

FULL PROPOSAL GUIDANCE

MARYLAND SEA GRANT COLLEGE PROGRAM

*For projects starting February 1, 2024
Two-year and four-year opportunities*



Full Proposals due June 1, 2023 at 5:00 PM

PROGRAM SYNOPSIS

The Maryland Sea Grant College (MDSG) seeks proposals for its next funding cycle. MDSG is seeking two-year, single or multi-investigator pre-proposals at the \$100,000 per year level for research projects within Maryland’s coasts and watersheds focused on three areas: 1) healthy coastal ecosystems; 2) sustainable fisheries and aquaculture; and 3) resilient communities and economies. Principal investigators should focus on outcomes that can be achieved in a 24-month period. Additionally, MDSG is seeking pre-proposals focused on co-production with underserved communities with a budget of up to \$125,000 per year for two to four years. We anticipate funding 4 projects at the \$100,000 per year level and 1 project at the \$125,000 per year level. 50% non-federal cost match is required for each proposal (\$1 match for every \$2 of Sea Grant funding). MDSG is particularly interested in proposals that specifically connect **to the needs of communities, and/or environmental management and policy** and include an **engagement plan** for effectively translating information to the specific audiences affected by research findings. MDSG support is offered on an open, competitive basis. The full solicitation with instructions specific to the request for proposals (RFP) will be maintained at <https://www.mdsg.umd.edu/funding-opportunities>.

SCHEDULE FOR PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND REVIEW

Full proposals due	June 1, 2023 at 5 PM EDT
External Review and Technical Review Panel	June - August
Final proposal selection, PIs notified	Late August 2023
Accepted proposal modifications, if required, and AECQ due	September
Omnibus proposal to NOAA	October 12, 2023
Funding cycle	February 1, 2024 to January 31, 2026

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I. SUMMARY OF PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Principle Investigators (PI) must follow the instructions about proposal format as explained in this guidance document or risk the proposal being rejected. Details for completing all components of the proposal are in the section “**Detailed Proposal Submission Requirements**” section of these guidelines.

Complete information about the RFP can be found on the web at <https://www.mdsg.umd.edu/funding-opportunities>. Form templates can be downloaded from <https://www.mdsg.umd.edu/proposal-forms-and-worksheets>.

Full proposals must be submitted by **June 1, 2023 at 5:00 PM EDT** to our online proposal submission system, eSeaGrant. <https://eseagrant.mdsg.umd.edu>.

In eSeaGrant, PIs must complete each proposal tab and attach documentation as appropriate. Tabs and documentation include:

- **Start Here** (Online Form)
- **Principal Investigator** (Online Form)
- **Co-Principal Investigators** (Online Form)
- **MDSG 90-2 2022 Form** (Online Form)
- **Sea Grant Data Management Plan** (PDF Upload)
- **Project Proposal Narrative Upload** (PDF Upload)
- **Reviewers and Conflicts** (PDF Upload)
- **Budgets** (Online Worksheets for budget and justification)
- **Graduate Research Fellowship Competition** (PDF Uploads)
- **Submission Preview** (Click to submit your proposal here)

All PIs encouraged to submit a full proposal will be provided access to eSeaGrant. PIs who submitted a pre-proposal that was not encouraged to go onward are still eligible to submit a full proposal. Please contact us via email at eseagrant@mdsg.umd.edu to request access.

Please note, proposals selected through this competition may require modification or additional information before being forwarded to the National Sea Grant Office for funding. In particular, selected proposals will need to complete the Abbreviated Environmental Compliance Questionnaire form.

II. DETAILED PROPOSAL SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

A. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Submit the full proposal electronically to Maryland Sea Grant's eSeaGrant portal by **June 1, 2023 at 5:00 PM EDT**. The submission system shuts down automatically at that time. Adobe Acrobat is required for creating the required PDF of your full proposal.

- You must submit your proposal online at <https://eseagrants.mdsq.umd.edu>. Login to the proposal online submission system with your credentials. Click "Add Proposal" under the "2024 Omnibus Research Competition" selection and enter a title to start a new submission or click on your existing proposal "In Progress."
- Maryland Sea Grant does not require an original signature on submitted proposals. Electronic signatures are acceptable. However, researchers should conform to the submission policies of their host institutions regarding obtaining institutional endorsements and requirements for the signature pages.
- Maryland Sea Grant does not require hard copies of proposals be submitted to us. Your electronic submission through our website is your official submission.

B. MULTI-INSTITUTION PROPOSALS

Sea Grant encourages Principal Investigators to collaborate when appropriate to strengthen the proposal expertise and outcomes. Sea Grant allows PIs to either include subawards in their proposal OR to use the collaborative model where Sea Grant directly funds a maximum of two institutions separately. Regardless of your choice, we must receive a separate budget worksheet (see **eSeaGrant Tab: Budgets**) for each institution in each year. If the PI is including a subaward on their budget, include that subaward total on the "Other Direct Costs" line item in the budget module. Include a signed transmittal letter in the **Narrative Upload** for each institution Sea Grant will directly fund.

