

Welcome to Sea Grant!

This page provides information and resources that may be helpful to faculty, staff and affiliates who are new to Sea Grant. Also, you can download a [PDF of the Sea Grant 101 presentation](#) (updated December 2020). Contact the NSGO for a Powerpoint or Google Slides version.



Let's start with the basics.

Sea Grant is a Federal-University partnership program that brings science together with communities for solutions that work.

The National Sea Grant College program was established by the U.S. Congress in 1966 and works to create and maintain a healthy coastal environment and economy. The Sea Grant network consists of a federal/university partnership between the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and 34 university-based programs in every coastal and Great Lakes state, Puerto Rico, and Guam. The network draws on the expertise of more than 3,000 scientists, engineers, public outreach

experts, educators and students to help citizens better understand, conserve and utilize America's coastal resources.

We have four focus areas.

A national framework of focus areas describes the network's overarching priorities based on national and regional needs and initiatives. The focus areas provide a structure to organize relevant accomplishments, impacts and outcomes with applicable priority. Sea Grant is broad and nimble with the depth of knowledge of the nation's academic institutions. Sea Grant's close connection with the academic community gives it the ability to engage in a broad diversity of topics, mobilizing local, regional and national expertise while also conserving the ability to address unforeseen needs.

Each university-based Sea Grant program contributes to the national focus areas and goals. Program strategies are aligned with the national network, but participation in individual focus areas, goals and performance measures are determined after consultation with local and regional stakeholders and advisors. This iterative and flexible planning process allows for local level input to identify and develop methods to address emerging issues while assuring alignment with the national strategic plan.

[2023-2027 National Strategic Plan, final draft](#)

[2018-2021 Strategic Plans of all Sea Grant programs](#)

<http://seagrant-redesign.hq.nor.rose-gov/Our-Work/FCE>

Healthy Coastal Ecosystems

Sea Grant works to protect, enhance and restore habitats, ecosystems and the services they provide.

<http://seagrant-redesign.hq.nor.rose-gov/Our-Work/SEA>

Sustainable Fisheries & Aquaculture

Sea Grant works with fishing communities to advance sustainable, domestic fisheries and aquaculture.

<http://seagrant-redesign.hq.nor.rose-gov/Our-Work/FCE>

Resilient Communities & Economies

Sea Grant helps coastal and Great Lakes communities prepare for and adapt to changing conditions.

<http://seagrant-redesign.hq.nor.rose-gov/Our-Work/ELWD>

Environment Literacy & Workforce Development

Sea Grant supports and trains a diverse and skilled workforce that is environmentally literate and equipped to address national and local needs.

Sea Grant is in every coastal and Great Lakes state, Puerto Rico and Guam.

Sea Grant is a national network of 34 university-based programs.

PROGRAM LOCATIONS



Our mission is simple.

Sea Grant's mission is to enhance the practical use and conservation of coastal, marine and Great Lakes resources in order to create a sustainable economy and environment.

Sea Grant accomplishes its mission using a combination of approaches.

Research

Extension

Education

Leadership is shared.

The National Sea Grant College Program Director, Jonathan Pennock, oversees the overall program as well as the National Sea Grant Office. The National Sea Grant Office is responsible for management and oversight of the National Sea Grant College Program.

The Sea Grant Association is a non-profit organization that gives a formal and unified voice to all the university-based Sea Grant directors.

The National Sea Grant Advisory Board is a Federal Advisory Committee charged with providing advice to the Secretary of Commerce on Sea Grant.

Formal leadership and management of the National Sea Grant College Program is the responsibility of the National Sea Grant Office (NSGO). The NSGO is located within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)'s Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR). It is the only legislatively mandated program within OAR. The NSGO provides management and assessment of individual Sea Grant programs, national leadership and program development, network leadership and coordination, and optimization of Sea Grant's role within NOAA.

