

**FLORIDA SEA GRANT COLLEGE PROGRAM
Priorities & Funding Opportunities for 2018-2020**



**Call for Statements of Interest
for Proposed New Applied Research Projects**

**Deadline: February 13, 2017
(3:00 PM Eastern Standard Time)**

This document is in three sections:

- A. Funding and Proposal Information**
- B. Priorities for Applied Research Projects**
- C. Statement of Interest Guidelines**

**This document is available online from:
January 4 to February 13, 2017 at**

https://www.flseagrant.org/funding/open/biennial_call_for_proposals/

Science Serving Florida's Coast

Florida Sea Grant is a university-based program that supports research, education and extension to enhance coastal resources and economic opportunities for the people of Florida. We are a partnership between the State University System of Florida, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and Florida's citizens and governments.

January 4, 2017

FLORIDA SEA GRANT RESEARCH COMPETITION

Criteria to Qualify for a Review

To have your Statement of Interest considered in this review process, ALL of the following criteria must be met. Statements of interest that do not meet ALL of these criteria will be returned without a review and will not be considered in this biennial applied research competition. There will be no exceptions.

1. All required materials identified in the RFP must be submitted using our online system on or before 3 PM on February 13, 2017.
2. The statement must clearly indicate that the Principal Investigator has worked with a specific end-user in order to develop a proposal that is applied and relevant to a priority identified in section B of this RFP. Professional colleagues are not end-users. An end-user is an industry or agency partner that makes use of a research product to address some coastal or ocean issue. Statements of Interest do not require letters of endorsement from end-users. Rather, we require evidence that an end-user, as defined above, was part of the issue identification, and we want to know specifically how the end user will ultimately use the new information, tools, models or other products of the research project. Having the end-user as a co-investigator on the proposal is suggested. Another approach is to have end-users as an advisory board for the project. We do recognize that projects funded by Florida Sea Grant last just two years, have limited funds, and may be just one step towards answering the question or solving the problem identified by the end-user, however, working with the end-user ensures that the research we support is moving the issue towards resolution.
3. The Principal Investigator must have documented expertise in the specific area of proposed research.
4. The project must include full or partial funding for at least one student who is being mentored by the Principal Investigator, and that student must be actively contributing to the project as part of his/her graduate or undergraduate research.
5. The proposed research must clearly address one or more of the priorities identified in section B of this RFP.

OVERVIEW

This is a solicitation for Statements of Interest for two-year coastal and ocean applied research grants.

- Priorities identified in Section B were taken from the 2018-21 Florida Sea Grant Strategic Plan, and address four focus areas: Healthy Coastal Environments; Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture; Resilient Communities and Economies and Environmental Literacy and Workforce Development.
- This is an open state-wide competition for any Principal Investigator in Florida who can meet the five previously described 'criteria to qualify for review.'
- Proposals must be strong in rationale, scientific / professional merit, and end-user engagement, and also meet the criteria in section A (8) below.

- A strong Statement of Interest is the first step to securing Florida Sea Grant funding.
- The maximum Florida Sea Grant award is \$200,000 for two years, with no more than \$100,000 in each individual budget year.
- A 50% match is required – i.e., \$100,000 match of non-federal funds if \$200,000 of federal funds is requested.
- We intend to fund approximately 10 research projects depending on available funds. Projects with the strongest end-user engagement and the highest scientific merit will be selected. A review panel will determine which projects are selected for development into full proposals and which full proposals are recommended for funding.

PURPOSE

This document describes the process to apply for Florida Sea Grant funding for two-year applied research projects beginning in Spring 2018. It provides an overview of the Florida Sea Grant proposal and review process, defines priority areas, and presents guidelines for the preparation of Statements of Interest.

A. Florida Sea Grant Funding and Proposal Information 2018 - 2020

1. Sea Grant Funding Cycle

Florida Sea Grant research projects are normally funded for two years. Thus, projects proposed should be for the period February 1, 2018 to January 31, 2020.

