LOUISIANA SEA GRANT REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

SPECIAL COMPETITION IN COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

Two Proposal Categories:
Research Proposals and Synthesis Proposals

FUNDING PERIOD: One or Two Years from Start Date

ISSUE DATE: June 27, 2014
PROPOSAL DUE DATE: August 6, 2014
PROPOSAL REVIEW DATE: September 3, 2014
NOTIFICATION OF AWARD: September 30, 2014
START DATE: 1 November 2014 or as requested by PI

Louisiana Sea Grant College Program (LSG) has new funds within the FY2014 appropriation to support competitive “RESILIENCE” research during the next two years. LSG is seeking proposals that describe projects in two grant categories: (1) RESEARCH Projects ($75K per year for 1-2 years; and (2) SYNTHESE Projects ($25K per year for 1-2 years). To learn more about the process of submitting a proposal and viewing documents necessary to formally apply for funding, visit the Louisiana Sea Grant web site at: www.laseagrant.org/rfp/Research-Synthesis-RFP.htm.

BACKGROUND

Resilient communities are defined as those that minimize a disaster’s disruption to everyday life and local economies through preparation. Resilient communities in the coastal zone are those that have the ability to quickly return citizens to work, reopen businesses, and restore other essential services needed for a full and timely economic recovery. Resilient coastal communities plan for and take deliberate action to reduce risks from coastal hazards, accelerate recovery from disaster events, and adapt to changing conditions. Planning and implementing characteristics of a resilient community can be improved through research and synthesis projects that provide knowledge to support critical decisions concerning natural and social system capacity to adapt.
PROPOSAL PRIORITIES

LSG has developed a summary of science needs related to our Strategic Plan on Resilient Communities and Economies (see descriptions of goals below). To develop knowledge in support of these goals, LSG will provide funding for RESEARCH and SYNTHESIS projects that will develop more resilient coastal communities.

LSG will fund ONE proposal using a RESEARCH approach (total of $150K for two years) and 2-3 proposals using a SYNTHESIS approach ($25K per project per year for two years) to study “community resilience.” At least 50% non-federal matching funds will be required for RESEARCH proposals. No match is required for SYNTHESIS proposals.

Proposals submitted for both the RESEARCH and SYNTHESIS opportunities must be responsive to one or more of the resilience research goals described below. It is also required that Principal Investigators work with end-users to formulate project plans that have a clear description of how the results will be conveyed to those communities, businesses or residents (Outreach Plan).

PROJECT PRIORITIES: RESILIENT COMMUNITIES AND ECONOMIES

Goal 1: Promote vibrant and resilient Louisiana coastal economies that include working waterfronts, an abundance of recreation and tourism opportunities, and coastal access for all citizens

Strategies
• 1.1 Support social and economic analyses of coastal communities that identify and communicate employment alternatives, such as either transitioning to local employment opportunities, applying traditional skill and knowledge to the aquaculture of finfish and shellfish, or ecotourism.
• 1.2 Engage, educate, and empower residents of Louisiana’s coastal communities in processes that identify and pursue sustainable economic development and community sustainability alternatives, policies and programs.

Goal 2: Improvements in coastal water resources to sustain human health and ecosystem services

Strategies
2.1 Investigate the existing water policies of both state and local jurisdictions whose water management practices affect coastal resources to understand alternative water policies that might be beneficial for application in Louisiana and the wider Gulf region.
2.2 Develop and enact model water policies that will assist Louisiana in addressing the growing demands on its water resources from various sectors, including domestic, coastal restoration, fisheries, energy, and interstate transfers.

Goal 3: Improve adaptation strategies of Louisiana coastal citizens, community leaders, and industries to complex interrelationships among social, economic and environmental values in coastal areas and reduce risks from hazards and climate change

Strategies
• 3.1 Investigate interactions among sea level rise, subsidence, and storm surge, including implications for saltwater intrusion, coastal flooding, agriculture, human health and safety, and
cultural changes.

• 3.2 Develop models of successfully resilient communities, including contributions of community demographics, economic base, insurance coverage, building codes, education programs, health care resources, fishery infrastructure, and development.

• 3.3 Research to improve land use planning and building codes in Louisiana coastal communities by developing best practices information.

• 3.4 Understand, predict, and communicate impacts of both natural features, including wetlands and upland vegetation, coastal/nearshore morphology, beach dunes, and barrier islands, and man-made structures in providing defense against tropical storms, storm surges, and technological disasters.

