’s coastal communities and marine-related resources</p>

#### D. Pre-Proposal Component Guidelines

Pre-proposals are evaluated primarily on the basis of their relevance to the Maine Sea Grant strategic priorities and potential benefits to stakeholders and citizens.

Pre-proposals are to be submitted electronically to Maine Sea Grant through eSeaGrant ([esg.umaine.edu](http://esg.umaine.edu)) by **5:00 p.m. EST on Wednesday, February 24, 2021**. **Applicants must first create an eSeaGrant account. A short walkthrough tutorial on how to use eSeaGrant can be found at <https://seagrants.umaine.edu/resource/eseagrants-instructions-and-tutorial/>.** Applicants are encouraged to contact the Research Coordinator, ([sgresearch@maine.edu](mailto:sgresearch@maine.edu)) with questions. For investigators from a University of Maine campus, please note that you will be required to follow submission guidelines from the Office of Research Administration.

Pre-proposals that do not include all of the following components will not be considered.

- 1) **List of investigators:** name, e-mail, affiliation, and role (principal investigator or co-principal investigator)
- 2) **List of additional personnel involved in the project:** name, e-mail, affiliation, and role in the project
- 3) **Project Abstract:** A brief summary of the project that describes the objectives, methodology, and rationale. A 75 word limit is imposed for each of the three sections.
- 4) **Proposal Narrative:** Proposals must be single-spaced using Times New Roman 12-point font with 1-inch margins on the top, bottom, and both sides of the page. **There is a 3-page limit to the proposal narrative.**

The 3-page limit covers the following required components (a-d). Literature citations (e) do not contribute to the 3-page limit.

- a. **Justification and expected impacts:** Describe the question or problem that you propose to address and clearly identify how it applies to one (or more) of Maine Sea Grant's strategic objectives and, if applicable, links to a climate action strategy identified by the Maine Climate Council as described above. It is particularly important to explicitly address the anticipated societal impacts of the research by explaining how the information obtained will be used by a clearly identified group of stakeholders. If the idea originated with a stakeholder then state and explain how your results will impact their needs.
- b. **Scientific objectives:** Describe the major goals and objectives of the research, including the questions or hypotheses that will be addressed or tested. Outline the conceptual approaches and methodologies that will be used, and provide a general timeline for the project.
- c. **Available resources:** Briefly summarize the qualifications of the investigator(s) and the institutional capabilities that will be brought to bear on the proposed project.
- d. **Outreach:** Describe the strategies that will be used to communicate the research results to stakeholders. The overall goal of outreach is to effect change by having individuals, groups, or institutions use science-based information when making decisions. Outreach is activity that extends Sea Grant-sponsored and other relevant coastal and marine information to user groups. Presenting results at a scientific meeting, academic seminar, or publishing in peer-reviewed journals are encouraged but are not considered outreach within this context. Applicants are encouraged to review [Maine Sea Grant's public outreach and engagement document](#) and discuss outreach goals and strategies with Hannah Robbins, Maine Sea Grant's Communication Manager, or a member of the [Marine Extension Team](#). If Marine Extension Team members or other Sea Grant staff will participate in the project, you must have their explicit permission to be included in the proposal, and their roles must be specified. **Do not assume their participation.**
- e. **Literature cited:** Provide complete citations for all literature referenced in the proposal.

## 5) **Budget form**

Applicants will be required to complete a budget using the NOAA 90-4 budget form template that can be downloaded from eSeaGrant ([esg.umaine.edu](http://esg.umaine.edu)) in the applicant's proposal submission page. Prepare a budget for each year of the proposal and an overall summary (if the project is for two years).

Applicants should allow sufficient time before the deadline to review draft budgets and budget justifications with Lynn Wardwell, Maine Sea Grant Fiscal Officer (207-581-1448; [wardwell@maine.edu](mailto:wardwell@maine.edu)).

- a. **Matching funds: 50% match of federal funds (i.e., one dollar of match for every two dollars of federal money received) is required on all Sea Grant proposals. The first year must contain at least 50% or more of required match. If over 50% match was applied in the first year, then subsequent years must contain enough match to keep the cumulative match at or above 50% of the total amount of federal funding that**

**has been received up to that point.** Matching funds on Sea Grant proposals must be from non-federal sources. For questions about appropriate match contact Lynn Wardwell, Maine Sea Grant Fiscal Officer (207-581-1448; [wardwell@maine.edu](mailto:wardwell@maine.edu)) or your institution's sponsored programs office.