C. PROPOSAL FORMATTING

For general text, use 12-point or greater Arial font. Captions and labels may be smaller but should be legible. **Use single spacing**, left justified only, and one hard return between paragraphs. All margins should be 1 inch. The project narrative of the proposal should be typed continuously (that is, do not start a new page for each new section). The *Works Cited* and *Engagement Plan* should each start on new pages and are not included in the 15-page single-spaced limit required for the project narrative. The first page of the project narrative should be numbered 1, and numbering should continue throughout the narrative. Please upload the documents as PDFs to eSeaGrant.

D. GRADUATE RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP COMPETITION

In addition to funding for the research proposal, MDSG offers an optional, [separately funded, competitive fellowship program](#) to provide two years of support for graduate

students working on projects funded through this omnibus competition, or up to four years of support for a proposal submitted under the cross-cutting co-production track. Fellowships are intended to *enhance or extend a proposal* rather than simply provide a graduate assistantship that would complete the proposed scope of work. Fellowships provide a stipend, tuition remission, and fringe benefits at current UMCES rates. Fellows participate in several MDSG activities designed to provide science communication training and near-peer mentorship opportunities. MDSG anticipates several fellowships will be available to work with teams selected for funding in this research competition, though not all projects will receive a fellowship.

Principal investigators (PIs) may request a fellowship for an existing student or to recruit a new graduate student. Ideally, new MDSG Research Fellows will begin their appointment on February 1, 2024, though this may not be possible for faculty recruiting new students to their program. Following Sea Grant's focus to expand diversity in the sciences, PIs are encouraged to recruit or select students that are underrepresented in the sciences and would benefit from the Sea Grant fellowship and associated opportunities.

PIs applying to add a graduate fellowship to their proposal must include a separate **two-page maximum statement** that outlines the student's role with the project team, potential directions for the student's research, plans for integrating the student into the project's outreach efforts, and the training the student will receive through the fellowship. The statement should include information about recruiting a new student (desired credentials/experiences) or the qualifications and attributes an existing student will bring to the team. PIs may upload copies of student CVs (current students or potential recruits, if appropriate) as part of the package.

Note that PIs may also include student support as a line item in their proposal budgets.

E. EXPLANATION FOR COMPLETING FULL PROPOSAL COMPONENTS

eSEAGRANT TAB: START HERE

The dates of your project should be 2-1-2024 to 1-31-2026 (2027 or 2028 for co-production proposals). On this tab, you can also add a collaborator—someone who has access to your submission—by clicking on the “Manage Collaborators” button. This person must already be registered for an eSeaGrant account. Sponsored programs officers may be granted access to budget worksheets through this feature or within the budget module.

eSEAGRANT TAB: PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR/CO-PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS

Complete the requested information for the principal investigator and each co-principal investigator in the appropriate eSeaGrant form. You may only have one PI, but you may have multiple Co-PIs.

eSEAGRANT TAB: MDSG 90-2 2022 FORM

This form is a summary of each submitted proposal.

Project Summary Information: Provide a title, project abstract (300 words), data sharing summary (300 words), and list of partners. The *abstract* must include the rationale for the project, the scientific or technical objectives and/or hypotheses to be tested, a brief summary of work, and accomplishments to be completed. This abstract may be used for public dissemination and should not include any special characters. Paste into this form from your proposal narrative file. The *data sharing plan summary* is a brief description of your plan as laid out in your separately uploaded document. Include what data will be collected and how/when they will be made publicly available.

Strategic Plan Categories: Select the most appropriate focus area and classification tiers for your project. Tiers 2 and 3 are optional and are not all inclusive of Sea Grant project topics.

Funding Information: Provide the dollar value of requested and matched funds for each year. These values should match your budget worksheets.

Sea Grant Research Fellow: Check this box if you are participating in the graduate research fellow competition. See additional instructions below.

eSEAGRANT TAB: MDSG DATA MANAGEMENT PLAN

Proposers must complete a Data Management Plan for making environmental data and results accessible and interpretable within two years of collection. Download and fill out the “Sea Grant Data Management Plan Form” from this tab or our forms page (<https://www.mdsg.umd.edu/proposal-forms-and-worksheets>) or use your own form. You will be required to list data sets created and how they will be accessed. Storing data on local servers or external drives without public access or noting that data will be available “upon request to the PI” are not sufficient options. **Data management plans are a maximum of two pages.** For additional guidance, see our “Data Management and Sharing” page: <https://www.mdsg.umd.edu/data-management-and-sharing>.

eSEAGRANT TAB: NARRATIVE UPLOAD

Indicate the competition focus and upload the proposal narrative file (PDF only).