The Sea Grant Association (SGA) is a non-profit corporation dedicated to furthering the National Sea Grant College Program concept. Academic institutions that receive core support from National Sea Grant comprise the regular members of the SGA. Each member institution appoints one delegate in writing, typically the Sea Grant director, to represent it. Alternate delegates are also designated, and dues are levied annually. Through the SGA, these institutions are provided a mechanism by which they can coordinate activities, set regional and national program priorities, and provide a unified voice on issues of importance to our ocean, coasts, and Great Lakes. More information on the SGA can be found at <http://www.sga.seagrant.org>.

The National Sea Grant Advisory Board is the National Sea Grant College Program's Federal Advisory Committee (FAC). The Board advises NOAA and the National Sea Grant College Program on strategies to address the Nation's highest priorities in terms of the understanding, assessment, development, management utilization and conservation of ocean, coastal and Great Lakes resources.

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More on Sea Grant's leadership structure

The National Sea Grant Office

The National Sea Grant College Program is administered through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) via the National Sea Grant Office (NSGO).

There are approximately 20 federal employees in the National Sea Grant Office (NSGO). Additionally, the NSGO typically hosts two Knauss fellows each year, sometimes hosts NOAA interns, and occasionally hosts federal employees from other programs or agencies to conduct detail assignments focused on a specific project. The NSGO has several core functions that result in many related activities.

The NSGO supports the National Sea Grant College Program director, Jonathan Pennock, including his charge to "ensure program competence in solving problems and meeting needs related to ocean, coastal and Great lakes resources." The NSGO must also ensure the stewardship of federal funds appropriated to Sea Grant, which is accomplished through grants administration, budget planning and management, and reporting and evaluation activities. The NSGO ensures Sea Grant's authorizing legislation is carried out, including strategic planning, priority setting, and developing national strategic investments. The NSGO also ensures that Sea Grant maintains research, advisory/extension, and education functions within each college and institution. Lastly, the NSGO ensures all relevant federal laws and policies are followed.

[Meet the NSGO Staff](#)

There are many ways to connect with colleagues in Sea Grant.

Join national, regional and topic-focused email lists by contacting your federal program officer in the NSGO as well as other colleagues. ([Link to contact info and distribution lists](#))

Contact your Sea Grant program's [federal program officer](#) with questions.

Sign up to receive the newsletter and news alerts via [this form](#) on the national website.

Follow Sea Grant national as well as individual Sea Grant programs on social media [via this page on the national website](#).

Ask colleagues in your Sea Grant program about joining Basecamp and Slack groups.

Find the point of contact at your Sea Grant program for the Sea Grant address book and submit your information. (See address book search feature above.)

Sea Grant Contact Lists

Submitting Things

Sea Grant programs are required to submit reports, publications, data, and forms to a variety of places, which are briefly explained here. In addition, there are many optional places to submit products and information. Those are also briefly described here.

PIER - The Planning Implementation and Evaluation Resources database, more affectionately known as PIER, is the NSGO's database for tracking progress towards strategic plans and related projects. It's where all aspects of annual reports are submitted and where project information is kept. Learn more about the specific materials required by programs in PIER as well as how to access and use PIER on Inside Sea Grant. <https://seagrants.noaa.gov/insideseagrants/>

Grants.gov is where federal funding opportunities are advertised and where applications for federal funding opportunities are submitted. <https://www.grants.gov/>

Grants Online is the government portal used for reporting progress on awarded federal funds. This is where grants progress reports are submitted. <https://grantsonline.rdc.noaa.gov>

The National Sea Grant Library is based at University of Rhode Island and serves as the keeper of Sea Grant publications. Sea Grant Programs are required to submit publications to the Sea Grant Library. Annual deadlines for submittal typically align with annual reporting cycles. See their website for details on what and how to submit. <https://nsgl.gso.uri.edu/> The Bridge is Sea Grant's online collection of ocean education resources.

The Bridge is a growing collection of the best marine education resources available on-line. It provides educators with a convenient source of accurate and useful information on global, national, and regional marine science topics, and gives researchers a contact point for educational outreach. Resources are organized as indicated on the sidebar on the left side of the screen. Partners include the National Sea Grant College Program (Sea Grant), the National Oceanographic Partnership Program (NOPP), and the National Marine Educators Association (NMEA).

Sea Grant Gatherings

There are several meetings and events for Sea Grant professionals.

Sea Grant Academy is a program for professionals new to Sea Grant. Once they apply and are accepted, participants completed a two-week program. The first week is typically spend in the greater Washington, D.C. area learning about Sea Grant history, structure and function; NOAA; the federal government; and several useful skills. The second week is spent in a location outside of Washington, D.C. The Academy typically occurs every two years.

Sea Grant Week is the biennial conference of Sea Grant leadership. The nature of the conference shifts over time, but it in general the conference includes professional development and working sessions for leaders in all areas of Sea Grant's work. It is hosted by a different Sea Grant program each time it occurs. Sea Grant Week is typically co-scheduled with meetings of the National Sea Grant Advisory Board and Sea Grant Association.

The Sea Grant Extension Assembly-Communicators Meeting is the biennial joint meeting of extension and communications professionals across Sea Grant. It is held in years opposite Sea Grant Week. Agendas and specific plans change each time, but it typically includes business meetings as well as professional development and sharing. The meeting is hosted by a different Sea Grant program each time it occurs.

Regional Meetings: Most Sea Grant regions gather annually or biennially for regional meetings. Find out more information by talking to someone in your Sea Grant program.

The Sea Grant Educators Meeting is typically held annually and in conjunction with the National Marine Educators Association conference, which is in a different location each year.

Additional sectors of Sea Grant professionals gather for workshops, business and professional sharing. Ask others with your Sea Grant program or ask your federal program officer for details about connecting

Sea Grant History

The idea of a Sea Grant College Program was originally suggested by oceanographer, inventor and writer, Dr. Athelstan Spilhaus at the 93rd meeting of the American Fisheries Society in 1963. Interest in the Sea Grant concept grew after the release of an editorial written by Spilhaus that appeared in a 1964 issue of Science: " I have suggested the establishment of 'sea-grant colleges' in existing universities that wish to develop oceanic work...These would be modernized parallels of the great developments in agriculture and the mechanic arts which were occasioned by the Land-Grant Act of about a hundred years ago...Establishment of the land-grant colleges was one of the best investments this nation ever made. That same kind of imagination and foresight should be applied to exploitation of the sea."

In 1965, Senator Claiborne Pell of Rhode Island introduced legislation to establish Sea Grant colleges on campuses nationwide as centers of excellence in marine and coastal studies. With the adoption in 1966 of the National Sea Grant College Act, Congress established an academic/industry/government partnership that would advance the nation's education, economy, and environment into the 21st century.

Laws, Regulations and Policies

[National Sea Grant College Program \(US Code 2020 Title 33 Chapter 22, PDF\)](#)

[Code of Federal Regulations - 917](#)

[Code of Federal Regulations - 918](#)

[National Sea Grant College Program Amendments Act of 2008 \(Public Law No: 110-394\) \(pdf\)](#)

[Sea Grant Legislation prior to 2008 amendments \(pdf\)](#)

[Sea Grant Public Law 107-299 \(pdf\)](#)

[Sea Grant forms, resources and guidance documents related to applying for funding](#)

[Sea Grant annual reporting guidance and resources](#)

More Resources

Sea Grant is administered by the [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration \(NOAA\)](#) and is housed within the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR), NOAA's R&D shop commonly referred to as NOAA Research.

[Learn more about NOAA's structure and leadership](#)

NOAA is a consortium of functions and operations. In addition to NOAA Research, it includes the National Weather Service, National Marine Fisheries Service, National Ocean Service and more. [Learn more about NOAA's structure.](#)

NOAA is part of the executive branch of the federal government. Information on [NOAA's budget](#) as well as the [federal budget process](#) overall is helpful when understanding how Sea Grant's shared budget (66% federal with 33% non-federal match) is structured.

Sea Grant is part of [OAR](#). [Learn more about OAR's structure and leadership.](#) OAR includes many [laboratories and programs](#).

If you haven't done so already, please browse all of the main Sea Grant website as well as Inside Sea Grant. If we are missing information or resources, please contact the NSGO.