- b. **Note for all applicants:** Prepare a budget for each year of the project and a total summary budget (if the project is for two years). The budget should include all direct (including fringe benefits) and indirect costs of the research. Applicants should contact the sponsored research office of their home institution to obtain the current rates for fringe benefits and indirect costs. Be sure to indicate which salaries and wages are subject to indirect costs, and those not subject to indirect costs. Applicants must budget for all costs of the project, including anticipated salary and wage increases for year 2 and the costs of any extension, communications, and publication activities associated with the project.
- c. **Notes for applicants outside the University of Maine:** University of Maine indirect costs must be added to the first \$25,000 of the total budget for grant administration. See the University of Maine website for the most up-to-date rates <https://umaine.edu/ora/proposals/indirect-costs-fa/rates/>
- d. **Notes for applicants from more than one institution:** A yearly and total budget for each institution and a yearly and total budget for the overall project must be prepared and submitted. Applicants outside the University of Maine see note (c). If the awarded project contains subawards or the primary award is to an off-campus institution, the project must also match indirect costs that the University of Maine will charge at a rate of 26% of the first \$25,000 (\$6,500).
- e. **Graduate education:** Because graduate education is a priority for Maine Sea Grant, applicants are encouraged to include support for graduate students in their projects. Graduate student stipends should account for minimum rates at the applicant's institution. For example, minimum graduate student research assistant stipends at the University of Maine are \$21,334 for Masters students and \$24,000 for PhD students for 12 months.

For University of Maine applicants please refer to <https://umaine.edu/ora/proposals/indirect-costs-fa/rates/> for the most up-to-date information on minimum stipends, health insurance, and tuition rates for graduate students. Requests for student support at other universities should be checked with their home institution. If graduate student support is included, our expectation is that the research project would form all or part of the graduate student's thesis, and that the student will be supported full-time. Requests for partial graduate student support (e.g., for a six-month stipend) must explain the nature of the student's involvement in the project and indicate how the student will be supported for the remainder of the year. For example, the University of Maine requires at least 50% of the cost of health insurance and also full tuition for the period of performance. This requirement may be waived if the student has these costs covered from other sources. Tuition is exempt from indirect costs. Requests for student support at other universities should be checked with that institution.

Applicants must budget for the cost of outreach aspects of their project, such as printing costs, or outreach-related meetings or workshops.

- f. **Budget justification:** Briefly justify the major items of the budget. A budget justification Word document template can be downloaded from eSeaGrant ([esg.umaine.edu](http://esg.umaine.edu)) in the applicant's proposal submission page. The template provides an example of how to complete the budget justification.
- 6) **Current and pending support:** For each PI, list all pending, current, and recent (within three years) outside support. Include project title, amount, source, and period of funding, and the extent of the PI's involvement in each project. This is a document that the applicant will upload to eSeaGrant.
- 7) **CV of principal investigator(s)** (2-page limit for each investigator). Indicate institutional affiliation and key professional details. List up to five publications most relevant to the proposal, along with five additional recent publications. This is a document that the applicant will upload to eSeaGrant.
- 8) **Letters of support (optional):** Provide 2 or 3 letters from stakeholders (e.g., government agencies, tribes, NGOs, industry, etc.) that support your proposed work.

## **E. Pre-Proposal Development and Evaluation Process**

The development and review of Sea Grant pre-proposals is a multi-step process.

- 1) Pre-proposals are evaluated by the Stakeholder Advisory Panel, an in-state ad-hoc group of stakeholders (e.g., government, NGOs, businesses). The objective at this stage of review is to identify pre-proposals that provide the most promise in advancing knowledge in one (or more) of the four identified Sea Grant strategic priorities and the potential for societal impact. The pre-proposal review is primarily focused on the relevance and potential of the project, rather than scientific merit, although obvious flaws in project design will be identified. The pre-proposal stage also offers the opportunity to give applicants feedback on how their proposals might be improved. Panelists will be asked to identify realized or potential conflicts of interest among submitted proposals and will be asked to sign a reviewer conflict of interest and confidentiality form. Panelists that identify a conflict of interest will not participate in the review or discussion process of the pre-proposal(s).
- 2) Pre-proposals will be reviewed based on the following criteria where each category below is assigned a score from 1 through 10, where 1 is weak and 10 is strong.
  - Does the proposed work apply in a meaningful way to one (or more) of Maine Sea Grant's strategic objectives?
  - Does the proposed work explicitly link to a climate action strategy identified by the Maine Climate Council in the [Four-Year Plan for Climate Action](#), [Scientific Assessment](#)



