

FY 2010-2012 Guidelines for Formal Sea Grant Proposals

The full proposal you submit to the Louisiana Sea Grant (LSG) College Program must include the following:

- # Project summary form 90-2. See [ProjectSummaryForm_90-2.pdf](#)
- # Individual project budgets with budget detail worksheets (sheets A, B, C, & D), one for each year of funding requested and a composite budget. **Do not type on the budget page. When you enter data on sheets A-D, the budget page will automatically be populated.** See [Budget_excel.xls](#)
- # Narrative budget justifications. See [NarrativeBudget_example.pdf](#)
- # Electronic version inclusive of all documents. <mailto:klea@lsu.edu>
- # CD containing all documents (MS Word or Word Perfect)
- # Federal forms and certifications for non-LSU applicants only. See [Funding/forms.html](#)

Please send 3 hard copies of the entire proposal package to Dr. Chuck Wilson, 238 Sea Grant Building, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA 70803-7507. Departmental signatures and principal investigator signatures must be included with one of the hard copies submitted.

Each of these items is discussed in the paragraphs following. Sample formats and typing instructions are included as attachments.

NOTE: Hard copy proposals must be received and date/time stamped in Room 238 Sea Building not later than 4:00 PM CDT Monday, 8 April 2011. If a proposal does not meet this deadline it will NOT be considered for funding.

SEA GRANT PROJECT SUMMARY (FORM 90-2) [ProjectSummaryForm_90-2.pdf](#)

The Project Summary Form is an extremely important part of the proposal because it is the only part that many persons will see. Hence their judgements about the proposed activity may hinge entirely on this form. The form is likely to be extracted from the proposal by the National Sea Grant Office and reproduced for a number of purposes. It will be entered in the LSG Research Database and maintained as one major part of your project record. You will be required to prepare and submit periodic updates of significant derivative accomplishments and benefits to your Research Database entry including a concluding report when the project ends.

Please note that a Project Summary Form is needed for each year of the project. The information (objectives, methodology and rationale) will remain the same for each year, but the budget amounts may change. The initiation date of the project will also remain the same, but the completion dates will change, (i.e., Year One initiation date 2/1/10; completion date 1/31/11; Year Two initiation date 2/1/11 (the project will have only one initiation date); completion date 1/31/12). The project summary form information must be contained on one page per funding year. Condensed print and narrow margins will

not be accepted. An 11 point font is preferable. Be concise and succinct.

THE NARRATIVE TECHNICAL PROPOSAL

The narrative technical proposal constitutes the main body of each project proposal. It must be sufficiently complete so that a reviewer with no detailed knowledge of either Louisiana or Sea Grant could make an intelligent judgement about the project's merits. You may, however, assume that the reviewer is knowledgeable in the field covered by the proposal, and is familiar with the national needs and issues being addressed by the proposal.

Narrative proposals must be self-contained and appropriate for 8-1/2 x 11 black and white photocopy reproduction. **Materials that require special treatment such as color illustrations, glossy photographs, and foldout pages will not be accepted.** Narrative proposals must not exceed 10 pages in length, including figures, tables, milestone charts, bibliographies, appendices, and attachments, but exclusive of project summary forms; preliminary proposal objectives page; project budgets, signature pages, and other federal forms and certifications. This page limitation may be waived by LSG (225-578-6373) in exceptional circumstances, e.g., collaborative efforts involving researchers from different disciplines working on closely related but separately administered aspects of a common theme. **See Appendixes A and B below for additional formats and instructions.**

PROJECT BUDGET (Form 90-4) [Budget excel.xls](#)

Project budgets show both requested federal funds and pledged cost-sharing (match) funds. They consist of (a) the Sea Grant Budget form and (b) the Budget Detail Worksheets.

The Sea Grant Budget form summarizes costs according to the categories provided in the Budget Detail Worksheet. Subtotals from the worksheet transfer directly into the 90-4 budget form.

The Budget Detail Worksheet is a four page form designed to standardize the entry of cost items formerly provided in narrative budget justifications. The worksheet should be completed prior to filling out the Sea Grant Budget. Please return all four pages of each worksheet, even if they do not contain entries.