Key dates:

2017

January 4	Call for Statements of Interest
February 13	Statements of Interest Due by 3 PM (no late statements will be accepted)
April 12-13	Technical Review Panel Meets to Review SI
April 17	Faculty Notified of Statement of Interest Results
April 17-May 28	Invited Proposals Written
May 29	Full Proposals Due by 3 PM (late proposals will not be accepted)
June-July	Peer Review Conducted
August 8-9	Technical Panel Meets to Review Full Proposals
August 14	Faculty Notified if Proposal Successful
September 4	Letter Response to Peer Reviews Due
October 6	Omnibus Florida Sea Grant Proposal Submitted to National Sea Grant Office, NOAA

2018 New projects start. The date when funds are released depends on when they are provided by NOAA.

2. Statement of Interest Defined

The Statement of Interest is a project pre-proposal that identifies a topic relevant to coastal and ocean needs in Florida and the nation. It describes the scope of the need, problem or opportunity, and how the results achieved under a grant would contribute to development, conservation, or use of ocean and coastal resources and economies. Statements allow for review of concepts, rationale, general approach, end-user participation and expected outcomes and impacts before faculty must commit extensive effort to writing a narrative of detailed methods and other aspects of a full proposal.

The five-page (maximum) Statement of Interest format and a one-page biographical data form are described and included in this document. Although brief, the Statement is the basis for deciding on whether to request a full proposal. Preparation should be done thoughtfully.

3. Participation

Any Principal Investigator who meets the aforementioned ‘criteria to qualify for a review’ is eligible to apply. Funded projects are selected based on the degree to which they address Florida Sea Grant’s stated priorities, scientific merit and active participation by an end-user in the private sector, a government agency, or a coastal community. Principal Investigators may be employees of universities, agencies, non-profits or private corporations. Regardless of where they are employed, however, they must meet the ‘criteria to qualify for a review.’ Because we are by nature a college program, one of our criteria is support of students. For principal investigators not employed by a university, an effective way to address this criterion is to team up with a faculty member at one of Florida’s many universities.

Investigators may participate on up to TWO Statements of Interest: On ONE Statement of Interest as Principal Investigator and on ONE Statement of Interest as either Co-Principal Investigator or Associate Investigator. Investigators may not participate as Principal Investigator on more than ONE Statement of Interest.

On average, we receive about 75 statements of interest, ask for 25 full proposals, and fund 10 projects. We aim to fund approximately 40% of full proposals, so the most intensive screening happens at the pre-proposal stage. Thus, while pre-proposals are of a short length, it is critical that in a concise manner you carefully describe the importance of the work, the specific approaches/methodology that will be taken, and the specific nature of the partnership with a defined end-user. Details regarding how you are working with the end-user are very important both here and in the full proposal.

4. Size of Grant Award

The maximum two-year award that Florida Sea Grant will provide is \$200,000, with a maximum of \$100,000 in each budget year. For each Sea Grant dollar, a 50% matching fund commitment is required (i.e., if you request \$200,000 of federal dollars, you must have \$100,000 of non-federal match).

For 2018 and 2019, the anticipated amount (assuming the current federal appropriation) of annual research funding available will be approximately \$1,000,000. At the \$100,000 level, this would fund 10 research projects.

5. Student Involvement Is Essential

Sea Grant is a college program and student participation in Sea Grant funded research is essential.

6. Review Criteria

In order for your Statement of Interest to be sent out for a review, **ALL** five of the criteria listed on page 2 of this call for Statements of Interest must be met. Statements of Interest that do not meet **ALL** of the criteria will be returned without a review and will not be considered in this biennial research competition.

For Statements of Interest, Florida Sea Grant will obtain relevancy reviews from agency and industry stakeholders, reviews from subject area experts, and reviews from a visiting panel of broadly experienced out-of-state scientists recognized for both their disciplinary and program leadership experience. They will consider email reviews and their own reviews in recommending which Statements of Interest will be selected for development into a full proposal.

Statements of Interest must advance one or more of the priorities identified in Section B of this document or they will not be reviewed. Three criteria will be used by reviewers and panel members to evaluate Statements of Interest that have passed the initial qualifying screening described above.

1. **Scientific Merit (30%)** -- the degree to which the proposed project is innovative and will advance the state of the science.
2. **Users, Participants and Co-Sponsors (30%)** -- the degree to which users or potential users of the results of the proposed project have been brought into the planning of the project, will be brought into the execution of the project, and will use results.
3. **Expected Results, Applications and Benefits (40%)** -- the degree to which the completed project is expected to create new commercial opportunities, improve technological and economic efficiency, promote environmental sustainability, or improve management decisions, in Florida or possibly nationally.