[of Climate Change and Its Effects in Maine](#), or report [Assessing the Potential Equity Outcomes of Maine’s Climate Action Plan: Framework, Analysis and Recommendations?](#)

- Are stakeholders identified that will benefit from the research and a description of how they will benefit?
- Are the anticipated societal impacts credible and do they justify the investment?
- Does the proposed work relate to, or complement, Maine Sea Grant’s ongoing research or extension efforts? (See <https://seagrant.umaine.edu/research-program-development-projects/> for information on previous Maine Sea Grant-funded research projects.)
- Is the outreach strategy well-conceived and appropriate?

The Stakeholder Advisory Panel will consider the review criteria and assign quantitative numerical scores for each proposal. At the review panel panelists will further give qualitative scores of each proposal, in the form of High, Medium, and Low, after the discussion of each proposal. Quantitative and qualitative scores will be used to develop a consensus ranking of all proposals.

The Stakeholder Advisory Panel’s evaluations are advisory; final decisions on encouraging full proposals will be made by the Maine Sea Grant Director. The Director may consult with the Maine Sea Grant Management Team, but will rely primarily on the evaluations and recommendations of the Stakeholder Advisory Panel.

- 3) Applicants who submit the most promising pre-proposals will be encouraged to submit full proposals. Full proposals are to be submitted electronically to Maine Sea Grant through eSeaGrant ([esg.umaine.edu](http://esg.umaine.edu)) by **5:00 p.m. EDT on Monday, May 17, 2021**. Full proposal development and evaluation processes are described below.

Pre-proposal applicants not encouraged to submit a full proposal by Maine Sea Grant may still choose to submit a full proposal. Applicants must have submitted a pre-proposal to be eligible to submit a full proposal. Applicants of discouraged pre-proposals that choose to submit a full proposal should be aware that their chance of funding success is low given the typical volume of proposals received and funding available.

## F. Checklist for Pre-Proposals

**Note for University of Maine investigators:** The Proposal Approval Routing System (PARS) process is required for pre-proposals. You must file a notice of intent for this pre-proposal. Please refer to the Office of Research Administration website for more detail.

- ❑ All proposal elements must be submitted electronically through Maine eSeaGrant ([esg.umaine.edu](http://esg.umaine.edu))
- ❑ Uploaded proposal narratives must be in pdf format with Times New Roman in 12-point font with 1-inch margins on the top, bottom, and both sides.
- ❑ The pre-proposal will include:
  - ❑ List of project investigators
  - ❑ List of additional personnel
  - ❑ Project abstract that includes objectives, methodology, and rationale (75-word limit for each of the three sections)
  - ❑ Proposal narrative (3-page maximum) and literature citations
  - ❑ Completed 90-4 budget form for each year of project, and an overall summary if the project is for two years, and accompanying budget justification Word document
  - ❑ Current and pending support
  - ❑ CVs for each investigator (2-page limit per investigator)
  - ❑ Letters of support (optional)

## **G. Pre-Proposal Deadlines and Decision Timetable (2021)**

**Wednesday, January 13:** Announce 2021 request for pre-proposals for research projects during 2022 – 2024.

**Monday, February 1, 1:00 p.m.:** Maine Sea Grant Researcher-Extension Webinar. Serving as an introduction to the RFP and a chance for prospective researchers to hear from Maine Sea Grant's Marine Extension Team. This meeting will be hosted virtually through Zoom and you must register in advance to attend. The registration link is below.

Registration Link: [https://maine.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEkceGprD0tHtWqM5ER8\\_aLy6ZN6XkKqcrQ](https://maine.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEkceGprD0tHtWqM5ER8_aLy6ZN6XkKqcrQ)

**Wednesday, February 24:** Pre-proposal submissions due electronically through eSeaGrant ([esg.umaine.edu](http://esg.umaine.edu)) by 5:00 p.m. EST.

**Mid-March:** Stakeholder Advisory Panel reviews pre-proposals and makes recommendations to Maine Sea Grant Management Team regarding full proposal development.

