FY2023 One-Year Request for Proposals

Deadline for eSeaGrant Registration: March 25, 2022
Deadline for Letter of Intent Submittal: March 30, 2022
Deadline for Full Proposal Submittal: May 25, 2022

Note: Full proposals will only be considered if applicants have submitted a Letter of Intent. All applicants that submit a Letter of Intent are permitted to submit to the full proposal process.

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1. Summary

The purpose of this document is to provide details and instructions on how to apply for the MIT Sea Grant College Program’s (MIT Sea Grant) FY23 One-Year Request for Proposals (RFP). Historically, MIT Sea Grant has issued an annual RFP for two-year research projects. This year only, we are offering an alternative RFP for one-year projects whose research topics contribute to the improved understanding, utilization and/or management of coastal and marine resources.
related to our four Focus Areas and associated goals and outcomes in the 2018-2023 MIT Sea Grant Strategic Plan. This RFP outlines research topics that are in line with our Strategic Plan and provides instructions on how to select a proposal topic to discuss with MIT Sea Grant. Instructions on submitting Letters of Intent and full proposals, as well as the evaluation process for each phase and specific evaluation criteria used, are described in detail in the following sections.

**Important Dates and Details:**
- **Deadline for eSeaGrant Registration:** March 25, 2022
- **Deadline for Letter of Intent Submittal:** March 30, 2022
- **Deadline for Full Proposal Submittal:** May 25, 2022
- **Eligibility:** All researchers from academic, research and educational institutions within the state of Massachusetts who are eligible to submit a proposal according to his/her home institution may apply.
- **Requested Funding:** Budget requests may not exceed $100,000, and the project timeline must be performed between 2/1/2023 and 1/31/2024. A 50% non-federal match is required.
- **Submitting:** Submittals are through eSeaGrant, our online proposal system. Please contact Mary Newton Lima, Research Program Coordinator (mnewlim@mit.edu) for access prior to March 25, 2022 in order to avoid missing the deadline due to technical issues.

2. **Introduction - MIT Sea Grant**

MIT Sea Grant is part of NOAA’s National Sea Grant College Program (NSGCP), one of the 34 programs located in coastal and Great Lakes states, Puerto Rico, and Guam. Research at MIT Sea Grant is directed by four Focus Areas and their Goals and Outcomes. The Focus Areas, Goals, and Outcomes guide us in supporting scientific and/or technology development research that aims to understand and improve ecosystem health and the human use of coastal and marine environments. The four Focus Areas and related MIT Sea Grant Goals and Outcomes are described in detail in our Strategic Plan. Applicants should refer to the MIT Sea Grant Strategic Plan for more information.

One of MIT Sea Grant’s cross-cutting principles is to enhance Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Justice, and Accessibility (DEIJA). MIT Sea Grant is striving to enhance cultural understanding and enable Sea Grant to pursue its vision and mission effectively and efficiently. Our program and the NSGCP encourages applicants from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups, individuals with disabilities and individuals from economically or educationally disadvantaged backgrounds.

3. **Topics and Topic Selection**

For each RFP, MIT Sea Grant selects certain topic areas to focus on in the RFP that are high priority research topics to Massachusetts stakeholders and take advantage of MIT Sea Grant’s unique abilities to address issues impacting coastal and marine waters; conduct innovative research to increase the capabilities of industry and resource managers; and ensure communities have access to science, tools, and technologies to support informed decision-making for the conservation of sustainable marine resources.

The topics for this year are as follows:
1. **Scoping studies and/or small-scale analyses for coastal and/or offshore aquaculture and machine learning for fisheries management and the seafood industry.** This topic is geared towards studies that answer the preliminary question “Can this research study be done?”, and is the initial step to exploring an innovative, cutting-edge research topic or emerging technology that could become the basis of a full research proposal. Proposals should focus on a specific region of the Massachusetts coast (e.g., Boston Harbor, North Shore, South Shore) and Gulf of Maine.

2. **Scoping studies and/or small-scale analyses for ocean acidification.** The focus is on ocean acidification analysis in regions of the Massachusetts coast and Gulf of Maine where data gaps exist. Examples of potential regions include, but are not limited to, the North Shore, South Shore, and Buzzards Bay.