Goal 4: Utilize integrated ecosystem-based approaches to sustainably manage land, water, and living resources in Louisiana’s coastal areas

Strategies

• 4.1 Model and communicate impacts of coastal restoration projects on residents and economies considering the ecosystem service value of both the potential social and economic implications of the projects themselves and the desirable social and economic alternatives of such projects.

PROPOSAL CATEGORIES

RESEARCH proposals: This is the typical research proposal normally submitted to Louisiana Sea Grant as in past competitive research opportunities. Research proposals should focus on experimental approaches and techniques, but may also include research synthesis techniques as described below. Since funding is in the range of $75K per year, the expectations in knowledge generated and outreach impacts realized should be commensurate with the effort described in the project narrative.

SYNTHESIS proposals: Scientific synthesis can be defined as “The inferential process whereby new models are developed from analysis of multiple data sets to explain observed patterns across a range of time and space scales” (Kemp and Boynton, 2012).

Two recent trends in science have promoted synthesis efforts. One trend is the discussion of the scholarship of synthesis in the scientific literature (e.g., Hampton and Parker, 2011; Kemp and Boynton, 2012; Peters, 2010). The other trend is in the proliferation of synthesis centers, created expressly to stimulate synthesis efforts (e.g., NCEAS, NESCent, NIMBioS, ACEAS, SESYNC).

Kemp and Boynton (2012) outline a five-step synthesis process as the following: 1) Identify challenging science problem, 2) Assemble relevant data, 3) Integrate data by identifying linkages among units, 4) Define alternative models that explain or test problem, and 5) Select simplest model that maximizes explanation. Each of these models provides an iterative cycle of converting data into information and ultimately into synthesized knowledge.

This initiative by LSG is to provide seed grants for SYNTHESIS proposals to stimulate the various professional and social skills needed for conducting synthesis research (Kemp and Boynton,
Professional skills include tested native intelligence, expertise in a specific research area, critical and logical thinker, pattern recognition and visualization, quantitative skills (statistics, models, data management), as well as writing and speaking skills. Social skills include inquisitive attitude, willingness to develop and try new ideas, tolerance and respect for unusual ideas, interest in “big picture” issues, team orientation with interdisciplinary knowledge, good listener and open mindedness, willingness to share (ideas, data, and publications), and constructive criticism.

Persons interested in submitting SYNTHESIS proposals should review the publications listed below and reference the following URL that demonstrates how University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science is developing scientific synthesis as part of their research mission. These essays and references should be helpful in understanding the approach to developing synthesis research techniques.  

http://ian.umces.edu/blog/tag/scientific-synthesis/

References


Kemp WM & WR Boynton. 2012. **Synthesis in estuarine and coastal ecological research: What is it, why is it important, and how do we teach it?** Estuaries and Coasts 35: 1-22.


**PROPOSAL REVIEW CRITERIA and PROCESS (RESEARCH and SYNTHESIS Proposals)**

An external review panel will review all proposals (RESEARCH and SYNTHESIS) received by the submission deadline and advise Louisiana Sea Grant on which proposals should be considered for funding.

RESEARCH and SYNTHESIS proposals will be reviewed for the following attributes:
- Scientific merit, utility, and anticipated benefits;
- Relevance to the Louisiana Sea Grant program priorities for this particular competition in community resilience (defined above);
- Extension or outreach plan;
- PI and co-PI qualifications; and
- Required budget

A typical panel discussion will include questions about whether the proposal has addressed the following qualifications based on scientific merit and program relevance. Have the PIs identified an important question or compelling research topic? Are the hypotheses, research questions, and objectives clearly stated? Is the proposed work innovative? Is it good science? Is the methodology appropriate and feasible? Are the PIs competent to do the work? Are the time schedule and budget reasonable? Are the potential benefits of the work significant and clearly
stated? Is there a well-developed plan for education and outreach activities? Is there evidence of graduate student involvement and support in the proposed budget?

The review panel will operate under procedures developed to avoid conflict of interest and will include the LSG program officer from the National Sea Grant Office (NSGO). Upon approval by NSGO on the review process to select final proposals, the LSG director notifies all proposers of final decisions. Anonymous copies of the corresponding peer reviews and a statement of the rationale for the decision will accompany this notification. Records of the proposals and decision-making process, including peer reviews, will be maintained for audit.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS (RESEARCH and SYNTHESIS Proposals)

The proposal submitted to the Louisiana Sea Grant (LSG) College Program for RESEARCH and SYNTHESIS projects must include the following content organized in sections A-E below:

A. Project Summary form 90-2. See Project Summary Form (pdf, Word or text format)

B. Technical Narrative (not to exceed 10 pages for RESEARCH proposals, and not to exceed 5 pages for SYNTHESIS proposals).