Single-institution projects require year one and year two budgets plus a composite budget for both years one and two. Multi-institutional projects require year one, year two, and composite budgets from each institution and must also include a summary of combined project costs for all institutions in which any LSU project costs are distributed in the appropriate expense categories and other participating institutions' costs are listed as subawards under the "Other Costs" category. The budget forms and worksheets must be thoughtfully and carefully constructed even though LSG will check, edit, and recalculate all project budgets before assembling the omnibus program

package.

Instructions for completing the Budget Detail Worksheet follow:

SALARIES AND WAGES

Sea Grant has always been a strong proponent of graduate student support; consequently, if two full proposals are scored equally in the review process, then the one that has graduate student support will be given a higher priority.

Identify project participants by name as indicated on the form. Use accurate current salaries as the basis for calculating amounts for each individual. If funds are being requested to support a vacant position, so indicate (vac. pos.) and use a salary rate appropriate to the position. Enter months of effort as full-time equivalents (FTEs), regardless of how many calendar months the individual will work on the project. For example, a graduate student on a 12-month, half-time (20 hr/week) appointment would accrue 6 months (or 6 FTEs) of effort.

Assign personnel to the various categories according to the following definitions, which conform to NOAA/Sea Grant usage (These definitions do not necessarily conform to usage in your institution.)

A. SENIOR PERSONNEL

A1A. The (Co) Principal Investigator is responsible for the conduct of the activity. He/she may be the leader of a research project, the coordinator of an educational project, or the director of an advisory service activity. If responsibility is shared equally among two persons; they should be shown as co-principal investigators. Do not list graduate students or non-university personnel as principal investigators. Summer support is not encouraged.

A1B. Associates: Faculty or staff other than (co) principal investigators.

B. OTHER PROFESSIONALS

A2A. Do not use this category. (See G. Other Costs)

A2B. Research associates are professional staff participating in the project who are either employees or persons retained solely for the project. Staff members of participating organizations and consultants should be budgeted under G. "Other Costs" because fringe benefits are not computed on their compensation.

A2C. Research assistant graduate students are part- or full-time students who hold at least a bachelor's degree or equivalent, are enrolled in a program leading to an advanced or professional degree, and are employed to work on the project.

A2D. Professional school students are students enrolled in medical, legal, and other professional schools.

A2E. Undergraduate students may be employed as aides or helpers on a Sea Grant Project either on an hourly basis. Pre-baccalaureates are undergraduate students enrolled either part- or full-time in a course leading to a degree.

A2F. Secretarial-clerical is a category for office personnel. (This category is not routinely chargeable to sponsored agreements as a direct federal or non-federal cost.)

A2G. Technical-shop is a category for technicians, shop personnel, and other persons with special but nonprofessional skills.

A2H. May be used for "other" persons assigned to project-related duties who are not included in categories a to g.

B. FRINGE BENEFITS are those customarily paid by the grantee institution, following its usual practices in the payment of such benefits. LSU's anticipated fringe benefit rate for regular employees is 33%.

C. PERMANENT EQUIPMENT is any nonexpendable equipment costing \$5,000 per unit or more with an expected useful lifetime in excess of one year. Included in this definition are enhancements to permanent equipment. General purpose permanent equipment items, including personal computers and related peripherals, are normally treated as unallowable costs to sponsored projects unless specifically justified in the proposal and approved by the granting agency.

D. EXPENDABLE SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT must be described according to major categories, e.g., chemical reagents, glassware, lumber, etc. All fuel for both vehicles and boats should be budgeted here rather than under travel. Office supplies are not allowable costs to sponsored agreements.

E. TRAVEL. Distinguish between field and conference travel. Itemize trips and show the basis of computation. Also distinguish between domestic and foreign travel. Domestic travel includes travel within the 48 contiguous states plus Alaska and Hawaii. All other travel outside the U.S. including Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, Canada, and Mexico is considered as international travel. Each such trip must be justified and specifically approved in advance. State travel regulations apply; see <http://www.fas.lsu.edu/acctservices/travel/procedures/>

All meals, lodging, commercial transportation, car rental, and vehicle mileage is budgeted under E. Travel. Budget boat rental under G. Other Costs.

