



Announcement of 2024 Community Partnership Development Grant Opportunity

Established at the University of Alaska in 1970, Alaska Sea Grant is one of 34 programs within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Sea Grant College Program, authorized by Congress in 1968. We are funded by federal and state appropriations, as well as project-specific funds from local governments, federal and state agencies, community organizations and industry. Alaska Sea Grant supports research, education, and extension activities that enhance the ability of Alaskans to understand, conserve, and sustainably use our rich and diverse marine and coastal resources.

Alaska Sea Grant invites proposals for seed grants that support the planning of community-based research partnerships and engagement of communities on research teams. The goal is to prepare community-academic partnerships to successfully collaborate on the design of research projects related to improving understanding and management of Alaska's coastal and marine ecosystems. This Request for Proposals (RFP) will not fund research, but rather provides resources to build community-academic partnership capacity for future research.

Community Partnership Development Grants provide up to six months of support for community-academic teams, ideally leading to longer-term, larger scale efforts that contribute to Alaska Sea Grant and state priority information needs, and advance knowledge in one of four focus areas: healthy coastal ecosystems, sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, resilient communities and economies, and environmental literacy and workforce development.

We anticipate that approximately \$60,000 will be available for project funding, supporting up to six Community Partnership Development Grants. Because Sea Grant funds are subject to annual federal appropriations, all awards are subject to the availability of funds.

Applicants are required to submit a proposal through eSeaGrant, the Alaska Sea Grant online proposal submission system (<https://eseagrant.alaska.edu/>).

This document provides information and guidance for project development and submission of proposals.

I. Proposal selection schedule

28 May 2024	Deadline: Proposals due via eSeaGrant by 5pm Alaska time
1 July 2024	Selection of projects
29 July 2024	Project start date
31 Jan 2025	Project end date

II. Program summary and priorities

Proposals funded through this RFP support the development of projects that align with Alaska Sea Grant’s core mission to improve understanding and management of Alaska’s marine and coastal systems while actively addressing diversity, equity, inclusion, justice, and accessibility goals that are a common foundation across all the work that Alaska Sea Grant conducts. This opportunity aims to enhance our ability to tackle problems facing coastal Alaskan communities by bringing together a range of perspectives, values, and tools that are innovative, creative, inclusive, equitable, and responsive.

As a result of Community Partnership Development Grant activities, teams will be better equipped to carry out transformative research and incorporate community partnerships into future funding opportunities from Alaska Sea Grant or other funding sources. Funds will support the development of new academic-community partnerships or the enhancement of existing partnerships. Proposers supported through this grant may use the funding to organize activities that help stimulate the formation of integrative, collaborative teams, and crystallize the ideas and research plans to be presented in a future grant proposal. Examples of community partnership development grant activities include:

- University-affiliated professionals engaging members of local communities to assist in the development of potential research questions and a research plan that addresses topics relevant to Alaska communities;
- Community organizations inviting university-affiliated professionals to co-develop research questions;
- Workshops and outreach events to connect scientific and community partners and engage community members in research project creation and design;
- Time for university researchers and community members to collaborate;
- Analysis and presentation of preliminary data;
- Professional development training opportunities for PIs and team members on community engagement, diversity, and inclusion-related topics, such as community outreach and inclusive science communication; and/or
- Travel to support the above activities.

III. Project and Proposal Criteria

Successful proposals will address problems and opportunities facing marine, coastal, and watershed users, managers, and educators using scientific, traditional or local knowledge approaches. Proposed projects must identify priorities to be addressed and align with the critical

program areas and goals identified in the Alaska Sea Grant 2024–2027 Strategic Plan (<https://alaskaseagrant.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Final-Alaska-Sea-Grant-Strategic-Plan-2024-2027.pdf>) with four interrelated themes.

1. Healthy Coastal Ecosystems

Alaska’s diverse and productive marine and coastal ecosystems face unprecedented challenges from human activities and a changing climate. Alaska Sea Grant focuses on increasing the shared body of knowledge about these ecosystems, particularly to address concerns and interests of stakeholders and to support planning, management and mitigation.

2. Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture

Alaska fisheries and aquaculture provide food, jobs, and economic and cultural value. Alaska Sea Grant focuses on facilitating the sustainable use of safe and high-quality seafood and other marine resources and the sustainability of fisheries resources.

3. Resilient Communities and Economies

Alaska’s coastal communities depend on coastal resources amid a time of environmental change. Alaska Sea Grant focuses on increasing resilience and well-being of coastal communities through diversification, growth, and strengthening of coastal economic sectors and maritime businesses; increasing capacity of Alaska’s coastal communities to adapt and respond to coastal hazards; and lowering the human risk of maritime activities.

4. Environmental Literacy and Workforce Development

Alaska has a diverse and far-flung population with varying degrees of access to educational resources. Alaska Sea Grant focuses on increasing effective environmental literacy communication and instruction and increasing awareness of and opportunities for careers in Alaska’s maritime sectors.

