

## National Sea Grant College Program

# Strategic Planning Guidance for the 2022-2023 Cycle

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### Overview and Background

Traditionally, every four years the National Sea Grant College Program (Sea Grant) develops the National Sea Grant Network Strategic Plan (the National Plan). A National Plan Steering Committee is appointed by the National Sea Grant College Program Director in consultation with leadership from the National Sea Grant Advisory Board (the Board) and the Sea Grant Association (SGA). The Steering committee is comprised of representatives from the National Sea Grant Office (NSGO), SGA, and the Board. The Steering Committee is charged with defining the scope and objectives of the planning process, reviewing relevant source material, providing progress updates and presenting the draft strategic plan to the Sea Grant Director according to the timeline outlined below.

For this cycle, the NSGO is making a temporary change in the traditional process and allowing both the National Plan and the strategic plans of individual Sea Grant programs to be extended or updated for two years through 2023. In the approach outlined here, we are not changing the mechanics of the existing PIE system, but we are adjusting the timelines to address the following:

1. We want to start looking at the strategic impact of our work on potentially longer timescales, to get away from the intense grind we all currently experience where we are constantly planning/implementing/evaluating nearly simultaneously.
2. We are seriously challenged by the fact that our current omnibus cycle is on the same cycle as Presidential elections. This makes starting new omnibus awards very difficult - in fact, in 2018, we were almost not allowed to do so.
3. Many Sea Grant programs have expressed concerns with the burden our current PIE system places, a concern that is shared by the NSGO and the NSGAB. We want to address that concern while meeting our mandates and requirements.

4. The NSGAB will soon complete a review of our 2014-17 evaluation process. This temporary change will allow us to fully incorporate feedback and recommendations from the NSGAB's review of the 2014-17 evaluation process into the next full planning cycle.

Implications of these changes:

1. The omnibus submission for 2022 will be a two-year award for all programs to reach the end of that two year extended strategic plan.
2. The Site Reviews for the 2018-2023 plan will be carried out in 2024-2025.
3. Merit funding from the current review will still be awarded in the 2022-2023 omnibus and will carry over into the 2024 omnibus
4. The following strategic plan after the mini-plan & omnibus in 2022-23 will begin in 2024, exact duration TBD.
5. The details of the 2024 strategic planning process are still to be determined and will be decided with input from NSGAB and SGA leadership.

## Timeline

### Fall 2019

- The National Sea Grant director has conversations with the Board and the SGA about the development of the national plan, its timeline, and establishing a steering committee to develop the national plan
- The NSGO shares guidance for developing plans with Sea Grant programs

### January to February 2020

- National Strategic Plan steering committee reviews existing plan to ensure there are no major changes or updates that must be made ahead of the 2022-2023 mini-cycle
- March: Updates are shared with the national director, SGA, and the Board

### March to April 2020

- National Strategic Plan steering committee makes any edits to existing plan for the purposes of extending it through 2023
- Steering committee shares updated current plan with broader Sea Grant network with notes on any changes or updates (Note: Individual Sea Grant programs do not need to wait on this updated national version to move forward with updating their plans.)

### June 2020

- NSGO shares 2022-23 omnibus guidance with Sea Grant programs

### January to August 2020

- A loose timeline for when individual Sea Grant programs may choose to review their existing plans and/or engage stakeholders for plan input, see “Guidance for Individual Sea Grant Programs to Develop Strategic Plans“ below for details.
- This is also a good time for programs to engage with their federal program officer to share an outline or draft of a strategic plan if they choose to change their plan

### Summer/Fall 2020

- Omnibus guidance for the mini-cycle of 2022-2023 comes from NSGO to Sea Grant programs

### September 2020

- Individual Sea Grant program strategic plans due to NSGO, exact date depends on plans negotiated and agreed upon by PO and program
- National strategic plan for the 2022-2023 mini-cycle is finalized
- POs - See process guidance for additional details

### September - October 2020

- NSGO reviews and approves strategic plans of individual Sea Grant programs

### Fall 2020 through 2021

- Individual Sea Grant programs begin their RFPs for the 2022-2023 strategic plan

### Fall 2021

- Two-year Omnibus proposals for 2022-2023, which are based on each program’s strategic plan, are due



## Guidance for Individual Sea Grant Programs to Develop Strategic Plans

Each Sea Grant program's strategic plan should be informed by and aligned with the mission, vision, values, and national strategic focus areas described in the national strategic plan. The NSGO does not anticipate any major departures from the mission, vision, values and focus areas described in the 2018-2021 strategic plan during this cycle. If a Sea Grant program determines that their work will fall outside of or not include one or more of the national focus areas, a justification will need to be included in the plan submitted to the NSGO.

The national strategic focus areas for the 2022- 2023 strategic plan will remain as

- Healthy Coastal Ecosystems
- Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture
- Resilient Communities and Economies
- Environmental Literacy and Workforce Development

Each program's plan should inform the priorities set in any requests for proposals issued by the program. It should also serve as the guiding document from which the 2022-2023 omnibus proposal, or implementation plan, is built.

### **Option One: Extend the Current 2018-2021 Plan Through 2023**

Sea Grant programs may choose to continue to address the priorities of their 2018-2021 Strategic Plan after a review of the existing plan and consultation with your advisory committee, and extend the existing plan through 2023 (It will become your 2018-2023 Strategic Plan). This may include revising proposed targets to reflect current progress.

### **Option Two: Update Priorities and Incorporate them into a revised 2018-2023 Strategic Plan**

Sea Grant programs may choose to host full stakeholder engagement sessions, and/or utilize the input recently received from stakeholders during their 2014-2017 Site Review Visit as well as input from their advisory board(s) to inform changes to a new 2018-2023 Strategic Plan.

No matter which option you choose, this current plan, as extended or updated, will be for six years, 2018-2023.

### **Strategic Plan Components**

The NSGO strongly recommends that each Sea Grant program's strategic plan include the following components:

- Program's Vision
- Program's Mission
- Core Values
- Cross-cutting principles – Partnerships, Organization Excellence, Diversity & Inclusion,
- National Focus Areas (noted above) that the program intends to support

- Goals for each of the National Focus Areas and, where applicable, integration of recent Network Visioning priorities.
- Desired outcomes associated with goals
- National performance measures and anticipated targets (The NSGO will provide additional guidance and a template to use for this portion of the plan in early 2020.)

#### Evaluation of Progress Towards Strategic Plan

Typically, Sea Grant programs are evaluated against their strategic plan at the end of a four year cycle. With this mini-strategic planning cycle, Sea Grant programs will be evaluated at the end of a six year cycle, 2018-2023, against progress made towards achieving the goals established in their strategic plan as described in the Sea Grant [PIE Policy](#).

Sea Grant's program evaluation and annual reporting processes are designed to capture annual updates on progress made towards strategic goals. The information provided by Sea Grant programs in annual reports assists programs in telling the story of achieving the goals set out in the strategic plan. More information on evaluation and reporting can be found on [Inside Sea Grant](#).