The outcome of this scoring will serve as the primary basis for project advancement to the full proposal stage. The panel and program Directors also will consider funding in the context of our four major focus areas, to ensure that projects are distributed across multiple areas.

7. Compliance with NOAA Data Sharing Requirement

Environmental data and information collected and/or created under NOAA grants and cooperative agreements must be made visible, accessible, and independently understandable to general users, free of charge or at minimal cost, in a timely manner (no later than two years after the data are collected or created), except where limited by law, regulation, policy or by security requirements. In this section, please describe any environmental variables that will be collected, how the data will be formatted, how descriptive metadata will be developed and where the data and metadata will be archived and be made available to the public (weblink or repository).

The NOAA data sharing requirement has two basic parts: (1) environmental data generated by a grant project must be made available two years after it has been collected; and (2) the grant application must describe the plan to archive the data, document the data and make the data publically available.

For the Statement of Interest, the Principal Investigator must simply agree in writing that they and any other investigators/sub-contractors will comply with NOAA's data sharing policy should their project involve the collection of environmental data.

For the Full Proposal, the Principal Investigator must explain how the data and metadata will be developed, described and archived for public access. Funds may be budgeted in the project full-proposal for this task.

8. Submitting Your Statement of Interest:

2018-2020 Florida Sea Grant Statements of Interest must be submitted online through the Florida Sea Grant website <http://seagrant.ifas.ufl.edu/CallForProposals/index.php>. (PAPER COPIES ARE NOT ACCEPTED). Please read and follow directions carefully. You will receive a confirmation by email when your Statement of Interest has been successfully submitted.

Deadline for receipt is February 13, 2017 by 3:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (No extensions.)

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B. Florida Sea Grant College Program Priorities for 2018 - 2020

The following research priorities, taken from our new strategic plan, have been identified for the 2018 - 2020 funding cycle.

Healthy Coastal Environments

- *Develop methods, tools or policies to more efficiently and effectively enhance coastal habitats and/or water quality.*
- *Acquire new actionable information about how altered freshwater flow now and in the future affects coastal ecosystems and their services.*
- *Acquire new actionable information about the effects of point and non-point source nutrient pollution, for example urban storm water runoff and agricultural runoff, on coastal ecosystems.*
- *Predict the impacts of climate change on coastal habitats, water quality and human uses, or develop new approaches to more effectively evaluate those impacts.*

Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture

- *Develop new models, tools and technologies for sustainably managing fisheries resources or more effectively protecting at-risk species.*
- *Develop and test stakeholder engagement processes to support fisheries management - at local levels and evaluated for use at broader geographic scales.*

- *Develop new tools, technologies, methods and approaches to support cost-effective, sustainable and environmentally-friendly aquaculture and the harvest, processing and sale of wild aquatic products.*
- *Develop and test new tools, methods, technologies and approaches to evaluate the source, identity, product quality and safety of seafood products.*
- *Develop new aquaculture products that can tolerate adverse conditions in coastal waters, for example rising water temperatures that are occurring due to climate change.*

Resilient Communities and Economies

- *Develop or apply existing tools and field-test them to evaluate risk and increase resilience of coastal communities to extreme weather, storm surge and sea level rise.*
- *Determine the potential extent of damage to infrastructure from extreme weather, storm surge and sea level rise.*
- *Develop new planning tools and policies to promote access and sustainable use of waterfronts and waterways.*

Environmental Literacy and Workforce Development

- *Develop innovative new immersive learning programs to educate children and young adults about the actions that they can avoid and take to protect the health of the coastal zone, including for example apps and video games with embedded learning attributes.*