C. Supporting Documents: Includes References, CV, Acknowledgement of Partnership Engagement, Summary Accomplishments of previously funded Sea Grant Projects (if applicable), Current and Pending Support (NOT required for Synthesis Proposals), and Project Milestone Chart. Additional supporting documents, such as a Data Management Plan, will be required of the RESEARCH proposal selected for funding.

D. Project Budget: 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 Detail Worksheet

E. Narrative Budget Justifications. See Guidelines for Narrative Budget Justification

The section below titled PROPOSAL ORGANIZATION has detailed instructions on how to complete sections A-E that are required for each proposal submitted. A formal proposal is defined as an electronic version in PDF inclusive of all documents A to E above.

In addition to the content and organization defined as A-E above, the following instructions for style apply as follows:

Format: Format to 8½" x 11" page with following margins: 1" from top and bottom of page; 1" left and right margins. Do not justify the right margin.

Font: Use an 11-point type size. Figures and tables may be placed in the text of the proposal – but must conform to type size requirements.
Spacing: One tab at the beginning of each paragraph. Single-space paragraphs. Use a space between new subheadings and previous paragraph.

Pages: Please include page numbers of narrative document in top right corner. Do not use line numbers.

**ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION:** We request that project summary forms, narrative proposals, supporting documents, explanatory budget notes, and applicable approval(s) be submitted in electronic version as a PDF (sections A-E) sent by e-mail to Katie Lea at **klea@lsu.edu**.

Electronic copies of complete proposals, budgets and unit approval as required by PI’s institution must be received no later than 4:00 PM CDT Wednesday, 6 August 2014. If a proposal does not received by this deadline it will NOT be submitted for external review. PIs are encouraged to request a delivery receipt when submitting proposals by email to ensure they are received.

**GUIDELINES FOR ROUTING RESEARCH PROPOSALS:** PIs submitting proposals from institutions other than LSU A&M should follow their institution’s procedures for routing proposals. For LSU A&M, Research proposal(s) selected for funding will need to be routed through LSU’s Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP). Further guidance will follow once selection is made (For LSU AgCenter and other universities, a letter from PI’s Office of Sponsored Programs will be required to indicate acceptance of budget and justification).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION or CLARIFICATION** concerning proposal process, contact Dr. Matthew Bethel, Director of Research, at Louisiana Sea Grant College Program (mbethe3@lsu.edu). Questions concerning budget forms and matching can be addressed by the LSG Business Manager at (225) 578-6517.

**PROPOSAL ORGANIZATION:**

**A. SEA GRANT PROJECT SUMMARY (FORM 90-2)** See Project Summary Form (pdf, Word or text format)

The Project Summary Form is an extremely important part of the proposal because it will be used to clearly state the objectives and merit of your research as part of the Sea Grant mission. This document will form the first judgment about the proposed activity to most of the reviewers, and may influence the review process. 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 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 10/1/14; completion date 9/30/15; Year Two initiation date 10/1/14 {the project will have only one initiation date}; completion date 9/30/16). 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 type size is preferable. Be concise and succinct.

B. THE TECHNICAL NARRATIVE

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 judgment 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 (remember, these are external reviewers).

Narrative proposals must be self-contained and appropriate for 8-1/2 x 11 inch page size using PDF reproduction. Narrative proposals must not exceed 10 pages in length for RESEARCH PROPOSALS, or 5 pages in length for SYNTHESIS PROPOSALS, including figures, tables, milestone charts, and any appendices; but exclusive of project summary forms, preliminary proposal objectives page, references cited, project budgets, signature pages, and other federal forms and certifications.

Instructions for completing the TECHNICAL NARRATIVE

PROJECT TITLE

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

Use either RESEARCH PROPOSAL or SYNTHESIS PROPOSAL at the beginning of your title, depending on which category of funding your project will compete.

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

Principal Investigator (name)

Co-Principal Investigator (name)

Background and Motivations

The background and motivations section should (a) demonstrate your knowledge of related research; (b) show that you understand contemporary research in your field well enough to
make a worthwhile contribution to it (c) identify how user groups may use results to maximize the likelihood that practical benefits will accrue from this effort. The primary purpose of Sea Grant-sponsored research is to solve problems that will have an impact and benefit to 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 solutions that the proposed project will address.