**Late-March / Early-April:** Applicants receive proposal feedback and are encouraged or discouraged regarding development of full proposals.

## H. Important Notes about Full Proposal Development

- Full project proposals will only be accepted from applicants who submitted a pre-proposal to the Maine Sea Grant 2022-2024 request for proposals.
- Applicants who intend to submit a full proposal must complete and return the Notice of Intent to submit a full proposal form (Appendix 1; section N.) to the Research Coordinator ([sgresearch@maine.edu](mailto:sgresearch@maine.edu)) by April 12.
- Total funds requested from Sea Grant should not exceed \$150,000; 50% non-federal match required.
- All components of the full proposal (described in section I.) must be submitted electronically through eSeaGrant ([esg.umaine.edu](http://esg.umaine.edu)) by 5:00 p.m. EDT on Monday, May 17, 2021. Some items submitted by the applicant during the pre-proposal phase will transfer to the full proposal phase. It will be up to the applicant to make any necessary changes and updates if applicable. Please contact the Research Coordinator ([sgresearch@maine.edu](mailto:sgresearch@maine.edu)) if you have questions about using the program.

## I. Full Proposal Guidelines

Full proposals are to be submitted through eSeaGrant ([esg.umaine.edu](http://esg.umaine.edu)) and must contain the following required elements. Proposals that do not include all components will not be considered.

1. **List of investigators:** name, e-mail, affiliation, and role (principal investigator or co-principal investigator)
2. **List of additional personnel involved in the project:** name, e-mail, affiliation, and role in the project
3. **Project Abstract:** A brief summary of the project that describes the objectives, methodology, and rationale. A 75 word limit is imposed for each of the three sections.
4. **Proposal Narrative:** Proposals must be single-spaced using Times New Roman 12-point font with 1-inch margins on the top, bottom, and both sides of the page. **There is a 12-page limit to the proposal narrative, including figures and tables.** The page limit establishes the maximum length of a proposal and is not intended to be a target. Applicants should strive to be as succinct and concise as possible in explaining their research or synthesis effort.

The 12-page limit covers the following required components (a-e) and includes any tables or figures used to explain the research. Literature citations (f) do not contribute to the 12-page limit.

- a. **Background and rationale:** Explain why the proposed research effort is important in the context of the Maine Sea Grant Strategic Objectives. If the proposal is linked to the Maine Climate Council's 4-Year Plan for Climate Action, please describe those connections in

this section as well. Describe the potential users of the information and how they will benefit from the results. Discuss the research relative to the current state of knowledge in the field and to previous or ongoing research by the applicant or other investigators.

- b. **Scientific objectives:** Provide a statement of the project's goals and objectives. Explain the questions that will be addressed and hypotheses that will be tested in the research.
- c. **Proposed research:** Describe the research that will be conducted to answer the questions and test the hypotheses outlined in section (b). This section of the proposal should be written for people who are familiar with the field, using the appropriate terminology. The research plan should be consistent with the highest standards in the discipline. Particular attention should be paid to experimental design, appropriate methodology, and data analysis.
- d. **Outreach (required):** Describe the strategies that will be used to communicate the research results to stakeholders. The overall goal of outreach is to effect change by having individuals, groups, or institutions use scientifically based information when making decisions. Outreach is activity that extends Sea Grant-sponsored and other relevant coastal and marine information to user groups. Presenting results at a scientific meeting, academic seminar, or publishing in peer-reviewed journals are encouraged but are not considered outreach within this context.

Applicants are encouraged to review the document [Public Outreach and Engagement: A Primer for Sea Grant Researches](#), which can be found here: <https://www.seagrants.umaine.edu/funding/research>. Applicants are also encouraged to contact a member of the [Marine Extension Team](#) and the [Communications Manager](#) to discuss and receive advice on conceptual development of an outreach component. If Marine Extension Team members or other Sea Grant staff will participate in the project, you must have their explicit permission to be included in the proposal, and their roles must be specified. **Do not assume their participation.**

- e. **Educational impact (optional):** Briefly describe the involvement of high school, undergraduate, graduate students, or post-doctoral researchers in the proposed research.
- f. **Literature cited:** Provide complete citations for all literature referenced in the proposal.