C. Guidelines for Preparation of Statement of Interest

INSTRUCTIONS: Statements of Interest **MUST BE SUBMITTED ONLINE** through the Florida Sea Grant web site www.flseagrant.org using the “**Call for 2018-2020 Florida Statements of Interest**” link. You are allowed a maximum of **five, single-spaced pages for the project narrative**, not counting the pages that provide literature citations and other forms identified below. Use at least 11-point font, New Times Roman. Figures, images, mathematical notations and symbols, and tables can be used, however they must be embedded within the narrative and they do count towards the five page narrative limit. From the Florida Sea Grant proposal website, download and use the Microsoft Word formatted worksheet to prepare your Statement of Interest (SI). Convert the completed SI to a PDF file using Adobe Acrobat, and use the “upload” button on the Florida Sea Grant web site link “**Call for 2018-2020 Florida Statements of Interest**” to submit your SI. **NO PAPER COPIES WILL BE ACCEPTED AT THE FLORIDA SEA GRANT OFFICE.**

STATEMENTS OF INTEREST RECEIVED AFTER 3 PM ON FEBRUARY 13, 2017 WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED FOR REVIEW, AND THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS GUIDELINE, SO PLEASE PLAN AND SUBMIT EARLY. We are not responsible for the internet being down or other things happening in the last hours or minutes before the deadline.

Prior to submitting your SI you will navigate to the submission process web page and be required to enter the Project Title, the Principal Investigator, the Co-principal Investigator(s), the Associate Investigator(s), and the Proposed Budget into the Sea Grant web site project entry form. Once you have completed the project entry form and submitted your SI you will receive an

SI number which you and your project associates will use to submit your biographical data sheets (discussed below).

Each Statement of Interest must address each of the following headings.

1. STATEMENT OF INTEREST NUMBER. This is the number that you will receive after completing the first page of the on-line submission process. Write this number down and save it because you will need it for submitting the SI and the biographical data forms.
2. PROJECT TITLE: (Make this succinct while also reflecting the anticipated application, opportunity or need to be addressed, or problem to be solved. It should clearly relate to a Florida Sea Grant goal and priority.)
3. PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR(S): (Provide faculty name, academic department, and institution)
4. CO-PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR(S): (Provide faculty name, academic department, and institution)
5. ASSOCIATE INVESTIGATOR(S): (Provide faculty name, academic department, and institution)
6. PROPOSED BUDGET: YEAR 1 -- SEA GRANT: \$ _____, MATCH YEAR 1: \$ _____.
(No commas) YEAR 2 -- SEA GRANT: \$ _____, MATCH YEAR 2: \$ _____.

One non-federal dollar match -- "hard" or "in-kind" -- must be provided by the grantee for every two dollars requested from Sea Grant; round to the nearest \$1000 (no commas). Prepare the budget estimate thoughtfully. *(A full proposal budget request exceeding the SI budget request will reduce the competitiveness of the full proposal.)*

7. RFP PRIORITY: Identify the RFP priority(ies) that your project addresses.
8. RELEVANCE: Describe the problem or opportunity using quantitative information. This section should document the magnitude of the situation, and the relevance of the issue or problem to the Florida Sea Grant priorities. Describe what makes this project innovative. Why is this topic important? As warranted or required discuss pilot data that establish a basis for this line of research.
9. OBJECTIVES: Number and list the objectives. Objectives must be attainable within the two-year timeframe of your project.
10. METHODS: Describe the overall project design. How will the hypothesis be tested or how will the efficacy of new tools, technologies, policies or products be rigorously evaluated? Identify specific methodology and major aspects such as replication, sampling, surveys, etc.
11. END-USER PARTICIPATION AND DELIVERY OF RESULTS: Identify the specific end-users that will participate in your project. Describe their specific confirmed role. Describe the specific approach that will be taken to transfer the new information, tools, technologies, policies or products to their end-users. This may involve coordinating the project with a state

or federal resource management agency, a governmental organization or and private sector. While we are not taking proposals for extension work at this time, the proposed project must develop linkages with the agency, industry or community for the dissemination and practical application of results. If there is a clear opportunity to involve one of our Extension Agents in the project, this is encouraged but not required. If you take this opportunity, be sure to include funds in the budget for their time that is directed towards the project. This section of the proposal is expected to be much more detailed for Technology Transfer statements (see Section B, Priorities).

