USC SEA GRANT
CALL FOR PRELIMINARY PROPOSALS

PROPOSALS FOR PROJECTS BEGINNING February 1, 2016

Preliminary Proposals Due: March 20, 2015 by 5 pm PST

The University of Southern California Sea Grant Program is now soliciting preliminary proposals for projects of one or two years’ duration beginning February 1, 2016. Projects should focus on topics pertaining to the "Urban Ocean," USC Sea Grant's primary focus. University faculty and academic staff at California academic or research institutions are eligible to apply, and we encourage interdisciplinary and inter-institutional projects.

Research Priorities

USC Sea Grant's "Urban Ocean" research program is intended to develop and sponsor projects directed at solving the particular problems associated with urbanization in and adjacent to the coastal zone. The program’s overall aims are to foster the use of sound scientific information to advance our understanding of coastal and ocean resources, to examine the ways we conserve and use these resources, and to support tools for evaluating the issues and socio-economic trade-offs that comprise coastal decision making. We encourage projects from researchers in the natural sciences, social sciences, and engineering.

The USC Sea Grant Strategic Plan for 2014-2017 outlines our research and outreach goals. It is available for download from the Sea Grant website: (http://dornsife.usc.edu/usceagrant/strategic-plan/).

Strategic focus areas include:

• Healthy Coastal Ecosystems
• Safe and Sustainable Seafood
• Resilient Communities and Economies
• Environmental Literacy and Workforce Development

Descriptions of USC Sea Grant’s focus areas are also on our website: (http://dornsife.usc.edu/usceagrant/focusareas/)

Of particular interest in this funding cycle are projects that develop ideas, information and techniques in the fields of water quality and land use management, climate change and coastal community resilience, urban wetlands, urban beaches, marine transportation, aquaculture, ocean energy and public education.

The California Ocean Protection Council’s Strategic Plan helps to inform our research program, providing information about California ocean management information needs. We encourage prospective researchers to consult the planning document, which was informed by other state agencies with ocean and coastal jurisdictions, to ensure that research topics respond to State needs. (http://www.opc.ca.gov/programs/).

Projects

Successful Sea Grant projects involve both a substantial intellectual question and the promise of useful application to real-world problems. Sea Grant emphasizes innovative research on ocean and coastal resources and processes. Sea Grant encourages interdisciplinary research that responds to current issues affecting coastal and ocean resources, physical processes and socioeconomic problems. Proposals should contain a well-developed rationale and potential for broad application, and a strong theoretical basis with a clear, testable hypothesis.
Funding

We anticipate funding 6-8 projects with our biennial Sea Grant College Program funds. Project budgets will range from $10,000 to $65,000, with the average being approximately $50,000 for new research. Research projects are required to provide 50% in matching funds from the PI's home institution or primary project partners. Continuation of a project beyond the first year is subject to demonstration of satisfactory progress by the project investigator.

Submission of Preliminary Proposals

Prospective applicants are encouraged to contact the USC Sea Grant offices (213-740-1961) to discuss potential projects and funding. Our office can serve as a regional clearinghouse for the coordination of complementary project proposals, and as a resource for research and education contacts.

Proposals may be submitted via email to: seagrant@usc.edu. A preliminary proposal template can be found on the USC Sea Grant website and is also attached to this document. Proposal should be submitted on the fillable Template Form and should not exceed two pages. The two pages provide: Title of Project, Principal Investigator(s), Proposed Project start and end dates, Trainees requested, First Year Funds requested, Total Estimated Funds requested over project period, Matching Funds, and Statement of Problem, Research Objectives, Methods, and Benefits. Proposals will not be considered if they are not received in the Sea Grant Office by the due date and time. If you do not receive confirmation of receipt of your proposal within 24 hours after submission please contact the USC Sea Grant Office by phone at 213-740-1961.

National Sea Grant College Program

The National Sea Grant College Program is a nationwide activity of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Commerce, authorized by Congress and conducted by universities, in cooperation with federal and state agencies and often marine industries and users. USC Sea Grant is one of 33 university-based programs that form the core of the network, involving some 300 universities and colleges.

The objective of the program is: to increase the understanding, assessment, development, utilization, and conservation of the nation's ocean and coastal resources by providing assistance to promote a strong educational base, responsive research and training activities, and broad and prompt dissemination of knowledge and techniques.

California is one of only two states in the nation with more than one Sea Grant Program. If you have marine related research interests outside of USC Sea Grant's "Urban Ocean" emphasis, we encourage you to contact the California Sea Grant College System, University of California, San Diego, 9500 Gilman Drive, La Jolla, CA 92093-0232 (619-534-4440). The web address is: http://www-csge.ucsd.edu.