3. **Scoping studies to enhance coastal resilience or mitigate marine debris.** The focus is on current literature, research being performed, and other data sources in a specific coastal region to identify and categorize research questions that require immediate study. Proposals should focus on a specific region of Massachusetts coast (e.g., Boston Harbor, North Shore, South Shore) and Gulf of Maine. Project types, including but not limited to meta-analyses, annotated bibliographies, or small scale and/or exploratory field trials are encouraged.

An informational Open House for the FY2023 RFP will be held virtually on Thursday, January 27, 2022 to provide guidance for interested applicants. Meeting slides will be available for download here. Applicants are encouraged to attend the Open House, review the topics and materials presented, and to ask questions at the Open House. Contacting the MITSG Advisory Services Group, to discuss stakeholder groups and outreach relevant to your proposal topic is also strongly encouraged prior to developing your proposal. Member of the Advisory Services Group will be available to begin discussions at the Open House.

4. **Proposal Information**

   4.1 **Funding**

   The maximum allowable research budget request is $100,000 for a one-year project. This does not include the required matching funds provided by the PI, which amount to at least 50% of the figure requested from MIT Sea Grant (i.e., if you request $100,000 from MITSG, you must provide an additional $50,000 in non-federal matching funds).

   The Principal Investigator (PI) must not be the recipient of other MIT Sea Grant funding during the period of this grant (i.e., 2/1/2023 to 1/31/2024). The Director may, at his/her discretion, remove a proposal from further consideration at any point in the process if an investigator has overdue obligations to MIT Sea Grant under a previous research award or contract.

   4.2 **MIT Sea Grant Advisory Services Group**

   Sea Grant research proposals featuring strong research accompanied by meaningful outreach will be more competitive, and PIs are encouraged to discuss their outreach and stakeholder engagement plans with the MIT Sea Grant Advisory Services Group. The Advisory Services Group specializes in stakeholder engagement, outreach, education, and assessments, and are well connected with partners and stakeholders throughout Massachusetts and the region. Most of the Advisory Services Group staff are research scientists that design and conduct research, bringing a thorough understanding of how to combine research and outreach that develops and transfers...
information and technology in support of stakeholder needs and the Sea Grant mission. Review our website to locate staff who might be able to assist you or connect you with others as you develop your outreach and stakeholder engagement plan. Involving MIT Sea Grant Advisory staff early in the planning and preparation process is strongly encouraged.

4.3 RFP Schedule

The proposal process is initiated in January of each year when the RFP Open House is announced. The timeline below is strictly enforced and the deadlines must be complete by the dates and times given in the RFP Schedule presented in Table 1. Letters of Intent and/or full proposals that are incomplete or not submitted by the deadlines will not be moved forward in the competition, and rebuttals submitted after the deadline will not be included in the review process. This is a multi-step process, so please be aware of each due date.

Table 1. RFP Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RFP Open House</td>
<td>January 27, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to eSeaGrant requested by 5:00 local time</td>
<td>March 25, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter of Intent due by 5:00 pm local time</td>
<td>March 30, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full proposals due by 5:00 pm local time</td>
<td>May 25, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blinded peer reviewer comments sent to Principal Investigators</td>
<td>July 8, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optional PI rebuttals due by 5:00 pm local time</td>
<td>August 12, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Review Panel Meeting</td>
<td>Late September 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal Investigators notified of funding decisions</td>
<td>Mid to Late October 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beginning of FY 2023 funding</td>
<td>February 1, 2023</td>
</tr>
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</table>

5. eSeaGrant Access

Do not forget to contact the Research Program Coordinator (mnewlim@mit.edu) by March 25, 2022 for access to eSeaGrant, MIT Sea Grant’s online submission portal, in order to avoid missing the deadline due to technical issues.

6. Letter of Intent

A Letter of Intent (LOI) is required in order to submit a full proposal. The LOI is intended to be a brief (one page) project summary and allows MIT Sea Grant time to begin planning the reviews of the full proposals. Unlike a preproposal, the LOI will not be reviewed or evaluated, and the PI will not be given feedback. Submitting an LOI automatically allows the PI to submit a full proposal.
The LOI must be submitted to MIT Sea Grant through eSeaGrant by 5:00 pm local time on **March 30, 2022**. All personal identification numbers (social security, student ID, etc.), should be redacted prior to submission.

The LOI must be one page long, single spaced, in 12-point Times New Roman font with 1-inch margins. Additional pages over the one-page limit will be removed. Items a-h are required and included in the one-page limit; items i-j are optional and do not count toward the one-page limit.