The narrative file must include the following components in this sequence:

- A. Signed Transmittal Page(s)
- B. Proposal Cover Page
- C. Abstract
- D. Project Description (major headings), Limited to 15 pages
 - Project Title
 - Project Background
 - Project Objectives
 - Project Details
 - Anticipated Outcomes and Results
 - Project Timeline
- E. Engagement Plan, Limited to two pages

- F. Institutional Review Board Statement, if applicable
- G. Works Cited
- H. Accomplishments of Current and Previously Funded Maryland Sea Grant Projects, Limited to one page per proposal
- I. Letters of Support, if applicable
- J. Curriculum Vitae, Limited to two pages per investigator
- K. Current and Pending Support

COMPONENT DESCRIPTION

- A. *Signed Transmittal Page(s)*: Principal Investigators are responsible for routing the proposal through their institution's research administration and for obtaining all required institutional endorsements prior to submitting. If Sea Grant is funding more than one institution directly (i.e., as a collaborative proposal), please include a signed cover sheet for each institution. A separate cover sheet for a subaward institution is not necessary.
- B. *Proposal Cover Page*: This page should list the primary focus area/cross-cutting topic, full project title and names, titles, affiliations, and contact information for each PI and Co-PI on the project. An example form is available [here](#).
- C. *Abstract*: Briefly summarize the proposed project objectives, methodologies, and rationale clearly and concisely. Emphasize the importance, relevance, application, and value to Maryland Sea Grant constituents. **Limit the abstract to 300 words.** Copy this language identically on the 90-2 form.
- D. *Project Description*: The project description contains the narrative and graphical components of the proposal. **You should address what you want to do, why you want to do it, how it will be done, how will you know if you succeed, and what benefits could accrue if the project is successful.** Your proposal should use the following headings in the order listed. A **15-page limit** applies to the narrative and includes any tables and figures. Failure to adhere to these guidelines is grounds for return without review. Before formatting the proposal consult the instructions under “III. ADDITIONAL FORMATTING GUIDELINES AND EXAMPLE.”

Project Title

Project Background

This section should describe the context and justification for the proposed work. Readers should obtain a complete understanding of the context in which the effort is being proposed, its direct connection to questions in the original RFP, its relevance to Maryland Sea Grant and environmental management or policy, and the nature of the specific problem being addressed. This section should demonstrate your familiarity with previous and ongoing work relevant to the

proposed effort.

Project Objectives

Provide a list of clearly defined objectives. For each objective, provide a concise statement explaining how it is aligned with the goals and priorities of the MDSG.

Project Details

This section should outline the methodologies, techniques, or actions for achieving each of the project objectives. Describe specifically the experimental designs, techniques, and analyses. Include an explanation of how the data will be analyzed using appropriate statistical procedures. If appropriate, include a labeled site map. Provide a description of major project components and outputs. The proposed approach should be clearly outlined so that the reader can determine how the proposed objectives will be met. Together, these sections should convince peer reviewers of your understanding of the current, state-of-the-art technologies and methodologies as well as the merit of your technical approach for conducting the proposed research. If necessary, proposers may also wish to respond to peer reviewer comments from the pre-proposal either in this section or elsewhere as appropriate.

Anticipated Outcomes and Results

Describe the outcomes, deliverables, and implications of the anticipated results of the project. This section should respond to questions such as:

- How does this research advance this field of science?
- What will be the products, deliverables, and outcomes from the project?
- Who will use this information or the products developed?
- Who is the target audience of your outreach effort?
- Have you communicated with potential users? How and at what point are they involved in the project? Is there coordination with underserved or under-resourced audiences? (It is strongly recommended that you involve users before submitting the proposal. Letters of support are appropriate.)
- What are the future applications of the proposed work?
- How might the results of this research be applied to the management of Maryland's coastal communities, environment, and resources?
- Are there other broader impacts from the work, including broadening access to science or working with underserved or traditionally underrepresented communities?

PIs are required to track their progress and report annually on information, products, and services rendered. Project deliverables may include academic products, outreach products, community engagement, presentations, workshops, tools, etc. Some of these deliverables will be tracked as performance measures.

Please review the list of Maryland Sea Grant performance measures described in Appendix 2 and include any applicable MDSG performance measures in this section.

Project Timeline

Provide a timeline for accomplishing the proposed work covering the entire project duration. Include approximate dates for key milestones related to the proposed work, including the accomplishment of anticipated outcomes and release of results. Two templates for milestone charts are available in Appendix 1; however, you may use any chart format to present your milestones. This section may include explanatory text for the chart as long as the page limit is not exceeded.

- E. *Engagement Plan*: Essential to the mission of Maryland Sea Grant is to fund research that meets the needs of audiences whom we serve. To that end, we require investigators to develop a **two-page maximum** plan that describes how the project will engage with constituencies that may benefit from the research and describes the ways the work will help solve problems and advance public understanding in Maryland and, possibly, beyond. We encourage you to work with end-users early on to assess their preferred communications methods and to develop creative approaches to meet their needs. We strongly encourage proposals to include funding to support engagement efforts.

Please read the description of the Engagement Plan in [Section V](#) before completing this section. Your plan should include clear engagement and communication strategies that support the effort and address some or all of the following bullets:

- Who is the end-user audience(s) you are trying to reach?
- How and when will end-users be engaged in the project or through outreach?
- How will end-user needs be integrated into the project and its outcomes?
- What scientific outputs/products/activities will be developed for, used by, or shared with end-users?
- How are end users not traditionally reached included in your efforts?
- What is being budgeted or leveraged to support engagement efforts?
- Present a timeframe for developing and implementing this plan.
- Describe the intended impact of these efforts with particular emphasis on how the impacts align with the RFP focus areas and research emphases.

