

# 2021 Sea Grant Academy Special Projects Competition

## **SPECIAL PROJECTS ANNOUNCEMENT**

**Competition:** 2021 Sea Grant Academy

**Application Closing date:** February 13, 2020

**Eligible Sea Grant programs:** This competition is open to all Sea Grant Colleges, Institutions and Coherent Area Programs.

### **Funding Availability:**

The National Sea Grant Office anticipates that up to \$75,000 in Sea Grant funding will be available to develop, conduct, and evaluate the 8th National Sea Grant Academy, to be held in 2021. Non-federal matching funds are not required for this competition. It is anticipated that no more than one application will be selected.

### **Project Description:**

The Sea Grant Academy was created to build the capacity of Sea Grant staff to meet the needs of America's coastal community by providing a foundation in the NOAA Sea Grant culture, and fundamentals of Sea Grant philosophy, responsibilities and skills. To date, the seven previous Academies have successfully provided over 200 Sea Grant participants with this training. Participants have also learned from subject-matter experts and peers, and formed partnerships between programs and with other NOAA line offices.

Specific goals are to:

- Encourage the pursuit of lifelong learning
- Improve the knowledge and skills needed for professionals and staff working in Sea Grant
- Provide a foundation in contemporary resource management and policy issues
- Supplement state training efforts
- Strengthen the national Sea Grant network by building internal capacity
- Instill a Sea Grant ethos among Academy participants

The 2021 Academy is intended for approximately 30 relatively new, Sea Grant professionals. In the past, in order to cover additional Academy costs, additional funding support has been provided by the participating Sea Grant programs (registration fees and travel).

### **Application Requirements:**

Applications should propose a start date of August 1, 2020 or later, and run for up to two years.

The proposal should include program planning and budget, and how the plan will meet the goals of the Academy. The proposal should provide detail for two, week-long workshops, spaced about six months apart, and an intersession assignment for the participants. The successful proposal will identify the two primary training venues, likely dates for the week-long sessions, and a proposed course of study for the participants. The course of study should include the working titles for the topics to be covered during both sessions. The first session should be conducted at a venue near the Washington, DC metropolitan area. Such a location offers the opportunity to meet with staff from the National Sea Grant Office, other NOAA offices, and will enable the Academy organizers to draw presenters from Washington area federal offices as well as nearby Sea Grant College programs.

The second session should take place at a reasonably priced location in a Sea Grant state, territory, or commonwealth. The venue should be conveniently located to local Sea Grant programs which could be called on to assist in training and field-based activities.

Proposal should include an estimate of the costs, including registration fees and travel costs for participants attending the two sessions. The "Cost" evaluation criteria described in the Federal Funding Opportunity will include consideration of these costs, as well as the cost of the grant itself.

An evaluation of the Academy will also be required. Applicants should identify the evaluation strategies they propose to use and how the results will be used to improve future sessions of the Academy.

The successful applicant will also be eligible to receive future institutional funding, without further competition, for the planning, execution, and post-Academy evaluation and follow-up activities for the 2023 Sea Grant Academy. Because selection for an award for the 2021 Sea Grant Academy will also establish eligibility for future funding for the 2023 Sea Grant Academy, the proposal should also briefly describe how the planning, execution, evaluation and follow-up of the 2021 Academy will inform and facilitate the 2023 Sea Grant Academy, including transfer of this information to the 2023 Academy host program, should the 2023 Sea Grant Academy be awarded to another program.

Funding for the 2023 Academy is not guaranteed, and will depend on future appropriations, mission priorities, and successful execution of the 2021 Sea Grant Academy. Applications to this competition announcement should not request any funding for the 2023 Academy. Should funding for the 2023 Academy become available, a separate application will be requested. For planning purposes, the amount of funding available for the 2023 Sea Grant Academy should be assumed to be about \$75,000.

**Applicant Evaluation Criteria:**

The following Evaluation Criteria will be used in selecting an applicant as a Grantee. Note that these criteria are different than the Evaluation Criteria laid out in the Special Projects Funding Opportunity announcement.

1. Importance/relevance and applicability of proposed projects to the funding objectives (30%). This criterion ascertains whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and/or relevance to NOAA, federal, regional, state, or local activities. For this opportunity, use the program goals listed above.
2. Technical Merit (30%): This measures whether the approach is technically sound, if the methods are appropriate, and whether there are clear project objectives consistent with the funding objectives of this competition.
3. Project Costs (25%): The budget is analyzed to see if it is realistic, commensurate with the project needs, and cost-effective (whether the proposal makes the most economical use of available resources to maximize project results and is not duplicative of existing work).
4. Outreach and Education (15%). This criterion assesses whether the project provides a focused and effective education and outreach strategy to meet Sea Grant goals.

**Other Information:**

Questions about this competition or the Special Projects Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) may be sent to [oar.hq.sg.competitions@noaa.gov](mailto:oar.hq.sg.competitions@noaa.gov). Please specify that your question is related to the Sea Grant Academy competition in the subject line.

The award will be in the form of a Cooperative Agreement with NOAA. The awardee will work closely with the National Sea Grant Office throughout the process in the development, implementation, and evaluation the Sea Grant Academy.

Consult the NOFO [NOAA-OAR-SG-2020-2006252](#), available at [Grants.gov](#), for eligible applicants, required elements of the application, how to submit, general programmatic priorities and selection factors, and other necessary information. Submit your application to **SPECIAL PROJECTS "E"** under this Opportunity in grants.gov.

Literature Citations do not count towards the 15-page limit for the Project Description. Although the Notice of Funding Opportunity states that they do, this Special Project Announcement takes precedence.

Fillable versions of required Sea Grant forms can be found here:

<https://seagrant.noaa.gov/insideseagrant/Implementation>

Guidance for completing these forms is located in the Sea Grant General Application Guidance Document:

(<https://seagrant.noaa.gov/Portals/1/Guidance/SeaGrantGeneralApplicationGuide.pdf>)