

LOUISIANA SEA GRANT COLLEGE PROGRAM



Announcement of Environmental Literacy and Workforce Development Competitive Research Program Funding Opportunity for 2024 – 2025

Due date for full proposals: April 26, 2024, at 11:59 PM CDT

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

The Louisiana Sea Grant College Program (LSG) seeks one-year, small-grant proposals for research projects related to its Environmental Literacy and Workforce Development focus area. Since its establishment in 1968, the Louisiana Sea Grant College Program has worked to promote stewardship of the state's coastal resources through a combination of research, education and outreach.

Projects funded through this competitive grant can explore activities that increase the environmental literacy of our communities and/or help to build a diverse, skilled workforce to address future challenges. Given the strong emphasis on education, these projects must include strong education and/or outreach. Issues that could be explored could relate to the efficacy of place-based learning, fisheries trainings for a changing workforce, outreach to build community resilience, participatory science research projects, providing educational partnerships/pathways, evaluating educational interventions, etc. These activities should carefully consider and identify their audience(s), which may include, but are not limited to, K-12 schools, teachers, community colleges, undergraduate students or adult audiences.

Successful LSG projects are based on clear, testable questions/hypotheses. Proposed work must clearly align with the Environmental Literacy and Workforce Development focus area, be based within Louisiana and target issues important to Louisiana's coastal region. The proposed project can also align with other LSG focus areas. Please refer to [LSG's Strategic Plan for 2024–2027](#).

The maximum one-year award that LSG will provide is \$50,000, with a 50% non-federal matching funds commitment (i.e., if you request \$30,000 from Sea Grant, you must provide \$15,000 of non-federal match). Externally sponsored projects are ineligible to serve as a match. LSG through its host institution (LSU A&M) will issue a separate subaward to the lead participating institution.

ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

PIs must be affiliated with an accredited academic institution of higher education in Louisiana. Co-PIs and project collaborators can have any affiliation and can be based either within or outside Louisiana. Federal agencies and their personnel are not permitted to receive federal funding under

this competition; however, federal scientists and other employees can serve as uncompensated partners or co-Principal Investigators on applications. Postdoctoral researchers are not eligible to apply as a PI but may be a project participant.

Single investigators and multiple investigator research teams from different institutions are encouraged to apply. Investigators may submit only one proposal as Principal Investigator (PI) but may be listed as a Co-PI on as many proposals as they desire.

FUNDING PROPOSAL INFORMATION

Research projects are funded for one year with an anticipated start date of September 1, 2024. Proposed projects should anticipate completion by August 31, 2025. Key dates are provided below.

Key Dates:

Late February 2024	Request for proposals issued
April 26, 2024	Proposals due
Late May 2024	Proposals reviewed; Principal Investigators (PIs) notified
Mid-July 2024	Recommendations for funding; PI notified
September 1, 2024	Research projects begin
August, 31, 2025	End date of research funding cycle

APPLICATION PROCESS

LSG requires the submission of all proposals through our proposal management system [eSeaGrant](#). Any emailed, faxed and mailed proposals will be rejected. The deadline for proposal submissions is 11:59 pm CST on Friday, April 26. Please do not wait until the last minute to start the process and/or submit your materials; we are unable to extend the deadline for any reason.

A complete proposal package includes:

- **Project Cover Page** – identifies the project title, the Principal Investigator and Co-Principal Investigators, affiliations, e-mail addresses and the total anticipated budget (federal request and non-federal match) for each year.
- **Demographic Questionnaire**
- **Proposed Budget and Justification** – broken down by Sea Grant Funds and Matching Funds. The budget form will allow for the inclusion of both numerical entries (budget amounts) and descriptions.
- **Proposal Narrative** (not to exceed five pages) which should include:
 - Abstract
 - Project Overview
 - Background and Relevance
 - Project Details and Methodology
 - Objectives

- Anticipated Outputs/Outcomes
- Project Timeline
- Education and/or Outreach Plan
- **Supporting Documents**
 - References (don't count toward proposal narrative page total)
 - Data Management Plan
 - Letters of Support (if any)
- **Curriculum Vitae** – two page each PI and Co-PI
- **Current and Pending Support**
- **Fringe and F&A Rate Agreement** – contact your institution with questions

Applicants submitting proposals that involve the use of human test subjects (including surveys) or animal use/testing would require approval of the applicant's Institutional Review Board (IRB) or animal care and use committee (IACUC) before such research can proceed. Applicants are responsible for obtaining IRB or IACUC approval and providing that documentation.