F. PUBLICATION AND DOCUMENTATION COSTS. Indicate the nature of the expense, e.g., journal page charges, advisory pamphlets, newsletters, etc.

G. OTHER COSTS. List allowable items classified as "Operating Services." These include long distance telephone charges, analytical services, photocopy charges, boat

rental, ship time, and chartered aviation services. Also list in this category “professional services” including consultants' charges and subawards to other organizations. Please note that memberships in scientific societies and other organizations are unallowable costs to sponsored projects. Subscriptions to journals and magazines are allowable costs only when fully justified in the proposal and approved in advance.

H. INDIRECT COSTS. The basis for computing indirect costs must be shown in the space provided. For LSU projects, the basis is modified total direct costs (MTDC) at 26%. Note that indirect costs apply to the grantee share column as well as to the Sea Grant funds column.

MATCHING SUPPORT

Grantee share contributions are an essential requirement of most projects supported by the National Sea Grant College Program.

Nonfederal matching/cost-sharing support of at least one-half (50%) of the total federal cost is required by Sea Grant's authorizing legislation. In addition, it can be a strong indication of relevance. For education projects, at least 50 percent matching support is the norm.

While a one-half match is the expected norm for research projects, reduced cost-sharing amounts may be approved by this office in exceptional cases. However, each project must have a meaningful amount of match, and each participating institution must meet the overall one-half matching requirement for projects that are funded at that institution. Where there are likely to be fairly immediate and direct benefits to private-sector entities, significant amounts of cost-sharing from those entities are appropriate.

It is important to identify matching cost items fully and carefully, since projects selected for funding support will be required to document all pledged matching support in the institution's official records. Matching support may be provided “in-kind” as well as in cash, but such items must be clearly identified as cost-shared contributions in the accounting records of proposing institutions. Examples of matching support include nonfederal salaries, wages, and benefits of those working in the project, expendable supplies and equipment, ship time, and donated supplies, and equipment. Waived indirect costs and indirect costs associated with nonfederal contributions also may be used for matching. Unrestricted grants and contracts with state and local government agencies are valid sources of matching support if documents of approval for use as match from the funding agency are provided with the budget.. Also, the amounts claimed as match must actually be expended in furtherance of the approved Sea Grant project objectives during the same active grant period.

Institutions that maintain information systems for after-the-fact documentation of salary distributions in accordance with OMB Circular A-21 (revised) should ensure that cost-sharing commitments are properly recorded and certified therein. Guidelines from the

LSU Office of Sponsored Programs require that a signed pledge or letter of commitment be obtained from the donor of any third-party cost-sharing contribution. This letter, preferably on the donor organization's letterhead, should list the items to be contributed and describe their valuation cost basis. Released time (salary match) provided to faculty for conduct of the project research must be formally documented. The provisions of OMB Circular A-21 (revised) determine allowability of project costs including matching items. If you are uncertain about claiming a matching contribution, the LSG office (225-578-6517) will provide additional guidance.

SUGGESTED REVIEWERS

We've received your list of suggested peer reviewers with your statement of interest submission; you are not required to provide any at this time unless otherwise instructed. NSGCP guidelines require the use of peer reviews for evaluating proposals with regard to (1) rationale, (2) scientific or professional merit, (3) innovativeness, and (4) professional qualifications of investigators. Peer reviewers' opinions about (5) user relationships, (6) responsiveness to LSG priorities, and (7) programmatic value may also be solicited, although the latter three criteria are largely the concerns of the program director and review panelists.

The broad range of topics that qualify for Sea Grant research funding necessitates recruitment of an equally broad and diverse pool of peer reviewers. Since people working in particular fields of research are likely to know of other competent researchers in the same or related areas, we request each investigator who submits a full proposal to nominate at least five candidate peer reviewers for that proposal. This request is made with the caveat that the individuals nominated must not only be knowledgeable in the field covered by the proposal, but must also be free of any conflict of interest that could bias their recommendations for/against the proposed projects. We do not request peer reviews from scientists in the author's home institution, and seldom request them from scientists in any Louisiana university. Peer reviewers are now required to attest in writing to the absence of any conflict of interest, or disclose the nature of any relationship with the proposal author that could be reasonably construed as a conflict of interest.