## 5. **Budget form**

Applicants completing a full proposal will be required to fill out a NOAA 90-4 excel budget form using the template that can be downloaded from eSeaGrant ([esg.umaine.edu](http://esg.umaine.edu)) in the applicant's proposal submission page. Budget items previously entered in the pre-proposal phase will be transferred to the full proposal phase. However, at this phase, it is expected that PIs develop a more accurate and detailed budget that shows appropriate match. After completing the 90-4 budget form it must be uploaded to eSeaGrant in the designated section.

Budgets for all full proposals must be reviewed and approved by the appropriate institutional sponsored programs office prior to submission to our office. Applicants should allow

sufficient time before the deadline to review draft budgets and budget justifications with Lynn Wardwell, Maine Sea Grant Fiscal Officer (207-581-1448; [wardwell@maine.edu](mailto:wardwell@maine.edu)).

- a. **Matching funds: 50% match of federal funds (i.e., one dollar of match for every two dollars of federal money received) is required on all Sea Grant proposals. The first year must contain at least 50% or more of required match. If over 50% match was applied in the first year, then subsequent years must contain enough match to keep the cumulative match at or above 50% of the total amount of federal funding that has been received up to that point.** Matching funds on Sea Grant proposals must be from non-federal sources. For questions about appropriate match contact Lynn Wardwell, Maine Sea Grant Fiscal Officer (207-581-1448; [wardwell@maine.edu](mailto:wardwell@maine.edu)) or your institution's sponsored program office.
- b. **Note for all applicants:** Prepare a budget for each year of the project and a total summary budget (if the project is for two years). The budget should include all direct costs (including fringe benefits) and indirect costs of the project. Applicants should contact the sponsored research office of their home institution to obtain the current rates for fringe benefits and indirect costs. Be sure to indicate which salaries and wages are subject to indirect costs, and those not subject to indirect costs. Applicants must budget for all costs of the project, including anticipated salary and wage increases for year 2 and costs of the extension, communications, and publication activities.
- c. **Note for applicants outside the University of Maine:** University of Maine indirect costs must be added to the first \$25,000 of the total budget for grant administration. See the University of Maine website for the most up-to-date rates <https://umaine.edu/ora/proposals/indirect-costs-fa/rates/>
- d. **Notes for applicants from more than one institution:** A yearly and total budget for each institution and a yearly and total budget for the overall project must be prepared and submitted. Applicants outside the University of Maine see note (c). If the awarded project contains subawards or the primary award is to an off-campus institution, the project must also match indirect costs that the University of Maine will charge at a rate of 26% of the first \$25,000 (\$6,500).
- e. **Graduate education:** Because graduate education is a priority for Maine Sea Grant, applicants are encouraged to include support for graduate students in their projects. Graduate student stipends should account for minimum rates at the applicant's institution. For example, minimum graduate student research assistant stipends at the University of Maine are \$21,334 for Masters students and \$24,000 for PhD students for twelve months.

For University of Maine applicants please refer to:

<https://umaine.edu/ora/proposals/indirect-costs-fa/rates/> for the most up-to-date information on minimum stipends, health insurance, and tuition rates for graduate students. Requests for student support at other universities should be checked with their home institution. If graduate student support is included, our expectation is that the research project would form all or part of the graduate student's thesis, and that the student will be supported full-time. Requests for partial graduate student support

(e.g., for a six-month stipend) must explain the nature of the student's involvement in the project and indicate how the student will be supported for the remainder of the year. For example, the University of Maine requires at least 50% of the cost of health insurance and also full tuition for the period of performance. This requirement may be waived if the student has these costs covered from other sources. Tuition is exempt from indirect costs. Requests for student support at other universities should be checked with that institution.

Applicants must budget for the cost of outreach aspects of their project, such as printing costs, or outreach-related meetings or workshops.