If your proposal is recommended for funding, contingent on approval from the National Sea Grant Office, the following items will also be required:

- Response to any significant reviewer comments
- A completed [NEPA Abbreviated Questionnaire Form](#) for the project with all necessary permits and certifications that may be needed
- Additional materials as needed

REVIEW CRITERIA

Sea Grant uses a five-point rating system for all proposals:

- Excellent: 5 (exhibits outstanding quality/relevance)
- Very Good 4: (above average quality/relevance)
- Good: 3 (routine/average quality/relevance)
- Fair: 2 (marginal quality/relevance)
- Poor: 1 (missed the mark, has major deficiencies, low relevance)

Proposals are reviewed based on four aspects:

Relevance (30%): The importance and applicability of the proposed project. Will the project help address a high priority coastal issue? Additionally, how does this align with the LSG Strategic Plan and focus areas. Will the project help address a high priority coastal issue?

Outreach and/or Education (30%): The inclusion of end-users into the development of the proposal and are considered in potential results. Is there evidence of a focused and effective education and outreach strategy? Is it clear how the work or the results of the work will be provided to end-users?

Merit (20%): The benefit and validity of the proposed project. Are the proposed methods

appropriate and scientifically valid to complete the work? Are clear objectives/hypotheses present? Is the project innovative?

Approach (20%): The research design address is appropriate and novel. Is there evidence that the approach is technically sound and innovative? Are the methods and/or evaluation of the project appropriate? Are there clear project goals and objectives?

Review undergoes a written peer review. Reviewers will consist of education and extension practitioners, researchers, and professionals from across Louisiana and the Gulf of Mexico region who are familiar with challenges in the education and workforce development sectors. At least three peer reviews will be solicited for each proposal received that are free from conflict of interest. The National Sea Grant Office reviews and provides final approval on the projects to be funded. Not all highly rated projects may be funded. LSG does not have enough funding to cover all the outstanding proposals that we receive. LSG may forward (or not forward) a proposal for funding out of scoring rank based on the following criteria:

- Balance/distribution of funds across academic disciplines and geography of work location
- Availability of funding
- Program-specific objectives
- Past poor performance in completing progress and final reports

FUNDING DESCRIPTION

LSG anticipates funding two to three projects in this Competitive Research Funding Cycle. The maximum federal request per project is \$50,000 over the one-year project period. PIs do not have to request the maximum amount. All funding is reliant upon LSG receiving federal funds that currently have not yet been appropriated. As such, no funding can be guaranteed.

All funding levels, including the maximum amount per project and the number of projects, are subject to change. Applicants may be asked to revise scopes of work, start date and budgets so that their projects align with available funding levels. If federal funding is not received, LSG may not fund any proposals out of this RFP.

As part of all award agreements, LSG requires yearly reports and semi-annual updates of project progress. PIs will be expected to report on the project performance measures and metrics as applicable to their project (Appendix A in the [Strategic Plan](#)). Grant funds may be withheld pending completion of reports as outlined in the project terms and award conditions.

PROGRAM BACKGROUND

Louisiana Sea Grant, based at Louisiana State University (LSU), is part of the National Sea Grant College Program, a network made up of 34 programs located in each of the coastal and Great Lakes states, Puerto Rico and Guam. Sea Grant programs work individually and in partnership to address major marine and coastal challenges. Louisiana Sea Grant is an integrated program of

extension, education, law and policy, communications, research and management. These core functions carry out the program's mission.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND POINTS OF CONTACT

FAQs are available at www.laseagrant.org/research/rfp/faqs/

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