- F. *Institutional Review Board Statement* (if applicable): Projects intending to use human test subjects for research purposes should include an anticipated timeline for when Institutional Review Board approval will be obtained and when the activities involving human test subjects are expected to occur.

- G. *Works Cited*: List references on a separate page. Reference pages are not included in the page limit.
- H. *Accomplishments of Current and Previously Funded Maryland Sea Grant Projects*: Principal Investigators who have been funded by Maryland Sea Grant since 2014 are requested to submit a **one-page maximum** summary of the accomplishments of their previous Maryland Sea Grant funded research. Information on research findings and publications, outreach efforts, and students supported as part of the research should be highlighted in the one-page summary. Details of how previous work may be relevant to the current proposal should be provided.
- I. *Letters of Support (Optional)*: Include letters of support from partners or agencies that can substantiate the need for the research or use of the results or outreach.
- J. *Curricula Vitae*: Provide a 2-page (maximum) curriculum vita for each PI and Co-PI. We recommend you use the National Science Foundation [Biographical Sketch](#) or [SciENCv format](#).
- K. *Current and Pending Support*: This list specifies projects in which PIs and Co-PIs are currently involved that are funded by Sea Grant programs and other agencies, or are under consideration for such funding, including the proposal being submitted to this competition. The total award amount for the entire award period covered (including indirect costs) must be shown as well as the number of person-months per year to be devoted to the project, regardless of source of support. Please provide a brief explanation of any overlap between this proposal and any of those listed. Include a separate list for each PI/Co-PI. An example format follows, but you may use other existing formats (e.g., NSF).

Currently Funded

“Evaluation of Food Sources for Striped Bass,” U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Contract no. FWS 14-16-0008-2138 with the Horn Point Laboratory, UMCES; 15 June 2016 – 14 June 2018; \$52,000; 1 mo/yr.

“Copper, Striped Bass and Patapsco River System,” National Science Foundation, Office for the IDOE, Grant GX-41953 with the Horn Point Laboratory, UMCES; 6 Feb 2016 – 6 August 2018; \$80,000; 1.5 mo/yr.

Pending

“International Maritime Laws and the Atlantic Striped Bass Fishery,” National Science Foundation, Office for the IDOE; 1 May 2018 – 30 April 2019; \$150,000; 6 mo/yr.

eSEAGRANT TAB: REVIEWERS AND CONFLICTS

Provide a list of four individuals from **outside** the Chesapeake Bay region (MD, VA, DC) that are knowledgeable and competent in your field of inquiry. Include complete addresses, e-mail, and website, if possible.

Following this list, provide an alphabetical list of conflicts of interest (COIs) for each of the PIs and Co-PIs. Conflicts may include collaborators, co-editors, advisors, and advisees (include affiliations). Do not provide a separate page for each PI.

eSEAGRANT TAB: BUDGETS

There are 4 tabs on the budget worksheet. Tab 1 is "Budget Instructions." Tab 2, "Budget Years," is informational only. It shows the budget years for which funding is available through this RFP.

Start with Tab 3, "Subawards." If your institution is giving out a subaward, enter the institution and PI's information here. Upload subawardee documentation (e.g., scope of work, institution cover letter). For "collaborative" proposals (where MDSG is directly funding each institution), skip this step.

Move to Tab 4, "Budget Worksheets."

Use the Budget Worksheets tab to add each budget worksheet.

- Enter a Worksheet Title (e.g., [PI Last Name] - [University] Year [1]).
- Select Indirect Cost type for your budget (On-Campus, Off-Campus, Other). Choosing "Other" will start your worksheets with 0%.
- Select Duration to align with the year.
- If this is a subaward, check the box and select the subaward institution.
- Click Save and Continue.

Lines for adding items are noted. Enter dollar values requested in the "Sea Grant Funds" column. "Matching Funds" is for cost shared funds. When finished populating a new item, be sure to click 'Add' to the right of it. **You are required to provide COMPLETE justification for every dollar value entered on each worksheet.** To add budget justifications, select the "Missing" icon (red) in the Justifications column. A pop-up window will appear, enter justification language here. Be sure to click 'Save' before closing. Once you have added a justification, the "Missing" icon will change to "Added" (green).

Justifications submitted for each line appear automatically in the Justification Preview page (click [printer icon] and [view] under 'Justification' at top-right) at the appropriate place within the justification outline. The Justification Preview page shows justifications grouped by project year.

Budget worksheets include auto-calculation of sub-total and total values but are not automatically saved as new data are entered. We recommend you save frequently. For all budget sections you must click the ADD or SAVE button at the end of each budget

line to save before you move on to the next line. Data will be lost if you click Update Worksheet before selecting ADD or SAVE. To ensure totals at the bottom of the worksheet are updated after adding new data, click the Update Worksheet button at the top of the page after you add or save a new line.