- f. **Budget justification:** In greater detail, justify all elements of the budget. A budget justification Word document template can be downloaded from eSeaGrant in the applicant's proposal submission page. The template provides an example of how to complete the budget justification. Justifications will need to be entered for all budget items. **It is expected that expenditures are thoughtfully considered and well justified at the full proposal stage.**
6. **Previous Sea Grant support (if applicable):** All principal investigators who have received Sea Grant support are required to provide a summary (two-page limit) for each project funded in the past five years. The report should contain the following elements:
  - Project title.
  - Principal investigator(s).
  - Period and amount of award.
  - Summary of major results and conclusions (250-word limit).
  - List of all publications that resulted from the grant, distinguishing between peer-reviewed and other literature.
  - List of students, post-docs, and other professionals supported with degree titles and dates (if appropriate).
  - List of significant outreach accomplishments or impacts on industry or other stakeholders.
7. **Current and pending support:** For each PI, list all pending, current, and recent (within three years) outside support. Include project title, amount, source, and period of funding, and the extent of the PI's involvement in each project. This is a document that the applicant will upload to eSeaGrant.
8. **CVs of principal investigator(s):** (2-page limit for each investigator): Indicate institutional affiliation and key professional details. List up to five publications most relevant to the proposal, plus up to five additional recent publications. This is a document that the applicant will upload to eSeaGrant.
9. **Data Management Plan:** NOAA requires that all environmental data collected from funded projects be visible, accessible and understandable to users. Applicants will be required to

complete a data management plan that addresses these aspects. The form, to be completed by the applicant, will be provided on eSeaGrant as part of the application process and submitted through eSeaGrant as part of the application package.

10. **National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Questionnaire:** The objectives of NEPA are to disclose, analyze, and consider environmental information as a criteria when making decisions about federal actions and to inform the public of potential impacts and alternatives and involve the public in decision making. Applicants are required to complete a NEPA Questionnaire that gauges potential impact to the environment. We request applicants give extra consideration to describing the proposed location of research activities and documenting permits that will be required to conduct research activities. Note that any Sea Grant funded work cannot commence until the necessary permits have been obtained and copies sent to Maine Sea Grant and the National Sea Grant Office.

Maine Sea Grant can provide assistance and guidance with completing the Data Management Plan and NEPA Questionnaire. Contact the Research Coordinator ([sgresearch@maine.edu](mailto:sgresearch@maine.edu)) with questions or assistance.

11. **Letters of support (optional):** Provide 2 or 3 letters from stakeholders (e.g., government agencies, tribes, NGOs, industry, etc.) that support your proposed work.

## **J. Full Proposal Development and Evaluation Process**

Applicants who submit a full proposal will be required to complete the Notice of Intent to submit full proposal form (Appendix 1; section H) that indicates the applicant's intent on submitting a full proposal and lists several potential scientific peer reviewers capable of reviewing the proposed work, as well as listing reviewers that might pose a conflict of interest during a review. Completed Notice of Intent forms should be emailed to the Research Coordinator ([sgresearch@maine.edu](mailto:sgresearch@maine.edu)). The Notice of Intent form is due Monday, April 12.

Full proposals are evaluated on **scientific merit** based on the highest national and international standards in the field. The full proposal evaluation process has several steps, including the assessment of any conflicts of interest present with the proposals.

- 1) Full proposals are reviewed by out-of-state U.S. and international experts in the area of the proposed research. Each proposal receives 3-4 reviews. Applicants are requested to suggest potential reviewers, and may also identify potential reviewers with conflicts of interest (on the Notice of Intent form). Scientific peer reviewers will consider, comment and numerically score the proposals on the following aspects:
  - a. **Rationale** – the degree to which the proposal addresses an important issue, problem, or opportunity in development, use, or management of marine or coastal resources
  - b. **Scientific or Professional Merit** – the degree to which the project will advance the state of the science or discipline



- c. **Innovativeness** – the degree to which the proposal incorporates new approaches to problems and issues or exploits new opportunities in resource management or development
- d. **Qualifications and Past Record of Investigators** – the degree to which investigators are qualified to execute the proposed research including the quality and quantity of their published research and outcomes of previous Sea Grant awards
- e. **Stakeholder Relevance** – the degree to which the proposed research will benefit stakeholders and the mechanisms proposed to keep them apprised of progress and results

The scientific peer reviewers will assign numerical scores of 1–5 for each review criteria a–e. Scores will follow the scheme of 1–poor, to 5–excellent. Scientific peer reviewers will also be given an opportunity to write qualitative comments about each assigned proposal.