The Letter of Intent must include the following:

a. Project Title  
b. Project PI (include name, affiliation, email, and phone number)  
c. List of PI, Co-PIs and key personnel (include name, affiliation, and email for each)  
d. Project start and end dates  
e. MIT Sea Grant RFP topic the LOI falls under  
f. MIT Sea Grant Focus Area the proposal is relevant to as detailed in the [MIT Sea Grant Strategic Plan](#)  
g. Project Abstract. Include objectives, approach, and how the project addresses Massachusetts stakeholder needs, especially any broader societal impacts on stakeholders from underrepresented or underserved communities.  
h. Estimation of total 1-year budget and match amounts  
i. Up to three (3) suggested Peer Reviewers (optional; does not count toward the page limit)  
   Reviewers should be scientific peers who are qualified to provide independent and knowledgeable reviews of your project in the full proposal phase.  
j. References/bibliography (optional; does not count toward the page limit)  

Any LOIs that do not conform to these requirements will not be accepted, and the PI will be notified that they will not be allowed to submit a full proposal.

### 7. Full Proposal

Full proposals will not be accepted unless a LOI was submitted, received by the deadline, and conformed to the requirements listed in Section 6. Full proposals must be submitted to MIT Sea Grant through the eSeaGrant online portal by 5:00 pm local time on May 25, 2022. Proposals that are not complete or don’t conform to the below specifications will not be moved forward to the review phase. All personal identification numbers (social security, student ID, etc.) should be redacted prior to submission.

Items for a complete full proposal are:

1. Full Proposal Narrative  
2. CVs of Principal Investigator (Required) and Co-Principal Investigator (Optional)  
3. Additional Personnel (Optional)  
4. Current and Pending Support (Required)  
5. Budget and Budget Justifications (Required)  
6. Data Management Plan (Required)  
7. Letters of Support (Optional)  
8. Letters of Commitment (Required for cost-sharing and subawards)  
9. NEPA Short Form (Required)
10. Suggested Reviewers (Optional)
The rest of this section details the requirements for the full proposal.

7.1 Proposal Narrative (Required)
The project narrative may not exceed seven (7) double-spaced pages, in Times New Roman font (at least 12 pt font), with 1-inch margins. Additional pages over the 7-page limit will be removed prior to review. The 7-page limit for project narratives includes items a-g in the list below and all tables and figures. References and literature citations (h) should demonstrate your familiarity with the literature of your topic, may be single-spaced and do NOT count against the page limit. The project narrative should address the following as separate sections:

a. Introduction / Background / Justification,
b. Relevance to one or more of MIT Sea Grant’s goals and outcomes
c. Project objectives
d. General work plan and milestones
e. Anticipated outcomes (including how the project informs MIT Sea Grant’s Strategic Plan)
f. Project Timeline
g. Outreach and Stakeholder Engagement Plan
h. References and literature citations

7.2 Resumes/CVs: Principal Investigator (Required) and Co-Principal Investigator (Optional)
Enter contact information for the Principal Investigator (PI) and Co-Principal Investigators, including name, mailing address, email address, phone number, university/organization, and Department. When entering phone numbers, omit all spaces and non-numeric characters. Note that Sea Grant employees may not be PIs or co-PIs, but can be listed as additional personnel.

Attach a CV/resume (PDF, 2-page maximum, page numbers, headers, or footers) at the bottom of the forms for each. Only CVs submitted as PDFs and that are two pages or less will be accepted. The CV will not be uploaded until you click the Save button.

7.3 Additional Personnel (Optional)
List additional personnel such as sub-awardees, graduate students, post docs and staff that will work on the project and listed in the budget. While resumes or CVs are not required for these individuals, please include them if they are considered key staff.

7.4 Current and Pending Support (Required)
Make sure you complete every field. Failure to provide complete information for these sources of support may delay consideration of your proposal.

7.5 Budget (Required)
You are strongly encouraged to begin the budget preparation process early. If your budget is completed with justifications in eSeaGrant five (5) business days before the deadline, the MIT Sea Grant Program Support Team will review it for completeness and correctness and inform you of errors. If the budget is incorrect, it may lead to the proposal being removed from further consideration. Please contact the MIT Sea Grant Financial Officer Caroline Johnston (carolin@mit.edu) with any questions you may have regarding the budget. Detailed
information on budget requirements, matching, and cost share can be found in Appendix A at the end of this RFP.