Once you edit and save a worksheet, click 'Back' and you will return to your Budget Worksheet tab. To edit a saved budget worksheet, click the Edit button next to its listing in the Budget Worksheets tab. You can also view the justification from this table.

You must create a separate budget worksheet for each year and every institution. If your institution intends to include a subaward in your budget, you must include this amount in G. Other costs, select the institution from the drop down AND create the separate budget for your subaward institution.

Specific Line Item Guidance

For A. Salaries and Wages, choose the appropriate Senior Personnel (PI, Co-PI) from the drop down box or Other Personnel type. For other personnel, include the person's name or TBD in the box. Enter the individual's monthly salary in box 1 (Mo. salary), their benefit percentage as a decimal in box 2 (Benefits %), how many months charged to the proposal in box 3 (Sea Grant mos. effort), how many months to be applied as match in box 4 (Grantee mos. effort). eSeaGrant will auto-calculate the total salary request and fringe based on these numbers. Add each individual to the form separately.

For G. Other Costs, choose the appropriate option from the drop down menu and then enter a very short item description in the box. Click "Add" on the right to add the line to the budget (and allow another line to be created). Include the full description and breakdown in the justification popup window. You may add up to 10 "Other Costs" lines.

For H. Indirect costs, you must enter your actual institutional rates in the "Inst. Rates" set of boxes as a decimal. Enter the rates you are charging on this proposal in the "SG Rates" boxes. Usually these will be the same. However, if you are partially forgoing collection of indirect costs, your proposal rates may be lower. To apply indirect costs as match/cost share, click the "Waived IDC as match" box. The difference between the Inst. Rates and SG rates will be applied as additional match. Make sure the "include" check box is selected for each set of items to which the rate applies (all for Modified Total Direct Costs, A and B for salary and fringe only, A for salary only). If you need to manually adjust the totals for any of these items, unclick the appropriate "Autocalculate" box.

Refer to our **Budget Justification Guidance** for examples of the minimum level of detail required in a justification response.

Once you have completed your budget and justifications, you may view the justifications from the budget worksheets tab and the 90-4 budget form(s) using a separate tab on the left side navigation.

Sharing your budget. From the table listing your worksheets (Tab 4), select the share icon on the right side of the budget worksheet you wish to share. A pop-up window will appear; click the “Add” button. Enter the information for the person whom you wish to share access to the worksheet and press “Send Request”. The individual will receive an email with a direct link to the worksheet from mdsg-eseagrant@umd.edu.

Cost Sharing or Matching Funds

A 50 percent match (e.g., a \$100K budget must have a match of \$50K) is sought on all Maryland Sea Grant proposals. The cumulative match at the end of each year of the grant must not fall below 50 percent of the cumulative federal request up to that point. Please contact the Maryland Sea Grant office if any questions arise about the eligibility of matching funds.

Note that it is important to specify match contributions in the budget and justification to clearly demonstrate sources and amounts. Any match contributions identified by investigators are subject to federal audit that may result in additional costs to the institution. Match may be in the form of selected "in-kind" services or additional funds from a specified institution, agency, industry, or non-federal program. **No funds from federal agencies can be used as match.**

eSEAGRANT TAB: BUDGET 90-4, SUBAWARD 90-4

Once you complete the budget tab, you may download or print a copy of your full budget table from the 90-4 tab. No data are entered here.

Select the drop down for “Show Full Data” to get a cumulative budget or a specific year to get annual budgets. Use the PDF Export button to get the correctly formatted form for your records.

Note that only budgets with a checked box in the “Include in 90-4” column in the Budget module, tab 4 “Budget Worksheets” will be displayed. You can uncheck individual boxes there to download budgets for separate organizations or years.

For budget worksheets created as subawards, you must view the Subawards 90-4 tab.

All 90-4 budgets for all institutions can also be downloaded from the “Submission Preview” tab by clicking “Download Proposal Docs Zip”.

eSEAGRANT TAB: GRADUATE RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP COMPETITION

This section is optional. Upload a two-page maximum statement requesting a graduate fellow as described in Section II. D. Upload a two-page maximum curriculum vita for pre-selected or to-be-recruited students.

eSEAGRANT TAB: SUBMISSION PREVIEW

Review the data and filenames of your submission. Click the “Submit” button in the upper right corner to submit your proposal package. **You MUST click submit by the**

deadline or your proposal will not be considered, regardless of what you have already uploaded. You may resubmit up until the deadline.

III. ADDITIONAL FORMATTING GUIDELINES AND EXAMPLE

To produce a uniform Sea Grant proposal volume for NOAA and to support equity among submissions, we require that you follow the guidelines listed in this section.

A. TYPEFACE OR FONT

When formatting your proposal, use 12-point Arial font for headers, subheaders and body text. Smaller (but legible to the reviewer) font sizes may be used for captions and figures. (Example follows this section.)

B. PROPOSAL FORMAT

Type proposals single spaced, left justified (a ragged right margin), with a full line of space between paragraphs. All margins should be 1". The body of the project narrative should be typed continuously (do not start a new page for each new heading). However, all major sections (Project description, Engagement plan, Works Cited, CVs, etc.) should start on a new page. Number continuously starting at 1 on the first page of the project narrative (center, bottom).