DISPOSITION OF PEER REVIEWS

A review panel that is capable of interpreting peer reviews within the fields of specialty in which proposals are under consideration will be convened by the program director to review all peer reviews received, and advise the program on which full proposals should be considered for funding. The review panel will operate under procedures developed to avoid conflict of interest and will include the program's NSGO program officer. Prior to notifying proposers of the outcome of the proposal process, the director will inform the NSGO of the institution's intended decisions and document the corresponding rationale, for the record. Once the NSGO has approved the decision-making process,

the director notifies all proposers of the decisions regarding their proposals. Anonymous copies of the corresponding peer reviews and a statement of the rationale for the decision will accompany this notification. Records of the proposal and decision-making process, including peer reviews, will be maintained for audit.

CD and ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION

We request that project summary forms, narrative proposals, and explanatory budget notes be submitted on a compact disk as well as an electronic version sent by e-mail to klea@lsu.edu. Three hard copies containing all documents, including departmental approval signatures needs to be date/time stamped not later than 4:00 pm CST on Thursday, 13 April 2009, in order to facilitate editing and production of the final proposal.

GUIDELINES FOR ROUTING PROPOSALS

Applicants should follow proposal routing instructions, including proper routing forms that apply to their particular administrative units, subject to the following instructions:

- # Sea Grant proposals from applicants assigned to units of the LSU Baton Rouge campus should be routed through all prescribed departmental and college (or equivalent) administrative channels to LSG. A Proposal Routing and Approval Form (PRAF) is available at [PRAF.pdf](#)
- # Sea Grant proposals from applicants assigned to units of the LSU Ag Center should be routed through all prescribed Ag Center administrative channels to LSG.
- # Proposals being submitted from institutions other than LSU and the LSU Agricultural Center must include, but is not limited to, the properly executed forms and certifications listed below:
 - # Current indirect cost rate negotiation letter
 - # Application for Federal Assistance (SF424)
 - # Assurances--Non-Construction Programs (SF424B)
 - # Certifications Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion-- Lower Tier Covered Transactions and Lobbying (CD512)
 - # Financial Audit Information

The above forms can be found at [Funding/forms.html](#)

Any form prepared by an applicant institution must be executed and signed by its Authorized Representative. Additionally, proposals requesting \$50,000 or more must include a Certificate of Signature Authority. This can be a form letter signed by the institution's chief executive officer that attests to the Authorized Representative's signature authority.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Please call either LSG Manager for Operations David Nieland at (225) 578-6373 or LSG Business Manager at (225) 578-6342 if you need additional information or clarification of these instructions.

APPENDIX A: SAMPLE FORMATS AND TYPING INSTRUCTIONS

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR FORMAL PROPOSALS In addition to the general organization and layout (attached), the following instructions apply:

Paper: DO NOT use letterhead stationery for the narrative proposal and DO NOT date. Print on white 8½" x 11" offset paper.

Font: Proposals printed on laser printers or letter quality printers are acceptable. Please use a font that is 11 point type. Tables and figures should be placed on separate sheets and included at the end of the proposal. **Do not place figures in the text of the proposal.**

Spacing: One tab at the beginning of each paragraph. Single-space paragraphs. Double-space between paragraphs. Triple space before headings.

Margins: 1" from top and bottom of page; 1" left and right margins (so that proposal can be printed on both sides). Please do not justify the right margin.

Pages: Number lightly in **pencil** (in the lower right corner).

We need the original typed manuscript, plus 2 photocopies, a CD and an electronic copy sent via email. The disk should contain the narrative proposal in Word Perfect, MS Word, or RTF for purposes of editing, collating, and pagination of the institutional proposal.

APPENDIX B: ANNOTATED TECHNICAL PROPOSAL OUTLINE

PROJECT

(Place Your Proposal Title Here. List exactly as shown on the project summary form. Sea Grant will assign project number.)