### 7.6 Data Management Plan (Required)

Data and information collected and/or created under NOAA grants and cooperative agreements, including this RFP, must be made visible, accessible, and independently understandable to general users, at no cost (or no more than the cost of reproduction) free of charge and in a timely manner, except where limited by law, regulation, policy or by security requirements. NOAA grant applications for projects expected to produce environmental data must include a Data Management Plan (DMP) describing how the PIs plan to make the data available. The plan must conform to NOAA’s Data Sharing Directive for Grants, Cooperative Agreements, and Contracts. PIs are expected to fully execute the plan.

If your project does not generate datasets, a simple statement such as “This proposal will not generate environmental data. Therefore, a Data Management Plan is not required as part of the Proposal” is all that is necessary to satisfy the DMP requirement. Please refer to the MIT Sea Grant Data Sharing Directive Policy found on eSeaGrant for more information.

### 7.7 Letters of Support (Optional)

Letters of support are optional. However, if other organizations are described as contributing to your project in the narrative portion of your proposal, it is advisable to include a letter of support from them. In addition, letters of support from stakeholders that will benefit from the work may also be submitted. Address letters to Dr. Michael Triantafyllou, Director, MIT Sea Grant.

### 7.8 Letters of Commitment (Required for cost-sharing and subawards)

A letter of commitment is required from:

- The contractor of each subaward
- Any external source for cost-sharing (match)
- For MIT PI’s: if you are using another PI’s salary

Failure to provide letters of commitment for either of these may impact consideration of your proposal. Please note federal funds, including equipment purchased with federal funds, cannot be used as match. Address letters to Dr. Michael Triantafyllou, Director, MIT Sea Grant.

### 7.9 NEPA Short Form (Required)

You are required to submit a copy of NOAA’s Abbreviated Environmental Compliance Questionnaire (i.e., NEPA) form in order to receive funding for your research. Download the form from the eSeaGrant NEPA form or at the bottom of this website. Leave the field ‘Grant number and/or Project ID’ blank. Address each question as completely as possible. Avoid answering any question with “N/A” or any other version of “Not Applicable”. If a question does not pertain to your work, state how the work does not pertain to the question being asked. Detailed responses will help with NEPA evaluations and determinations. Imprecise answers or “N/A” may result in delays in your proposal’s review.

Per the requirements in the NEPA, potential PIs must include with their full proposal a list of all state and federal permits required to complete the project, including copies of the permits that have already been acquired, in the appropriate section of the questionnaire. Applications of pending permits are not required but must be listed. If a partner institution will be responsible for
acquiring permits, this should be stated in the application. The responsibility for acquiring permits lies with the funded PI, and failure to secure permits may result in delayed receipt of funds or changes to the scope of work proposed.

Funded PIs are required to share with the Sea Grant program proof that all required permits and permissions have been granted prior to expending funds on the work covered by the permit. If permits are still pending, funds may be expended on portions of the project that do not require permitting, such as student support, statistical work, and project planning. Absence of required permits will result in the NSGO placing restrictions on the award until those permits are provided, and host institutions may have additional restrictions on such funds, per their own policies.

7.10 Suggested Reviewers (Optional)

You may give us contact information for potential peer reviewers. Reviewers should be scientific peers who are qualified to provide independent and knowledgeable reviews of your project in the full proposal phase. Peer reviewers should not be from Massachusetts institutions. Do not include individuals with whom you have had any of the following relationships in the past three years:

- All co-authors on publications within the past three years, including pending publications and submissions.
- All collaborators on projects within the past three years, including current and planned collaborations.
- All persons in your field with whom you have had consulting/financial arrangement/conflicts-of-interest in the past three years, including receiving compensation of any type (e.g. money, goods or services.)
- Former mentors, advisors, or students.

If your recommendation falls into one of these categories, please indicate this in your submission.

7.11 Submitting

Once you are satisfied with your submittal, you may submit by clicking SUBMIT on the Proposal Summary form. This will time-stamp your submission and generate an acknowledgement email for your records. If you have not pressed the SUBMIT button by the deadline, your full proposal will not be processed. No exceptions can be made.