- 2) Applicants are provided with anonymous copies of the reviews and given the opportunity to write rebuttals to the scientific peer reviewers’ comments.
- 3) A technical review panel of out-of-state experts, convenes to evaluate proposals that considers all aspects of the RFP process including:
  - a. Scientific and technical merit of the proposals
  - b. Programmatic fit with Sea Grant’s strategic focus areas.  
Links with the Maine Climate Council’s Four-Year Plan for Climate Action, Scientific Assessment of Climate Change and Its Effects in Maine, or report Assessing the Potential Equity Outcomes of Maine’s Climate Action Plan: Framework, Analysis and Recommendations are also encouraged, but not required.
  - c. Meaningful societal impact
  - d. Expert peer reviews and the applicants’ responsiveness to the peer reviews

The technical review panel evaluates the criteria a – d based on a qualitative scoring system where individuals assign a High, Medium, and Low score to each proposal. The technical review panel then develops a consensus ranked order of all proposals and provides a summary of the scientific merit and prospects for success of the proposal. The technical panel may be conducted in person or held virtually.

- 4) Recommendations for funding of Sea Grant proposals are made by the Maine Sea Grant Director. The Director may consult with the Maine Sea Grant Management Team, but will rely primarily on the evaluations and recommendations of the Technical Review Panel except in instances where the program chooses to select a meritorious project out of rank order based upon the following selection factors.

Selection Factors:

1. Availability of funding;
2. balance of selected projects across strategic program priorities;
3. similarities of projects funded previously by Maine Sea Grant;
4. prior award performance (e.g. timeliness of reporting, progress and correspondence with Maine Sea Grant)
5. diversity of institutions, geography, career stage, and engaged stakeholders and partners.

The Maine Sea Grant Director makes final funding recommendations to the National Sea Grant Program Office

- 5) Final award decisions are subject to approval by Maine Sea Grant's designated Program Officer from the National Sea Grant Office, who attends the full-proposal Technical Review Panel.

## **K. Checklist for Full Proposals**

- ❑ The Notice of Intent to submit a full proposal must be submitted by email to the Research Coordinator (sgresearch@maine.edu)
- ❑ All proposal elements must be submitted electronically through eSeaGrant ([esg.umaine.edu](http://esg.umaine.edu))
- ❑ University of Maine investigators must obtain permission for submission through the Proposal Approval Routing System (PARS). Investigators from other institutions may need formal approval from their own institutions.
- ❑ Proposal narratives must be Times New Roman in 12-point font with 1-inch margins on the top, bottom, and both sides.
- ❑ The proposal should include:
  - ❑ List of project investigators
  - ❑ List of additional personnel
  - ❑ Proposal abstract that includes objectives, methodology, and rationale (75-word limit for each of the three sections)
  - ❑ Proposal narrative (12-page maximum) and literature citations
  - ❑ Completed 90-4 budget form completed for each institution and each year of the project, and overall summary if the project is for two years, and accompanying budget justification Word document.
  - ❑ Prior Sea Grant support
  - ❑ Current and pending support
  - ❑ CVs for each investigator (2-page limit per investigator)
  - ❑ Data Management Plan
  - ❑ National Environmental Policy Act Questionnaire (including copies of permits if applicable and available)
  - ❑ Letters of support (optional)

## **L. Full Proposal Deadlines and Decision Timetable (2021)**

All PIs should reach out to Fiscal Officer, Lynn Wardwell for budget advice, by email [wardwell@maine.edu](mailto:wardwell@maine.edu) or phone (207-581-1448).

**Monday, April 12:** Notice of intent to submit full proposal form (Appendix 1) with list of suggested reviewers due to the Research Coordinator via email ([sgresearch@maine.edu](mailto:sgresearch@maine.edu)) by 5:00 p.m.

**\*Tuesday, April 27:** Draft of budget and justification is due to the University of Maine's Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORA) by 4:30 p.m. EDT.

**\*Monday, May 10:** Finalized budget and justification is due to the University of Maine's ORA. Proposal Approval Routing System (PARS) should be initiated.

**\*Wednesday, May 12:** Final proposals must be submitted to ORA.

**Monday, May 17:** Full proposals due electronically through eSeaGrant ([esg.umaine.edu](http://esg.umaine.edu)) by 5:00 p.m. EDT.

**Wednesday, May 19:** Full proposals emailed to scientific peer reviewers.

**Wednesday, June 16:** Full proposal peer reviews due in eSeaGrant by 5:00 p.m. EDT.

**Monday, June 28:** Peer review blind copies provided to applicants for rebuttals.

**Wednesday, July 7:** Applicant rebuttal letters due in eSeaGrant by 5:00 p.m. EDT.

**Monday, July 12:** Proposals, peer reviews, and rebuttals sent to Technical Review Panel and to the National Sea Grant Office.