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 research or synthesis approach.

Approach

Describe the Research and/or Synthesis approach to be used in achieving objectives of the project. This is the place to describe - and justify - analytical designs and methodologies, data sources, and similar characteristics to describe how conclusions will be drawn from the research proposed. Indicate what is innovative about the proposed project and what science question or management issues may be resolved with more informed insights developed from the research proposed.

Impacts and Outreach

Extension/outreach impacts should be an essential element of your project proposal. Sea Grant is a program with its roots in extension, education, and outreach; thus, extension participation in Louisiana Sea Grant funded research is strongly recommended. There are several options available in achieving “Impacts and Outreach,” including Louisiana Sea Grant’s Extension Agents & Specialists. The latter 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 development of your project. Alternatively, when used to their fullest capabilities, partnerships with private businesses, non-governmental organizations, or state agencies can also contribute greatly to the impact and outreach potential of your project. Proposals that do not demonstrate a plan to develop “impact and outreach” utilizing any of these potential partnerships to develop outputs to constituents and stakeholders will be given very low priority for funding.

Partnerships: Describe existing and planned partnerships with industry, agencies, educational communities that will be utilized as part of this proposed project.

C. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

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 the narrative. 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.

**Accomplishments (if applicable)**

Describe progress achieved in developing previous efforts on the topics proposed. What efforts, either those funded by Sea Grant or other sponsors, that is relevant to either identifying a gap in scientific understanding or management issues. 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.

**Acknowledgement of Partnership Engagement**

Each project must include a statement from each of the proposed partnerships that are considered essential to the development of the technical material proposed in either the RESEARCH or SYNTHESIS proposal, AND those partnerships that are part of the Outreach Plan proposed (including agents in LSG’s Marine Extension Program). These can include an email response from a proposed partner that acknowledged the statement below:

“I have read a draft of the proposed project or discussed the nature of a project to be submitted for the Community Resilience opportunity for grant funding from Louisiana Sea Grant, and acknowledge that I have discussed how I or those in the organization that I represent may be involved in developing the objectives of the project.”

**Curriculum Vitae**

Maximum length of two pages for each lead PI. Each CV should include six distinct sections as follows: (1) PI Name, academic title, and affiliation; (2) Education; (3) Experience; (4) Research Interests; (5) Professional Activities; (6) Publications (include no more than 10 publications – 5 that are related to the topic of the proposed research).

**Current and Pending Support** (NOT required for Synthesis Proposals)
Applicants must provide information on all current and pending (including Louisiana Sea Grant) support for projects and proposals that relate to the proposed work, including subsequent funding in the case of continuing grants. The proposed project and all other projects or activities requiring a portion of time of the principal investigator and other senior personnel must be included. The relationship between the proposed project and these other projects must be described, and the number of person-months per year to be devoted to the projects must be stated.

**D. PROJECT BUDGET (Form 90-4)** See [Budget Detail Worksheet](#) (Excel)

Research 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 (scroll to the right in the excel file to see the different page forms). The worksheet should be completed which will fill in 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 sub-awards under the “Other Costs” category. The budget forms and worksheets must be thoughtfully and carefully constructed even though LSG will check, edit, and recalculate project budgets before assembling the omnibus program package.

**Instructions for completing the Budget Detail Worksheet**

**SALARIES AND WAGES**

Sea Grant has always placed a high priority on salaries and wages supporting graduate student education. 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 0.5 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 between two persons, they should be shown as co-principal investigators. Do not list graduate students or non-university personnel as principal investigators.

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 are also encouraged to be employed as aides or helpers on a Sea Grant Project 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 fringe benefit rate for regular employees is 40%; consult your institution to be sure you are using the up to date fringe benefit rate. LSU's graduate assistant’s tuition remission rate is 33% and health insurance rate is 3%.

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 [www.fas.lsu.edu/acctservices/acctpay/procedures.html](http://www.fas.lsu.edu/acctservices/acctpay/procedures.html)

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 sub-awards to other organizations. Please note that memberships in scientific societies and other organizations, along with subscriptions to journals and magazines, are unallowable costs to sponsored projects.

H. INDIRECT COSTS. The basis for computing indirect costs must be shown in the space provided in the worksheets. 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.
Instructions for completing information on MATCHING SUPPORT:

(NO MATCHING IS REQUIRED FOR SYNTHESIS PROPOSALS – you may ignore these instructions for that category of proposals)

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.