C. HEADINGS

Do not number the different levels of headings. Follow format of headings shown in the example on the following page, including title, PI/Co-PIs, major headings, subheadings, etc.

D. LISTS

Use bullets for lists. When typing lists, indent left margin flush under first letter of each item, as shown below:

- To determine the nature and pattern of variable developmental rates seen in sibling larvae of two-parent broods.
- To begin a light and electron microscopic examination of the successive developmental stages of larvae from rapid and slow growth/developmental groups.

E. LATIN TERMS

Please type Latin genus and species names in *italic*.

FORMAT EXAMPLE

Morphological, Physiological and Biochemical Aspects of Variable Developmental and Growth Rates in Oyster Larvae (Title in Arial Bold, 18-point) (2 blank lines)

PROJECT BACKGROUND

(Major headings should be Arial Bold, 12-point, all caps, centered)
(All major heads, subheads and rest of text should be Arial, 12-point)
(Skip 2 blank lines before each major heading and 1 blank line after)

Delay of Metamorphosis (Subhead one—use Arial Bold Italic)

Baseline Data (Subhead two—use Arial Bold)

Once the baseline data on metamorphic delay are obtained, subsequent cultures will be monitored for changes in growth rate (shell and biomass) following metamorphic competence. Pechenik . . .

Growth Rates (Subhead three—use Arial Italic)

Subsequent cultures will be monitored for changes in growth rate (shell and biomass) following metamorphic changes:

- To determine the nature and pattern of variable developmental rates seen in sibling larvae of two-parent broods.
- To begin a light and electron microscopic examination of the successive developmental stages of larvae from rapid and slow growth/developmental groups.

IV. PROPOSAL REVIEW PROCESS

After full proposals are received, they will be sent out for external electronic review. In addition, an extension review panel and a technical review panel will be convened. The technical panel will consist of diverse researchers and faculty with expertise in the disciplines represented by proposals under consideration. Based on the technical panel's review, external written reviews, and extension panel reviews, the technical panel will recommend a set of proposals for MDSG to consider for funding.

A. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Maryland Sea Grant will select projects for inclusion in the Maryland Sea Grant College Omnibus funding request based on the following criteria. Extension reviews will be based on the Relevance and Impact-Outreach criteria only.

Research Plan (30%)

- *Scientific merit:* What is the scientific and technical merit of the study?
- *Objectives:* Are the scientific objectives clearly stated and justified? Will they lead to actionable science and/or community driven outcomes?
- *Methodology:* Are the methods appropriate to the scientific problem outlined?
- *Time Schedule:* Can the PI complete the project in the allotted 24-month or 48-month (for community co-production proposals) time frame specifically set in this Request for Proposal?
- *Budget:* Is the budget reasonable and sufficient to complete the project?

Relevance to Sea Grant (30%)

- *Relevance:* Is the proposal relevant to the RFP and MDSG Strategic Plan? Does the project address one of MDSG's priority areas?
- *Appropriateness:* How appropriate is support from Sea Grant for this proposal relative to other sources of funding? Does the proposal leverage Sea Grant resources effectively through coordination and collaboration with other programs, funding sources, and collaborators?

Potential Impact and Outreach (30%)

- *Opportunities:* Does the project provide actionable science outcomes that can be applied over short-or long-term timeframes? Is a well-developed engagement plan proposed to translate the results of the study for end-users outside of direct scientific peers? Is co-production of science with communities considered and enacted, if appropriate for the study?
- *Potential Impact:* Does the research have a potential to impact public policy, management decisions, and/or behavior change?
- *Broader Impacts:* Does the proposed work contribute to MDSG's mission to broaden access to science and address environmental justice issues? Are under-resourced, underserved, or underrepresented students, organizations, or communities involved with or supported by the work?

Applicant(s) (10%)

- *Team approach:* Has the applicant assembled an effective collaborative or multidisciplinary team, if appropriate? For the community co-production proposals: Has a community been identified and is fully integrated into the proposal?
- *Knowledge of the Field:* Does the applicant demonstrate a clear, well-grounded knowledge of the field of study? Are the appropriate references acknowledged?
- *Previous Contributions:* Based upon the CVs and past contributions statement, do the applicants appear to possess the background and technical foundation needed to complete the project?

B. SELECTION CRITERIA

The Maryland Sea Grant leadership team will conduct a final review and consider the written peer reviews and technical and extension review panels' recommendations. The Sea Grant director has final discretion to select proposals to fund based on panel recommendations, technical reviews, availability of funds, and specific programmatic priorities, which include having a diverse and inclusive portfolio of awards across institutions, research topics, strategic focus areas, program needs, and investigators.

Depending on funding constraints and reviewers' comments, Maryland Sea Grant may ask PIs to revise their proposed budgets and scope of work, for example, by considering modifications to a proposed study.