Successful proposals will:

- describe how the planned activities may benefit communities and explore potential long-term impacts to society;
- describe anticipated planning grant outcomes and how they may be applied to solving or better understanding of problems and issues at local, state and regional scales; and
- address how the partnership(s) will generate joint priorities to guide future research

IV. Proposal award, investigator eligibility, and other project information

Award information

Projects may be scheduled to begin as early as July 29, 2024, with an end date on or before January 31, 2025. Project awards are contingent on the availability of funds to Alaska Sea Grant and National Sea Grant.

Budget and required cost share or match

Community Partnership Development Grants can request a maximum budget up to \$20,000. Funding should be equitably distributed between researchers and community partners. Expected budget categories include salaries, travel, and meeting costs.

Federal law requires that Alaska Sea Grant provide a non-federal cost share (match) of 50 percent or one dollar for every two dollars of federal funds awarded. Cost-share will not be the applicant's responsibility for this opportunity. Instead, Alaska Sea Grant will internally provide the required match funds to decrease barriers for applicants interested in applying for this opportunity.

Investigator eligibility

Project Principal Investigators (PIs) must be affiliated with a university, two- or four-year college, museum, research laboratory, or other nonprofit or tribal entity in Alaska. Project Co-Principal Investigators (co-PIs) may be affiliated with the above-listed Alaska institutions, research or education institutions outside of Alaska, state and federal agencies, and for-profit and foreign organizations. Individuals from federal agencies and for-profit and foreign organizations are prohibited from requesting salary or travel support. Alaska Sea Grant welcomes proposals for cooperative projects involving research institutions and the private sector.

Alaska Sea Grant discourages PIs from submitting more than one proposal for the Community Partnership Development Grant Opportunity. There is no limit on the number of proposals in which an investigator may serve as co-PI.

PIs who have received Alaska Sea Grant funds previously and have not completed all reporting requirements are ineligible for future funding until reports have been submitted and approved.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion

Sea Grant champions diversity, equity, and inclusion by recruiting, retaining, and preparing a diverse workforce, and proactively engaging and serving the diverse populations of coastal communities. Sea Grant is committed to building inclusive research, extension, communication, and education programs that serve people with unique backgrounds, circumstances, needs, perspectives, and ways of thinking. Alaska Sea Grant encourages proposals that include diverse participants with regards to age, race, ethnicities, national origins, gender identities, sexual orientations, disabilities, cultures, religions, citizenship types, marital statuses, education levels, job classifications, veteran status types, income, and socioeconomic status.

Conflicts of interest, human subjects, and animal care

All projects undertaken through Alaska Sea Grant must be conducted in full compliance with applicable federal and state laws pertaining to conflicts of interest.

V. Proposal guidance

Proposals must be submitted via eSeaGrant by **5:00 pm AKDT on May 28, 2024**. Proposals received after the deadline will not be considered; the system will shut down automatically and lock out further submissions. **Please be sure to allow ample time for online proposal**

completion and submission. Register in the eSeaGrant system (<https://eseagrantsystem.alaska.edu>) well ahead of the proposal deadline.

During the online submission, be prepared to provide the following information:

Investigators: Names, affiliations, address, phone, and email of the principal investigator and co-principal investigators who will significantly contribute to the project. Do not include collaborators or others who will not dedicate time to the project (directly or in-kind).

Curriculum vitae (2-page maximum pdf per investigator) must be uploaded for each individual who will serve as PI or co-investigator in the project. The vitae can include up to 10 relevant publications.

Project title: Exact title as it appears in the rest of the application. Please keep titles succinct.

Project period: Initiation and completion dates. Proposals should request a start date of 29 July 2024 or later and a completion date of 31 January 2025 or earlier. Project duration is no more than 6 months.

Focus area alignment and Sea Grant classification: Identify relevant Alaska Sea Grant focus area and topical areas to which your project contributes.

Data management statement: Data collection is not supported by this program. In eSeaGrant, applicants will certify that the proposed project will not generate data. Projects funded through Alaska Sea Grant that generate data must conform to NOAA's Data Sharing Directive, including submission of a data management plan. This RFP will not require a data management plan since the proposed projects will not generate data.

Note that the components listed above are completed in eSeaGrant and do not count against the proposal narrative 3-page limit.

Proposal components

1. Proposal narrative (Upload PDF: 3-page limit including all figures and tables. References cited do not count towards the page limit. 1 inch margins, single spaced, and 12 pt font): The narrative should be written for a nonspecialist, scientifically literate audience.

Required elements include:

- a) **Issue identification:** Provide a brief background and introduction. Why is the general topic important to Alaska coasts and coastal communities? Who are the interested parties impacted by the issue?
- b) **Relevance to Alaska Sea Grant:** How does this project relate to [Alaska Sea Grant's Strategic Plan](#)?
- c) **Planned approach and grant activities:** What activities will you engage in during the project? How will these activities help further project goals? Who is on the team, and what are their responsibilities? How will community partners be included in the proposed project and be compensated for their time? What is the timeline of project activities?