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 allow ability 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.

E. NARRATIVE BUDGET JUSTIFICATION

Guidelines for Narrative Budget Justification

A. SALARIES & WAGES. List each person or unfilled position associated with the project, either federally funded or cost-shared. Show levels of effort and costs associated with these positions. For omnibus multi-year project proposals, budget salaries at their current rates for the first year; second year cost of living salary increases may be applied as allowed by your institution. Briefly explain the individual’s role in the project. What will the lead Principal Investigator do
that contributes to the project? What will co-PIs, Associates, and other personnel do? How will they participate in the project? (Showing other faculty as a way to generate cost sharing is not an option; they must actually contribute effort towards attainment of the project’s objectives.) What particular project-related duties will be performed by listed research associates, research assistants, student workers, and other professionals?

B. FRINGE BENEFITS. Indicate that fringe benefits negotiated with the cognizant federal audit agency apply and list the categories of personnel to which the various rates apply. Refer to the current negotiated fringe benefit rate agreement, which accompanies each proposal.

C. PERMANENT EQUIPMENT. Sea Grant does not normally fund large equipment purchases. Identify each item of permanent equipment to be purchased with grant or cost-sharing funds, indicate how it will be used to accomplish the project, and list the estimated cost. For any single item costing more than $5,000, indicate whether a lease vs. purchase analysis was considered and if not, why.

D. SUPPLIES. Subdivide large supply requests into smaller categories, describe each category, and indicate how that class of supplies will be used to advance the project. Do not include general office supplies, postage, magazine subscriptions, or other categories of expense that are unallowable as direct costs to sponsored agreements. Do not identify any group of supplies or other categories of cost as miscellaneous or contingent.

E. TRAVEL. Subdivide your travel budget into Conference Travel and Field Travel. For conference travel, list each planned conference trip, cite a reason for attending it, and identify each traveler and destination to the best of your ability. If the destination is unknown, explain how you arrived at the proposed charges. For field travel (meaning travel for the purpose of collecting data and information pursuant to the research objectives) indicate the general types of data to be collected, destinations, the number of travelers, trips, mileage, and other pertinent factors that affect the costs. Do not list any travel expenses as “miscellaneous.” Identify any planned foreign travel, describe its purpose, and name the traveler.

F. PUBLICATION & DOCUMENTATION COSTS. Identify the nature of the expense, e.g., journal page charges, advisory pamphlets, newsletters.

G. OTHER COSTS. Briefly identify each group of costs, e.g., “Photocopy, long-distance, shipping.” An explanation of purpose is not required for small cost groupings of a few hundred dollars or less. Show the cost basis for larger items such as boat and truck rental (craft/vehicle description, cost per day, number of days), and cite the reason for needing to rent boats and towing vehicles, even if it seems obvious to you. Likewise, for larger vessels. For sub-awards to other institutions, briefly indicate how the sub-award relates to the parent project. (Sub-recipients should provide the same types of justification information as primary recipients.) Identify consultants, describe costs, and explain why their services are needed. INDIRECT COSTS. State the current rate and basis of indirect costs, e.g., 26% Modified Total Direct Costs.
EXAMPLE OF NARRATIVE BUDGET JUSTIFICATION

Year 1 Budget Justification (REPEAT THIS FOR YEAR 2, DO NOT COMBINE YEARS 1 and 2)

Project Number, Project Title, and Principal Investigator

A. SALARIES AND WAGES. Principal Investigator (PI NAME) will devote 2.6 months of effort to this project which includes .5 months of effort ($________) requested from grant funds, and 2.10 months of effort ($________) in non-federal cost-shared salary. As lead principal investigator, Dr. ________ will be responsible for the overall direction of the project, supervision of the two post-doctoral researchers in the laboratory, advice and oversight regarding analytical procedures, experimentation, and data analysis; and preparation of progress reports and scientific publications reporting project results.

Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI NAME) will contribute $________ or 1.50 months of non-federal cost-shared effort to this project. He will be responsible for supervision of project activities to be performed at the Grand Isle Oyster Hatchery, including production of oyster larvae, maintenance of larvae in upwellers, and growing them out in lots maintained both on-bottom and in the adjustable long line system (ALS).

Faculty Associate. Salary support of $__________ or 0.49 months effort is requested for (ASSOCIATE NAME) who will perform studies of Vibrio vulnificus load in oysters, using the latest analytical protocol from the Food and Drug Administration’s Bacteriological Analytical Manual. She will also perform literature research, data analysis, and contribute to reports and publications.