8. Full Proposal Evaluation

Per the NSGCP National Competition Policy Guidance, each full proposal will receive a minimum of three written peer reviews for each proposal. Peer reviewers will be experts in the field(s) which are covered in the proposals and will be chosen to avoid any potential conflict of interest. In the event that an in-state reviewer needs to be used, the selection will be justified to the federal program officer. Peer reviewers will be tasked with evaluating the proposal package using the criteria identified in the Evaluation Criteria section (Section 9) of this RFP. Each reviewer will be asked to rate their proposal and submit their entire review to MIT Sea Grant via eSeaGrant.
Blinded peer reviews for each proposal will be sent to the PI of that proposal by July 8, 2022. The PIs then have until 5:00 pm Eastern time on August 12, 2022 to respond to the reviewer’s comments. Rebuttals are optional and not required of any PI.

The full proposal, blinded peer reviews, and the PI's rebuttals (if provided) are submitted to a Technical Review Panel (TRP) which meets in September for extensive discussion of the technical merits of the full proposals.

The Director will present the results of the TRP to the MIT Sea Grant Advisory Committee for additional programmatic insight and discussion and will make the final funding recommendations based on the TRP’s rank order except in instances where the Director may deviate from the rank order based on certain selection criteria:

1. strategic priority;
2. number of proposals within each Topic;
3. diversity in applicant pool (e.g., institution, geography, career stage, end-user groups);
4. prior award performance (e.g., timeliness of reports); and
5. availability of funding.

Final funding recommendations will then be submitted by the MIT Sea Grant Director in a Letter of Intent to the National Sea Grant Office for final approval. Principal Investigators will be informed of the funding decision following final authorization by the National Sea Grant Office and the GMD.

9. Evaluation Criteria and Scoring Definitions

Below are criteria used in evaluating proposals for funding by the MIT Sea Grant program. As part the review process, all reviewers are assessed for conflicts of interest. The peer and TRP reviewers will provide a written review of the proposal taking into consideration the list below. Proposals will be evaluated on:

1. **Rationale** - the degree to which the proposed activity addresses an important issue, problem, or opportunity in development, use, or management of marine or coastal resources.

2. **Scientific or Professional Merit** - the degree to which the activity will advance the state of the science or discipline through use and extension of state-of-the-art methods.

3. **Relevance to Sea Grant Priorities** - degree to which the proposed activity relates to priorities, goals, and outcomes provided in the MIT Sea Grant Strategic Plan.

4. **Innovativeness** - the degree to which new approaches to solving problems and exploiting opportunities in resource management or development, or in public outreach on such issues will be employed; alternatively, the degree to which the activity will focus on new types of important or potentially important resources and issues.

5. **Qualifications and Past Record of Investigators** - degree to which investigators are qualified by education, training, and/or experience to execute the proposed activity; record of achievement with previous funding.

6. **Appropriate and Cost-Effective Budget** – degree to which the proposed budget is adequate to accomplish the objectives and of the budget justification in explaining the need for resources.
7. **Outreach:** the degree to which investigators have incorporated an outreach and stakeholder engagement plan for the research findings or tools they plan to develop, relevance to Massachusetts stakeholder-driven needs, and the likelihood the work will inform the public and decision-makers, benefit industry and/or communities, support underrepresented groups, and provide meaningful stakeholder impacts as a result of the efforts.

8. **Timeliness:** degree to which the proposed activity addresses a little-known or emerging field and builds a foundation for additional research.

Reviewers will then assign an overall proposal score by choosing one of the following:

5 - **Excellent** - Exhibits outstanding scientific quality; demonstrates the research strategy and methods are well-designed to address the problem; contributes to basic discipline as well as more general Sea Grant goals in marine resource development, use, management, and sustainability; and has outlined a meaningful outreach plan, including the identification of stakeholders and/or linkages to user groups

4 - **Very Good** - With careful consideration of recommended changes, would be rated Excellent

3 - **Good** - Routine but acceptable scientific quality; needs revision in some major part of the proposal; for example, the methodology, linkage to user groups, clarification of relationship to similar projects, or major budget changes necessary to achieve objectives

2 - **Fair** - Marginal scientific approach to a potentially interesting problem; limited understanding of how proposed research is related to general Sea Grant goals; major deficiencies in problem definition, research strategy, and methods; inadequate institutional support

1 - **Poor** - Proposal has major deficiencies and should not be funded

10. **Reporting Requirements**

NOAA requires Sea Grant programs to report the impacts, accomplishments and metrics of each proposal it funds, and sets strict deadlines and formats for these reports. These products include annual reports and performance measures that are used to review the program and ensure it is meeting the expectations as set forth by Congress. Program viability and future funding is based on highlighting the positive impacts funded research is having on Massachusetts and the nation.