**Late-August:** Technical Review Panel reviews proposal packages in accordance with evaluation criteria and makes recommendations to the Maine Sea Grant Director. The Maine Sea Grant Director makes final decisions on which projects to include in the proposal to the National Sea Grant Office for funding.

**Mid-September:** Selected projects and rationale submitted to the National Sea Grant Office for approval.

**By October:** Applicants informed of decisions.

**February 1, 2022:** Anticipated 2022-2024 awards begin.

**\*Dates apply only to proposals submitted by University of Maine PIs.**

## M. Additional Information and Maine Sea Grant Contacts

Additional Information can be found at: <https://www.seagrant.umaine.edu/funding/research/>:

- Maine Sea Grant 2018 – 2023 Strategic Plan:  
<https://seagrant.umaine.edu/resource/strategic-plan-2018-2023-december-2020-version/>
- Outreach and Engagement: A Primer for Sea Grant Researchers:  
<https://seagrant.umaine.edu/resource/public-outreach-engagement-a-primer-for-sea-grant-researchers/>
- Tutorial for using eSeaGrant:  
[https://seagrant.umaine.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/467/2021/01/2021\\_MSG\\_eSG\\_Instruction\\_Guide.pdf](https://seagrant.umaine.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/467/2021/01/2021_MSG_eSG_Instruction_Guide.pdf)

Links to the Maine Climate Council's Reports:

- Maine Climate Council's Four-Year Plan for Climate Action:  
[https://www.maine.gov/future/sites/maine.gov.future/files/inline-files/MaineWontWait\\_December2020.pdf](https://www.maine.gov/future/sites/maine.gov.future/files/inline-files/MaineWontWait_December2020.pdf)
- Scientific Assessment of Climate Change and Its Effects in Maine:  
[https://climatecouncil.maine.gov/future/sites/maine.gov.future/files/inline-files/GOPIF\\_STS\\_REPORT\\_092320.pdf](https://climatecouncil.maine.gov/future/sites/maine.gov.future/files/inline-files/GOPIF_STS_REPORT_092320.pdf)
- Assessing the Potential Equity Outcomes of Maine's Climate Action Plan: Framework, Analysis and Recommendations:  
[https://climatecouncil.maine.gov/future/sites/maine.gov.future/files/inline-files/MCC\\_EquityAssessmentReport\\_201007.pdf](https://climatecouncil.maine.gov/future/sites/maine.gov.future/files/inline-files/MCC_EquityAssessmentReport_201007.pdf)

Prospective applicants are encouraged to contact Dan Weaver, Research Coordinator to discuss proposal development, Lynn Wardwell, Fiscal Officer to discuss budgeting, and Hannah Robbins, Communications Manager to discuss effective ways to communicate research.

Research Coordinator: Daniel Weaver

[sgresearch@maine.edu](mailto:sgresearch@maine.edu)

Tel: 207.581.4880

Fiscal Officer: Lynn Wardwell

[wardwell@maine.edu](mailto:wardwell@maine.edu)

Tel: 207.581.1448

Communications Manager: Hannah Robbins

[Hannah.robbins@maine.edu](mailto:Hannah.robbins@maine.edu)

Tel: 207.581.1442

**N. Appendix 1: Notice of Intent to Submit Full Proposal**

**MAINE SEA GRANT COLLEGE PROGRAM  
BIENNIAL RESEARCH COMPETITION 2022-2024**

*All applicants who intend to develop a full proposal for the 2020-2024 Maine Sea Grant research competition must complete this form and email it to [sgresearch@maine.edu](mailto:sgresearch@maine.edu) by **April 12, 2021**. Full proposals are due **May 17, 2021**. Proposals will not be accepted from applicants who do not submit this form.*

**1. Applicants:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Institution</b>

**2. Title of proposal:**

**3. Suggested reviewers:** Provide the names, addresses, telephone numbers and e-mail addresses of a minimum of four people you consider qualified to review the proposal. Reviewers must work outside Maine and have no conflict of interests with any of the applicants. Contact Sea Grant Research Coordinator at [sgresearch@maine.edu](mailto:sgresearch@maine.edu) if you need guidance.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Work address</b>	<b>Telephone</b>	<b>e-mail</b>

**4. Conflict of interest:** Indicate any individuals you believe should not be allowed to review your proposal, together with a brief explanation of your concern.