C. EVALUATION AND SELECTION CRITERIA FOR GRADUATE FELLOWSHIP

Evaluation for the graduate fellowship competition will be an extension of the review process for full proposals. The following criteria will be equally weighted.

Research Role

- Is the student's role in the overall project is well-defined? Does the student have a leadership role in the project? Will the student's project augment or complement the PI's research proposal?

Training

- How well will the student be integrated into outreach and engagement efforts of the project?
- What is the extent of academic and professional training the student will gain from the team?

Student Qualifications

- Is the specified student academically well qualified? Will they benefit from the fellowship and opportunities?
- If no student is pre-selected, do the credentials and experiences the PIs seek in applicants align with the project and fellowship goals?
- Do the PIs describe a commitment and the plan or process used to expand

diversity in science as part of the graduate student recruitment effort?

Once research projects are selected, the review panel will discuss the fellowship reviews for each project and rate fellowship materials as: Not Recommended for Funding, Recommended, or Highly Recommended.

The Maryland Sea Grant director has final discretion to select applications to fund based on panels' ratings and comments, availability of funds, and specific programmatic priorities, which include having a diverse and inclusive portfolio of fellows across institutions, research topics, strategic focus areas, program needs, and investigators. In the event that additional funding becomes available, the Sea Grant director may make additional offers to applicants deemed meritorious and fundable or extend fellow terms.

V. ENGAGEMENT PLAN INFORMATION

All full proposals must include the Engagement Plan section. Discussions with Maryland Sea Grant Extension Program specialists or other end-user partners are encouraged in the early stages of pre-proposal development. Investigators should contact the Maryland Sea Grant office to discuss potential outreach approach and audiences (including industry, policymakers, educators the broader research community, and the public) and take part in our webinar to be held on November 29, 2022. Extension specialists may contribute to projects or direct you to other appropriate partners. A list of Maryland Sea Grant Extension specialists can be found at: <https://www.mdsg.umd.edu/extension-directory>.

Why Ask About End-User Engagement?

Sea Grant has a broad mission to contribute to the sustainable and wise use of our coastal resources. To accomplish this, we use research, education, extension, and communication. Our products are useful to society and incorporate science as the basis for the messages we convey. To ensure that the research we fund is as effective as it can be in serving our broad mission, we require investigators receiving support to demonstrate that they have a plan for translating their findings into a form that is useable by the individuals and organizations that the research intends to benefit.

What is Engagement?

In our research proposals, principal investigators must describe reasonable anticipated benefits of the actionable research to be undertaken over short to long time scales and to various "end users" of the information or technologies developed. Since very few end users will read peer-reviewed journal articles or attend professional meetings, outreach must employ

Potential End Users

- Coastal communities
- Decision makers
- Environmental managers
- Environmental NGOs
- Industry
- K-12 teachers
- Targeted groups within the general public

different and appropriate vehicles to convey the research findings to end-users in a readily understandable and potentially actionable manner. Many different tools can be used provided there is a clear target audience and a logical outcome from the research effort. In some cases, end-users should be engaged in the proposed work throughout the project through the process of co-production. **Articulating a plan to get this information to end users is a vital part of successful Sea Grant proposals.**

What are not “Engagement Products” (for MDSG’s purposes)?

The following are all important products of the research process, but they do not qualify as outreach to constituents or specific end users:

- Undergraduate and graduate education (internships, assistantships)
- Peer-reviewed journal articles
- Presentations at scientific meetings

What is an Engagement Plan?

A Maryland Sea Grant engagement plan describes how specific end users will be engaged early and learn about research outcomes so that they can use the information when making decisions (e.g., about coastal resources or land use policy). Involvement of the targeted end users during proposal development is important and co-production of research projects with end-users often leads to more targeted, actionable outcomes. An engagement plan describes what methods and/or products the project team will use/create to work with and communicate results to end users who are likely to benefit from the research. In addition, the plan should predict, within reason, the impact of the research and outreach effort on the relevant end-users. For example:

- Will managers be able to make more informed decisions regarding a specific issue?
- Will a new method to manage a specific end-user-identified problem be developed and disseminated?
- Will a key group have new tools and training to address an important issue pertaining to Chesapeake or coastal bays management?
- Will a coastal community or organization be engaged in developing and advancing the research and identifying desired outcomes?
- Will the project have a local impact?
- Will a policy or individual behavior change result from the project?
- Will communities, underserved or under-resourced, be reached?
- Will communities, underserved or under-resourced, benefit from the project (e.g. is the community more resilient to extreme events or climate change because of the research)?

A general distribution of information to wide audiences in the general public (e.g., via a website) can be useful but is most likely not sufficient in and of itself to be considered an effective engagement tool. An engagement effort should lead to outcomes that can be evaluated as products of the funded project. Often developing a logic model or employing Theory of Change can prove useful for defining how a project will lead from

activities to outcomes. In particular for community co-production proposals, the work should strengthen engagement with end-users to help them to achieve significant outcomes from the research. The research should not be extractive of end-users, but rather empowering for communities and/or end-users.