As a result, funded researchers are expected to provide:

- Annual progress reports while the project is underway, a final report when completed, a short post-completion report a year after completion, and followup emails thereon. The reports should include specific impacts and accomplishments. Details on report formats, impact statements and metrics desired will be provided to researchers upon funding.

- Copies of any publication or product intended for public dissemination produced as part of, or as a result of, the project. This includes peer-reviewed reprints from journals, posters and other presentations, books and proceedings, brochures, pamphlets, news articles, DVDs, etc.

- Acknowledgement of MITSG funding on any publication, presentation, or product. Text to use that includes funding award number and an MITSG logo will be provided to PIs at the start of funding.
● Participation, including presenting, at an annual research meeting of MIT Sea Grant funded researchers and fellows.
● Information and other assistance as requested to MITSG’s Communications and Extension personnel.

11. Contact Information

- **SeaGrant Registration**: Mary Newton Lima, Research Program Coordinator, [mnewlim@mit.edu](mailto:mnewlim@mit.edu)
- **RFP Process**: Mary Newton Lima, Research Program Coordinator, [mnewlim@mit.edu](mailto:mnewlim@mit.edu)
- **Budgets**: Caroline Johnston, Financial Administrator, [carolin@mit.edu](mailto:carolin@mit.edu)
- **MIT Sea Grant Advisory Services Group**: (Click [here](http://mit.edu) for webpage)
Appendix A. Budget Instructions

The budget must include all direct (including fringe benefits) and indirect costs of the project. Be sure to indicate which salaries and wages are and are not subject to indirect costs on the worksheets. Applicants must budget for all costs of the project, including costs of the extension, communications, and publication activities. Detailed information on how to fill out the budget worksheets can be found on the Budget Instructions tab in the Budgets form.

Home Institution Approval: Applicants should contact the appropriate office of their home institution to obtain the current rates for fringe benefits and indirect costs. In addition, the PI’s home institution must review and approve the proposal’s budget, including matching fund estimates, prior to submission to MIT Sea Grant.

Matching Funds: By law, every MIT Sea Grant-funded investigator is required to match 50% of the contributions from NOAA with funding from non-federal sources. For example, if you are requesting $100,000 from MIT Sea Grant, you are required to provide at least $50,000 from qualified, non-federal matching sources. These costs may be funded by your prospective university, or by a third party. Federal funds may not be used as cost sharing. It is the responsibility of the applicant and the applicant’s prospective institution to ensure that matching commitments are met as presented on the budget sheet.

The source of matching funds must be specified in the budget and budget justification. Sources of matching funds include but are not limited to: private foundation grants, state and local government contracts, co-sponsorship by industry, up to one month's salary per year for the PI, waived tuition, equipment, supplies, cash, and in-kind contributions such as salaries, wages / benefits of investigators and students working on the project, expendable supplies and equipment, ship time, and donated supplies, space or equipment. Foreign government funds also qualify, but funds from federal sources do not. Note that matching funds from an external source require a letter of commitment as stated in Section 6.1.8.

All cost sharing funds from colleges, departments, and outside sources should be listed on the 90-4 budget form under the appropriate categories and described in the budget justification in detail. Documentation must be clear as to the specific dollar amount of cost sharing being provided, source (where the funds are from), and must be consistent with the budget and budget justification. The additional documentation should contain a statement certifying the matching commitment by the prospective institution and should be signed by the officer at the institution (A sample cost share authorization form can be found in eSeaGrant). Cost share is difficult to modify later and is a firm commitment. All applicants are asked to pay extra attention to cost share sources and documentation.

Budget Justifications: Budget justifications must be prepared for each budget category (e.g., Salaries and Wages, Fringe Benefits). This feature is integrated into the eSeaGrant online tool and justifications must be entered as line by line descriptions. Failure to include complete budget justifications, or if the budget justifications do not match the budget worksheet, may result in your proposal being removed from the competition. Subcontracts must have their own budget justifications.

Please refer to the NOAA Grants Management Division’s (GMD) Budget Narrative Guidance and detailed justification examples in eSeaGrant’s budget instructions for complete guidance on developing your budget justifications.