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

Undergraduate Students. Funds in the amount of $_____ are requested for 1,000 hours of student worker services at $6.00 per hour for assorted duties such as performing routine analytical procedures, maintaining laboratories in good order, and assisting in fieldwork at the Grand Isle hatchery facility.

B. FRINGE BENEFITS. Fringe benefits will be charged at a negotiated rate of ___% on salaries and wages of all regular staff members and ___% for graduate assistants. No fringe benefits for student workers.

C. PERMANENT EQUIPMENT. Equipment funds for an adjustable long line system costing $6,000 are requested. This will be used for growing off-bottom oysters and subjecting them to alternating cycles of immersion and aerial exposure. We have not investigated a lease vs. purchase arrangement because the equipment, which is manufactured in Australia, will be permanently installed in a saltwater environment where it may deteriorate rapidly and thus have little salvage value.

D. EXPENDABLE SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT. Six categories of expendable supplies and equipment are requested, including (a) supplies used to produce and raise oyster larvae at the
Grand Isle oyster hatchery ($1,500); (b) supplies, e.g., thermocouples & wiring, data logger media, used to record oyster temperatures ($1,500); (c) supplies, e.g., chemicals, reagents, and glassware used to perform Hsp70 analyses of protein molecules ($2,000); (d) supplies, e.g., chemicals, reagents, and glassware used for Hsp70 analyses of gene expression ($2,800); (e) laboratory supplies used for assays of body burden and counts of dermo cells in infected oyster tissue ($1,000); laboratory supplies used for enumeration of V. vulnificus cells in oyster tissue ($1,500).

E. TRAVEL. Funds for travel are requested for both field research and attendance at a scientific conference. Field per diem travel expenses are requested for two people (NAMES or post-doctoral researchers or student) making 10 trips to Grand Isle, LA at a daily in-state rate for meals of $____ per day to collect samples and oyster measurements, and to tend and maintain the long line system. Travel funds are requested for PI (NAME) to attend the (conference) in (location) to present results of this Sea Grant research and to attend presentations on oyster research by peer scientists. The estimated travel costs total $1,260, including airfare ($400), lodging @ $100 per night for four nights, meals @ $32/day for five days, and conference registration ($300).

F. PUBLICATION AND DOCUMENTATION COSTS. $1,000 is requested to cover the estimated costs of publishing two scientific manuscripts resulting from this research projects.

G. OTHER COSTS. Funds totaling $500 is requested for photocopy service, long distance telephone, and shipping of research samples. INDIRECT COSTS. LSU currently applies a negotiated on-campus F&A rate of 26% MTDC.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ):

What is the difference in RESEARCH and SYNTHESIS Projects? The distinction is that RESEARCH proposals are considered a more thorough plan of experimental, survey, and synthesis techniques to achieve a research objective and impact an outreach outcome. RESEARCH proposals can include SYNTHESIS techniques; whereas SYNTHESIS proposals are limited to specific synthesis approaches defined in the RFP to address a gap in scientific knowledge.

What is the level of funding for Synthesis Research Project? Projects are limited to $25K per year for two years.

What is the difference in proposal form for a Synthesis Project compared to the call for proposals defined as Research Projects? There are two specific proposal formats for RESEARCH and SYNTHESIS projects. Some important differences: RESEARCH proposals are limited to $75K per year for two years, 10 pages of narrative, and require 50% matching. SYNTHESIS projects are limited to $25K per project per year, 5 pages of narrative, and require NO matching funds.
Can I compete for both project funds? Yes, investigators are allowed to be on one proposal in each category of RESEARCH and SYNTHESIS projects. Do I have to submit two proposals? Yes. Proposals are required for each of respective project funding of interest.

Are the criteria different for evaluation by external panel for Synthesis Projects compared to Research Projects? Not really. Each project has to define the problem, provide methods techniques appropriate for either research or synthesis approaches, and define the outcome that will address the specific goals of the Resilient Communities and Economies focus area of LSG. Also, each project must define outreach opportunities for the knowledge generated in the respective project type.

Who do I contact to address any other questions that I may have concerning these two project solicitations? You may contact either Dr. Matthew Bethel (mbethe3@lsu.edu), Director of Research at Louisiana Sea Grant, or Katie Lea (klea@lsu.edu), Project Manager of Louisiana Sea Grant.