The following bullets form the framework for a Maryland Sea Grant Engagement Plan. They are designed to guide investigators as they develop plans and will serve as the reference for evaluating outreach efforts over the lifetime of funded projects.

- Who is the end-user audience(s) you are trying to reach?
- How and when will end-users be engaged in the project or through outreach?
- How will end-user needs be integrated into the project and its outcomes?
- What scientific outputs/products/activities will be developed for, used by, or shared with end-users?
- How are end users not traditionally reached included in your efforts?
- What is being budgeted or leveraged to support engagement efforts?
- Present a timeframe for developing and implementing this plan with specific emphasis on points of end-user engagement.
- Describe the intended impact of these efforts with particular emphasis on how the impacts align with the RFP focus areas and research emphases.

These efforts often require funds and as such an appropriate, justified funding request should be included in the project budget. For community co-production projects, this is likely to include, in particular, participant support costs, meeting costs (e.g. child care, food), or transportation for full participation by community partners.

Your plan should be specific and targeted to the audience(s) who will most benefit from engagement with the research project!

Assistance and Examples

The key to a successful engagement effort is defining a strategy for how specific users can **participate, learn about, and/or make use of** the results and products of the proposed research. Early engagement of stakeholders is key to successful and useable products. Below are some resources you may consult during the development of your proposal and during the implementation of your engagement plan.

- **Contact Maryland Sea Grant Extension Faculty:** Our Extension educators and specialists have a variety of expertise and work with many of the groups that are potential beneficiaries of your research. <https://www.mdsg.umd.edu/extension-directory>. They may serve as co-PIs on projects.
- **Involve constituents in research:** Co-produce the research project with individuals who are most likely to benefit from the research (communities, landowners, NGOs, policy makers). Incorporate interested volunteers (e.g. paid and unpaid) or environmental groups in the collection of data. Connect with underserved communities who may have unique needs and applications of research projects and results.

- **Serve on or connect with a committee or working group:** Some researchers, as part of their research programs or service activities, are directly and actively engaged with end user communities. These groups help to inform the direction of the proposed research and provide a built-in audience for the results when they become available.
- **Partner with industry or non-governmental organizations:** Some researchers collaborate with environmental consultants or other interested constituencies (e.g. boundary organizations that work among communities, academia and government) to develop research questions and/or to disseminate pertinent results.
- **Engage the Maryland Sea Grant communications team:** Maryland Sea Grant staff write and publish blogs, multimedia pieces, and our magazine *Chesapeake Quarterly*. They also have graphic design, social media, and production expertise. <https://www.mdsg.umd.edu/our-communications-staff-and-products>

APPENDIX 1: FORMS & EXAMPLES

Proposal cover page, milestone charts, and curriculum vitae are available as electronic templates on the web at:

<http://www.mdsg.umd.edu/proposal-forms-and-worksheets>.

The project summary (90-2), budget (90-4) and budget justification forms must be completed online using eSeaGrant: <https://eseagrant.mdsg.umd.edu>.

Project Information and Focus Area or Cross-Cutting Topic

Title: This Is an Example Proposal Title

Principal Investigator: Michael Allen

Title: Associate Director

Affiliation: Maryland Sea Grant

Contact Information: xxx@mdsg.umd.edu; 000-000-0000

Co-Principal Investigator:

Title:

Affiliation:

Contact Information: xxx@mdsg.umd.edu; 000-000-0000

MULTI-YEAR MILESTONE CHART

Timetable for initiation, performance, and completion of tasks included in the program for the funding period

<i>Work Plan Tasks:</i>		Year 1	Year 2
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

YEARLY MILESTONE CHART: 20xx

<i>Work Plan Tasks:</i>		JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
1.	Activity		X	X	X								
2.													
3.													
4.													
5.													
6.													
7.													
8.													
9.													
10.													

APPENDIX 2: MARYLAND SEA GRANT PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Healthy Coastal Ecosystems (HCE)

- Number of resource managers who use ecosystem-based approaches in the management of land, water, and living resources as a result of Sea Grant activities
- Number of acres of coastal habitat protected, enhanced, or restored as a result of Sea Grant activities

Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture (SFA)

- Number of fishers, seafood processors, aquaculture industry personnel or seafood consumers who modify their practices using knowledge gained in fisheries sustainability and seafood safety as a result of Sea Grant activities

Resilient Communities and Economies (RCE)

- Number of communities that adopt/ implement sustainable economic and environmental development practices and policies as a result of Sea Grant activities
- Annual number of communities that adopt/implement hazard resilience practices to prepare for and respond to/ minimize coastal hazardous events

Environmental Literacy and Workforce Development (ELWD)

- Number of Sea Grant products that are used to advance environmental literacy and workforce development
- Number of people (youth and adults) engaged in Sea Grant-supported nonformal education programs
- Number of Sea Grant supported graduates who become employed in a job related to their degree within two years of graduation

Cross Cutting National Focus Area Measures

- Number of Sea Grant tools, technologies and information services that are used by our partners/customers to improve ecosystem-based management
- Economic and societal impacts and benefits derived from Sea Grant activities market and non-market; jobs and businesses created or sustained; patents