12. **EXPECTED RESULTS, APPLICATIONS AND BENEFITS:** Describe the expected outcomes of the project. If the objectives are attained, how would the problem to be solved create new commercial opportunities, improve technological and economic efficiency, improve management decisions, etc.? What Florida, regional or national impact is envisioned? Note: we recognize that with a two-year duration, the ultimate goals of the work may not be attained, and that some research initiatives take considerably longer than two years to provide a solution to an identified problem. We want to know that your project is moving the level of understanding or utility of tools or models in a direction toward issue resolution.
13. **AFFIRMATION OF COMPLIANCE WITH NOAA DATA SHARING GUIDELINES:** In the Statement of Interest, the PI only needs to affirm that he/she will comply with the NOAA data sharing guideline if selected to write a full proposal and if funded by Florida Sea Grant. Note: these guidelines will apply only to environmental field data.
14. **LITERATURE CITATIONS:** Limit this section to no more than 10 highly relevant references.
15. **REVIEWERS / CONFLICTS:** Please provide the names, addresses, telephone, and email of five potential reviewers. Please also tell us if particular persons may have a conflict of interest in reviewing your proposal and in those cases, provide an explanation.

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA: Each project investigator (principal, co-principal, associate), listed in headings 3, 4, and 5 above, MUST submit a one-page biographical information summary in the format of their choosing. A template is available for download from the proposal submittal website. The biographical summary should contain information that will allow reviewers to assess investigator qualifications to conduct the proposed project.

SUBMISSION: To submit a Statement of Interest, go to the Florida Sea Grant home page at <http://www.flseagrant.org> and follow the link to **Call for 2018-2020 Statements of Interest**. Read all of the instructions and follow them carefully. You will receive a confirmation SI number when your Statement of Interest has been received. You will need this number to submit the Biographical Data form(s). Please do not wait until the last day to submit your Statement of Interest or Biographical Data forms; the process may take longer than you anticipate.

The eight steps to completion are:

1. Read all (A) funding and proposal information; (B) priorities for 2018-2020 and (C) guidelines for preparation of a Statement of Interest and Biographical Data forms.
2. Download the Statement of Interest and Biographical Data forms. Complete those forms off-line.

3. Access the SI submission web page
["http://seagrant.ifas.ufl.edu/CallForProposals/index.php"](http://seagrant.ifas.ufl.edu/CallForProposals/index.php) fill out the required data fields and click submit. You will then receive your unique SI number.
4. Enter the SI number on your Statement of Interest (first heading on the form) and the biographical data sheets that you and your colleagues completed off-line. The Principal Investigator should have all biographical data sheets prior to accessing the statement of interest submission process web page. Additional biographical data sheets may be uploaded **prior to the February 13, 2017 deadline** using a password that the PI creates during the initial submission. However, your statement will not be considered if all biographical data forms have not been submitted by the deadline.
5. Convert the SI and biographical forms to a PDF format using Adobe Acrobat.
6. Select the option for "This is a biographical data form" and click "attach PDF." Repeat for multiple biographical data forms.
7. After you have attached your SI and all biographical data forms click "finish" to complete the submission process.
8. You will receive an email confirming our receipt of you statement of interest.

Deadline for receipt of Statements of Interest and all biographical data forms is February 13, 2017 by 3:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (no extensions).

FLORIDA SEA GRANT STATEMENT OF INTEREST TEMPLATE

Deadline for receipt is February 13, 2017 by 3:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (no extensions). DO NOT exceed FIVE pages for items 8 through 12. After completing, save as a PDF for uploading to Statement of Interest website.

1. SI-2017- _____
2. PROJECT TITLE:
3. PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR(S): (Provide faculty name, academic department and institution)
4. CO-PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR(S): (Provide faculty name, academic department and institution)
5. ASSOCIATE INVESTIGATOR(S): (Provide faculty name, academic department and institution)
6. PROPOSED BUDGET: YEAR 1: SEA GRANT: \$, MATCH: \$
(No commas) YEAR 2: SEA GRANT: \$, MATCH: \$
(Round to nearest \$1000)
7. RFP PRIORITY:
8. REVELANCE:
9. OBJECTIVES:
10. METHODS:
11. END-USER PARTICIPATION AND DELIVERY OF RESULTS:
12. EXPECTED RESULTS, APPLICATIONS AND BENEFITS:
13. AFFIRMATION OF COMPLIANCE WITH NOAA DATA SHARING GUIDELINES:
14. LITERATURE CITED:
15. REVIEWERS/CONFLICTS: