

MEMO FOR: Sea Grant staff processing Aquaculture Research proposals
FROM: Gene Kim
SUBJECT: Receiving Aquaculture Research proposals and sending NSGO the proposals

Thank you for your help processing proposals submitted to your Program for the Aquaculture Research competition. This guidance describes what you need to do and send to the National Sea Grant Office (NSGO), and what the NSGO will do and send to you.

THIS GUIDANCE IS NOT ABOUT THE OFFICIAL SUBMISSION OF THE AQUACULTURE RESEARCH PROPOSALS TO GRANTS.GOV. You will still have to submit these Aquaculture Research proposals officially to grants.gov, but that is not due until May 9.

All research full proposal are supposed to be submitted to you by **4:00 pm Eastern Time April 17, 2012**. Any applications that you receive after 4:00 pm Eastern Time are LATE, and are not eligible for this competition, so please make sure you keep track of when proposals are received (or at least, keep track of whether they came in before or after 4:00 Eastern Time on the due date). Writing or stamping the date and time received on the proposal is a good idea.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO by COB Thursday, April 19:

Step 1. Please send the following information to the NSGO oar.hq.sg.aquaculture@noaa.gov in one email (with attachments)

- (a) A spreadsheet listing the titles and PIs of all the aquaculture research applications you received; indicate those that you received by the deadline date and time and those you received after the deadline.
- (b) In the email, please certify that the proposals on the attached spreadsheet are those you received before the deadline (or not).
- (c) If you did not receive any aquaculture research proposals before the deadline, please send an email telling us so.

Step 2. In separate emails, please combine all separate files from a given proposal into a single PDF, and attach it to an individual email (ONE EMAIL PER PROPOSAL PLEASE). If this is a problem, you can send the proposal as multiple files, but please attach all the files to a single email. If it is more convenient for you, you may send us the entire application. **Again, please send each proposal in a separate email, with all of the pieces attached to that single email:**

For the attachments, please add to the front of each filename the abbreviation of your state or program (e.g., "WHOI", "VA"), followed by "_", then the index number your program gave the proposal from the email above, followed by "_", and the last name of the PI (e.g., "VA_3_Jones"). After the PI's name the filename can be anything you want. More descriptive if better (e.g., "VA_2_Smith_Reducing fish meal in larval halibut feed with support letters.pdf").

By sending us this information, you are NOT submitting an application--you haven't committed your institution or the PI to anything. We are using the information for technical purposes only.

You will still have to officially submit the applications via grants.gov by May 9th. Don't worry. The grants.gov portal will be changed next week to reflect your May 9th deadline to process unchanged proposals.

Note: e-mail is not secure and may be read by others than the intended recipient. If you are concerned with the security of proposals, or if the size of a proposal is larger than can be accommodated by our e-mail system (approximately 10 megabytes) or by your e-mail system, please contact the NSGO (oar.hq.sg.aquaculture@noaa.gov) prior to the submission due date to request a secure file transfer. Include your name and valid e-mail address in the request.

All technical reviews will be handled by the NSGO, so there is nothing the SG Programs need to do for that step.

WHAT WE WILL SEND TO YOU

By April 23, we will email your proposals from PIs in your state that came in directly through grants.gov. We are sending you these proposals for your records only.

Thank you again for your help! Please email questions or comments to oar.hq.sg.aquaculture@noaa.gov.

Gene

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(Alt #: 202-375-9535)

How to submit Aquaculture Research applications to grants.gov for the May 9 deadline

Thank you for providing us with the information about the Aquaculture Research proposals submitted to your programs on time. We are using this to start the technical evaluations of these proposals. There remains the step of officially submitting these proposals to grants.gov. The following guidance is provided to help with this step.

Submitting the applications received unchanged to grants.gov

State Sea Grant Programs must forward applications unchanged to Grants.gov by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on May 9, 2012. Applications received after the closing dates and times will not be accepted.

Each application needs to be submitted to grants.gov by 5:00 PM Eastern time (*not 5:00 PM local time!*) on May 9. You can submit it earlier if you have it ready earlier.

The full proposal content requirements are listed in the FFO pages (including 7-10). Make sure you get the correct application package off of grants.gov (and from <http://www.seagrants.gov/funding/forms.html>). For Aquaculture Research 2012, the correct package can be found by searching for Funding Opportunity Number NOAA-OAR-SG-2012-2003249. Please don't forget that the NEPA questionnaire is required (see FFO page 10 for details).

Include in the application package to grants.gov all of the materials that the applicant submitted to you by the April 17 deadline. Itemized budgets are required from the applicant on a 90-4 form or similar format; these should be included in the application package. If the applicant is from your host institution, use this budget information to prepare the SF-424A in the grants.gov package. If the applicant is not from your host institution, he will get his funding as a subaward from your institution. Fill out the SF-424A accordingly, listing the amount of the subaward in Line 6.f, "Contractual".

What is meant by the Sea Grant Director being the nominal PI?

In nearly all cases, an award will be made as an amendment to the current omnibus. Any awards off-campus should be sub-awards to the institutions of the scientific PI. The SF424 form describes the recipient of the grant, not the performer of the research. It should include the person to be contacted on matters associated with the application, and the name of the authorized representative of that institution. When filling out the SF-424 in the grants.gov package, the applicant (Line 8. Applicant Information) is the Sea Grant Program's host institution. The name of the "person to be reached on matters involving this application", Line 8f, is the Sea Grant Program representative (to be determined by each Program). List your Sea Grant Director listed as the nominal PI.

The 90-2 and the cover page should include the name of the PI actually leading the project.

What does it mean to submit the application to grants.gov "unchanged"?

As stated in the FFO for the aquaculture research competition, "State Sea Grant Programs must forward all applications unchanged". This is a legal requirement to assure that PIs who submit

directly to grants.gov aren't disadvantaged over those that submit to a Program, by having less time to tweak their proposal. After April 17, the PI cannot make any changes to the proposal, and you can't make any changes at his request. The Title Page, Project Summary, Project Description, References, Vitae, and Letters of Support cannot be changed from what the applicant provided.

This requirement is not intended to prohibit the office of sponsored programs from making any corrections that it needs to make.

My host institution charges overhead on subawards. Is this allowable?

Yes, you should have been working with applicants before the deadline so that they understood how much they needed to request for institutional overhead (all should be within the \$500K maximum for the award). There may be specific cases where this still is needed after the April 17 deadline. Please contact the NSGO, if this is the case.

What if two preproposals are merged into one? And what if the budget or idea is changed?

That is fine. The PIs do not have to stick with the scope or budget listed in the preproposal. But, the changes should still align within the Sea Grant strategic plans. Selected projects will become part of the Sea Grant Program's portfolio, so it is in the interest of both the PI and the Program to work together to produce a proposal that is well integrated with the needs and other activities of the Program.

I received an application that does not include the proper overhead that my host institution charges for subawards. What do I do?

These charges are allowed, and the budget you submit to grants.gov should reflect the correct charges. If you can add on these overhead charges and the overall budget is still at or below the maximum allowed request of \$500K, add on the appropriate charges to your grants.gov application. If your overhead charges would place the request amount above the maximum, you are still entitled to them. As the maximum request cannot be exceeded, the applicant must reduce his direct expenses. Contact the applicant and tell him or her that he or she forgot to include enough institutional overhead charges, and to reduce direct expenses. The applicant has the option of reducing the direct request (without changing his scope of work), or of withdrawing the proposal. The discussions with the PI must be documented in writing, and if the applicant chooses to withdraw his proposal he or she must tell you in writing.

If the applicant does not respond, document when and how you contacted or tried to contact the applicant, add the missing required overhead amount to the SF-424A line 6.j., unilaterally reduce the subward amount in line 6.f. of the SF-424A by whatever amount is necessary to keep the total at the maximum request amount, and submit the application.

If an applicant asks in writing to withdraw his proposal before you submit the package to grants.gov, you do not have to submit it. Send the entire application, and the request to withdraw, to the national office. Make sure that the person requesting the withdrawal is really entitled to speak for the applicant!

If an applicant asks you in writing to withdraw his proposal after you submitted it, let us know by email and forward the written withdrawal request from the applicant to us. We'll withdraw the application from the system at our end.

If you make any of the above changes, follow the directions under "*I have to change something in the application. What do I do?*", below.

I have to change something in the application. What do I do?

In the rare case that the Program must make changes in an application after the applicant deadline has passed (for example, an error was discovered that would prevent your office of sponsored programs or grants.gov from accepting the electronic submission), the Program should correct the error, and include as "optional attachments" to the Grants.gov submission, (1) the corrected form or document, (2) a brief statement noting the error that was corrected, and (3) a copy of the incorrect document with a file name that clearly indicates that it is incorrect (for example, "incorrect-424A-submitted-by-applicant.pdf". This will meet the requirement that the PI's application is forwarded unchanged, and it will also allow you to submit correct information to grants.gov.

May I add something to the budget to cover my expenses in managing this project?

No. You are allowed to receive up to 3% of an application's request to cover the cost of managing the project if it is selected, but this is not part of the application package. *Do not include this cost in the grants.gov application!* This cost will be covered outside of the grants application process, as part of our institutional relationship. A match will be required for these administrative costs.

Our Program received several applications. Can I submit them to grants.gov as a single "omnibus" application?

No. Each application received needs to be a separate, standalone grants.gov submission.

Is there a limit to the number of full proposals that PI a can be on? Is there a limit to full proposals per state?

There is no limit to the number of full proposals that a PI can be part of. There is no limit to full proposals per state.

The application I received is "incorrect" (not aligned with my program's strategic plan, or is just technically awful) or "incomplete". Do I still have to submit it to grants.gov?

Yes. All applications received by the deadline have to be submitted to grants.gov. If you let us know by email to oar.hq.sg.aquaculture@noaa.gov of any problems with an application, we will take the responsibility for rejecting it if need be.

Thank you again for your help! Please email questions or comments to oar.hq.sg.aquaculture@noaa.gov.

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