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

Principal Investigator (name)
Co-Principal Investigator (name)

Background and Motivations

(The primary purpose of Sea Grant-sponsored research is to solve problems that impede full development of the nation's marine resources. Your proposal must therefore demonstrate that you not only have identified a challenging, important problem and possess the research skills to address it, but that you have given careful attention to the applied context of the research and dialogue with the organizations and people who would implement your findings. It is desirable that projects be developed cooperatively with the intended users of your research results to maximize the likelihood that practical benefits will accrue from the effort. It is even more desirable to obtain some commitment from users in the form of cost-sharing contributions, in-kind materials and services, or funding of complementary activities. This section is an appropriate place in which to discuss these arrangements.

The background and motivations section should also (a) demonstrate your knowledge of related research and (b) show that you understand contemporary research in your field well enough to make a worthwhile contribution to it.

For instance, it is no longer enough to base the need for environmental research on the argument that Louisiana has the nation's largest ecologically productive estuarine system; we must also demonstrate that we have exceptional competence to develop its potential through fundamental and applied research.)

Objectives

(List the overall objectives of your project briefly, concisely, and realistically. If your project will take more than one year to complete, indicate the estimated completion time and list milestones to be achieved during each year. Reviewers must judge whether the stated objectives can be reached using the proposed approach. Projects must have objectives that are capable of attainment during the project's life. Reviewers and the funding agency seldom consider favorably open-ended, i.e., "never-ending" studies or projects of a purely basic research nature.)

Approach

(Describe the approach to be used in achieving objectives of the project. This is the place to describe--and justify--analytical and experimental design and methodology, sampling schedules, special techniques, data sources, and the like. For standard or well-known procedures (e.g., Kjeldahl nitrogen determination), detailed expositions are unnecessary; for

certain esoteric procedures, a reference may suffice; improvised methodology or field setups should be explained or illustrated in more detail.

Indicate what is innovative about the project, and what performance criteria must be met in order to count the efforts successful.)

Accomplishments (if applicable)

(Describe progress made in achieving the stated objectives of currently active or recently completed Sea Grant projects during the past 2 years if such progress is relevant to the new proposal. This may include completed tasks or statements concerning status of work in progress and, as a minimum, should demonstrate progress as measured against the previous year's planned activities. Also describe the results of any relevant preliminary work, i.e., projects initiated with discretionary funds that evolved into continuation proposals.

The application of Sea Grant-generated information by other individuals, organizations, and programs (e.g., inputs to the Coastal Zone Management Program, industry, etc.), as well as significant results derived from such utilization, is particularly noteworthy evidence of accomplishment, as are major publications, theses, and dissertations.)

Plans

(Chronologically describe how project effort will be apportioned during each of the next two years, if your project is to continue more than one year. Plans may be incorporated with approach for one-year projects.)

User Relationships and Technology Transfer

Extension/outreach should be an essential element of your project proposal. Sea Grant is a program with its roots in extension and outreach; thus, extension participation in Louisiana Sea Grant funded research, though not required, is strongly recommended. Louisiana Sea Grant's [Extension Agents & Specialists](#) possess both important technical expertise on a wide range of subject matter and knowledge of local geographic, social, and governmental circumstances; they can prove invaluable to the successful planning and prosecution of your research project. Alternatively, when used to their fullest capabilities, partnerships with private businesses, non-governmental organizations, or state agencies can contribute greatly to the outreach potential of your project. Proposals with either no or little extension contribution or a weak plan for dissemination of project outputs to constituents and stakeholders will be given very low priority.

(Many research projects fail to achieve their potential for applied benefits because user relationships and information transfer are not treated as necessary, integral parts of the project effort. Since the primary reason for Sea Grant's existence is to create and transfer new, useful, research-based information and technology to nonacademic audiences who can use such information, it is appropriate to indicate in your technical proposal how this process is going to occur.

In this section, identify the prospective users of project results; briefly describe the principal

investigators' ongoing relationships with them; describe any planned participation by users in the project itself; and describe any other concrete measures planned for transferring useful results and technology.)

Literature Cited

(Provide complete bibliographic references for publications and other information sources that are cited in the body of your proposal.)

Milestone Charts

(Include a diagram that shows the time sequence of major tasks during the period for which funds are requested. Milestone charts, tables, and figures are placed behind narrative.)