



Louisiana Sea Grant College Program
Office of the Executive Director

January 4, 2017

FROM: Louisiana Sea Grant, Executive Director

TO: University Research Community

RE: Sea Grant Competitive Research Program 2018-2020

Louisiana Sea Grant has made some very important and significant changes to the approach and process of developing our competitive research portfolio for the next four years. These changes will coincide with our next four-year cycle in omnibus funding from February 1, 2018 to January 31, 2022. This funding cycle also corresponds to our new four-year strategic plan that will be released in February 2017. We just announced our request for Statements of Interest for 2018-2020 research competition that are due on Friday, March 3, 2017. Below is a little more background information to provide guidance on the new strategies in our research competition portfolio.

This request for competitive research proposals by Louisiana Sea Grant (LSG) seeks to promote interdisciplinary solutions using university research to address complex and often interrelated ecological, economic and social challenges that affect the state's adaptation strategies. The magnitude of such challenges in the Mississippi River Delta are significant, and LSG wants to make strategic investments in discoveries of the natural, economic and social landscape utilizing practical innovations that are linked to community engagement through our outreach program. Coastal Louisiana, with nearly twenty-five years of trying different restoration and protection projects, a highly engineered coastal landscape, an extensive observation network, economies of national scale, and communities facing different types of challenges, offers unique research opportunities to the university community to develop research teams to explore how best to discover innovative best management practices for more resilient ecosystems, fisheries, communities, and economies (see our four focus areas).

Louisiana Sea Grant is soliciting research proposals that to a large degree reflect on the program initiatives by National Science Foundation and other Federal Funding Opportunities in coupling natural and social sciences to improve our capacity to promote science of coastal adaptation strategies. You will notice that the proposed integrated research program, referred to as ***Integrated Research (IR&E) and Engagement Projects***, has goals and objectives similar to the Coupled Natural and Social System program, Coastal SEES program, and PREEVENTS program at NSF. We feel that the university research community has responded to developing the fundamental science in support of these calls for transdisciplinary approaches to complex problems. At Louisiana Sea Grant, we feel that this approach also serves our mission to apply

discoveries integrated with application to solve coastal issues here in Louisiana (the fundamentals of our LaDIA program). We feel a more integrated approach to discovery will also help us improve impacts in our outreach. We hope that you will respond to this challenge by forming research teams across disciplines and across universities, using the rich laboratory of our coastal landscape that has been highly engineered to provide the nation's wealth. With the highest rates of relative sea level rise in the nation, our solutions today will guide most coastal communities in planning for tomorrow by shaping adaptation strategies. At Louisiana Sea Grant, we not only want to challenge our university research community to innovate creative strategies that promote adaptation to changing environmental, economic and social systems, but also to lead the nation in the application of theory into practice.

The call for STATEMENTS OF INTEREST just released by Louisiana Sea Grant can be found at (www.laseagrant.org/research/rfp). This leads to another new innovation in our Competitive Research Program – the process of submitting proposals to LSG. We are now using a new proposal management system, entitled eSeaGrant, which is very similar to the FASTLANE program you may be familiar with NSF. Please note these changes in our system, as you need to first register within eSeaGrant to participate in LSG research programs (www.laseagrantdatab.org).

Research projects within Louisiana's coastal region should focus on discovery that integrates knowledge across disciplines that can be applied to one or more of the four focus areas of Strategic Plan: 1) Healthy Coastal Ecosystems; 2) Resilient Communities and Economies; 3) Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture; and 4) Environmental Literacy and Workforce Development. This RFP contains a listing of relevant research questions, and information about the format and timetable for submitting proposals. Proposals must have clear **relevancy to Louisiana Sea Grant's research priorities** (www.laseagrant.org/research/rfp) and must include a clear **outreach plan** for disseminating the results to targeted audiences.

Please feel free to contact Louisiana Sea Grant College Program for more information or to answer any questions concerning this new approach to integrated research projects. We look forward to discussing the new elements of our competitive research program.

Robert R. Twilley, Executive Director: rtwilley@lsu.edu
Matthew Bethel, Director of Research: mbethe3@lsu.edu