- d) Project Evaluation: How will you define success for the project? Applicants must describe anticipated outcomes and/or deliverables and how they may be applied to solving or better understanding problems and issues relevant to Alaska Sea Grant's mission. Which resource management audiences would likely benefit from the project results?
- e) Looking Ahead: Following the end of the six-month Community Partnership Development Grant, what's next? Where would the project ideally lead following the planning period? What future support could be sought or is currently being sought to further the goals of the project? What are the general research questions or hypotheses a larger, longer-term project would aim to investigate? How would receiving a Community Partnership Development Grant help achieve larger project goals that would otherwise not be possible?
- f) References cited: Complete bibliographic references in a standard format are required for all citations used in the proposal text. Articles not cited should not be included.

2. Budget table and budget narrative: A completed budget table and budget narrative, using [the provided template](#), should be uploaded in eSeaGrant. The budget narrative should provide sufficient detail to justify the amount allocated in each category. All salaries must be detailed on a monthly or hourly basis with appropriate institutional fringe benefits or other charges detailed separately. All subawards require full project documentation (narrative and budget) and official approvals from subawardee organizations or institutions.

Budget guidelines: Budgets and budget justifications should adhere to the prescribed funding award of up to \$20,000. Federal agencies and personnel may not request salaries, travel, or indirect costs.

3. Letters of collaboration (optional): Letters confirming the extent of partner collaboration are encouraged. Appropriate and relevant letters of collaboration may be uploaded as a single PDF. Letters should describe collaborative contributions; how project results will benefit a community, industry, or agency; and/or how benefits will be derived from new products, methods, technology, or other outcomes. Note that funding for partner collaboration participation in the form of subawards is encouraged.

4. NEPA abbreviated environmental compliance questionnaire: Please answer all of the questions in the [NEPA questionnaire](#) and provide any supplementary material, including permits, requested in the required form. Guidance on how to complete the questionnaire and examples of completed questionnaires can be found at <https://seagrant.noaa.gov/funding/implementation/> by navigating to NEPA Compliance on the right bar.

5. Office of Management and Budget-approved demographics question: It is required that this question concerning demographics be asked, and your response is voluntary.

VI. Review process and selection criteria

Proposals will undergo a review process coordinated by Alaska Sea Grant. Each proposal will be evaluated by at least three written reviews. These reviewers will score proposals based on

evaluation criteria (Table 1). All reviewers will be external to Alaska Sea Grant, and will consist of disciplinary and engagement experts, all individuals who certify no conflict of interest.

Alaska Sea Grant will consider feedback provided by reviewers and all information available to make final decisions on projects selected for funding. The Alaska Sea Grant Director has final discretion to select projects based on reviewer feedback, diversity and balance of proposals, availability of funding, and programmatic objectives, needs, and priorities.

Proposal evaluation criteria

Criteria	Proposal Weighting	Elements
Relevance	30%	Importance, relevance and applicability of proposed project to Alaska Sea Grant strategic plan; application to problems or opportunities with societal relevance.
Quality and value of proposed collaboration	30%	Degree to which the proposed project incorporates the goals and requirements highlighted in this RFP to build meaningful and equitable community-academic partnerships for future research.
Potential for future project growth	20%	Degree to which the proposed work has a clear path for growth and/or expansion following the end of the 6-month funding period. This includes proposed outlines for future steps and plans for financial sustainability.
Scientific merit	10%	Degree to which the activity advances scientific or educational goals and whether the approach is technically sound and innovative.
Qualification of applicants	10%	Applicants possess the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project, with consideration to career stage and past performance.

VII. Reporting requirements

All NOAA programs are required to report annually on their performance to NOAA leadership, OMB, and Congress. Thus, a part of the proposal evaluation will be based on outcomes and impacts of the research. The definition of “impacts” from National Sea Grant:

Impacts are higher order, usually long-term results of a program’s activities that have significant scientific, economic or social benefits. Impacts may involve behavioral, policy, or economic changes. Seminal contributions to science are considered impacts especially if the research findings lead to major progress in a particular field, implementation of new technologies, or have a substantive bearing on an economic or societal issue. While breakthroughs do occur, it is important to realize that impacts are developed over the long term—both in the scientific arena and through sustained, integrated efforts by Sea Grant programs themselves.

Reporting requirements include submission of an annual report and possible participation in Sea Grant–related meetings. Additional assistance may be requested in periodic updates and presentations for Alaska Sea Grant outreach, education, and special reporting efforts. By accepting grants from Alaska Sea Grant, investigators agree to these requirements. Failure to submit timely reports may result in freezing of remaining grant funds and denial of future funding opportunities.

Federal funding sources shall be identified in all outreach materials, conference presentations and posters, and scholarly publications. An Acknowledgements section shall be included in the body of the publication stating the relevant project and award numbers. In addition, funding sources shall be reported during the publication submission process using the FundRef mechanism (<http://www.crossref.org/fundref/>), with funding acknowledgement to “Alaska Sea Grant, University of Alaska Fairbanks.”

VIII. Contact information

To discuss proposal ideas or issues contact Alaska Sea Grant Associate Director Molly Cain (mrcain@alaska.edu, 907-474-6383).

For *eSeaGrant* technical issues or questions contact Alaska Sea Grant Communications and Technology Specialist Dave Partee (dave.partee@alaska.edu, 907-474-2432)