



Request for Proposals – STREAM Grants

Solutions Through Research, Education & Art in Massachusetts

Important Dates and Details:

- **Deadlines:** May 15 and November 15 by 5:00pm ET.
- **Eligibility:** STREAM Grants are open to a broad range of applicants within Massachusetts, including faculty of any public or private institution of higher education, P-12 educators, undergraduate and graduate students, industry and nonprofit organizations, and artists, involved in scientific outreach, who are affiliated with an institution or organization as described above.
- **Criteria:** Proposed projects must be innovative and directly relevant to the goals and outcomes the goals and outcomes as described in of [MIT Sea Grant's Strategic Plan](#).
- **Requested Funding:** Budget requests must be under \$10,000. A maximum of three awards may be granted during each funding cycle (i.e., every six months).
- **Project Duration:** One year or less
- **Submitting:** Submittals are through eSeaGrant, our [online proposal system](#). Please contact Mary Newton Lima, Research Program Coordinator (mnewlim@mit.edu) for access as soon as possible in order to avoid missing the deadline due to technical issues.

Contact Information:

- **Questions about STREAM Grants:** Mary Newton Lima, Research Program Coordinator, mnewlim@mit.edu OR Lily Keyes, Communications, keyes@mit.edu
- **RFP Process/eSeaGrant:** Mary Newton Lima, Research Program Coordinator, mnewlim@mit.edu

Purpose

MIT Sea Grant allocates a portion of its budget to program development, which The National Sea Grant Office allows state programs to award to enhance their strategic plan goals when resources are available. MIT Sea Grant's STREAM program uses a portion of those funds for small projects such as: 1) small research projects and seed funding for exploratory or innovative efforts in industry, education, extension, or research; 2) undergraduate/graduate student support to further expand a classroom/independent research project into a larger project; 3) innovative scientific ideas to bring coastal and marine science and engineering into preschool through high

school (P-12) classrooms, and 4) rapid response projects, defined as projects for which there is an urgent, immediate need for timely action in response to a current situation or driver tied to the MITSG Strategic Plan. An example would be work that will address challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic on the communities that Sea Grant serves. Proposals for use of these funds may also include extension, education, communications, and graduate student support.

Applicants must express how the proposed project will meet the needs and reflect the diversity of Massachusetts coastal communities and other stakeholders, and add value to MIT Sea Grant’s research, extension, education, and outreach efforts in the program’s current strategic focus areas as outlined in the [MIT Sea Grant Strategic Plan](#).

All proposals meeting the criteria above are welcome. We highly encourage proposals that:

- advance areas of emerging interest (e.g. community resilience, marine debris, microplastics) or focus on other important or potentially important resources and issues;
- explore and/or advance the intersection between coastal marine science and art, especially to P-12 classrooms
- provide innovative approaches to solving problems and leveraging opportunities in resource management, development, or public outreach.
- art proposals that bring science to the public and highlight/support the goals and outcomes as outlined in the MIT Sea Grant Strategic Plan

Award and Deadlines

STREAM Grants must remain under \$10,000 and be one year or less in duration. While cost share is not required for STREAM proposals, opportunities for matching funds are highly encouraged. Please contact us to discuss possible cost share for your project. STREAM proposals will be considered on a bi-annual basis. Requests should be submitted no later than May 15 and November 15 of any given year. Reviews are planned for January and July. Decisions will be communicated within four to eight weeks of the review.

Eligibility

The following individuals in the state of Massachusetts may submit proposals: faculty of any public or private institution of higher education, P-12 educators, undergraduate and graduate students, artists involved in scientific outreach, and industry and nonprofit organizations. While student-led projects will be funded through a designated faculty member (typically the major advisor), graduate and undergraduate students are encouraged to lead the development and submission of proposals for discrete projects aligned with [MIT Sea Grant’s Strategic Plan](#).

Direct salary support for individuals from state and federal agencies, tribal, and for-profit and foreign organizations is not allowed; however, non-federal contributions can be counted as matching or in-kind support for the project. This funding can be used for P-12 student and teacher workshop, professional, and field trip costs such as teacher training costs and fees and transportation to and from field trip locations. However, proposals requesting support for travel to or participation in academic workshops, conferences, or existing research will not be considered. Please contact Mary Newton Lima, Research Program Coordinator,

mnewlim@mit.edu OR Lily Keyes, Communications, keyes@mit.edu, if you have any questions.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The mission of MIT Sea Grant is to promote the sustainable development of coastal and marine resources, connect communities with science, and rise to meet ocean-related challenges. In meeting these challenges through innovative technical contributions and a commitment to both scientific research and outreach to inform communities, we continue to gain understanding about our oceans and coasts as well as our communities. MIT Sea Grant is committed to supporting projects that uphold our cross-cutting principles:

- a. Cultivate Partnerships by integrating the expertise and capabilities of partners from the international, federal, tribal, state, and local communities as well as from academia, nongovernmental organizations and industry.
- b. Enhance Diversity and Inclusion by seeking and welcoming diverse perspectives to enhance cultural understanding and enable the network to pursue its vision and mission with respect to all audiences.

MIT Sea Grant strongly encourages applicants of all ages, races, ethnicities, national origins, gender identities, sexual orientations, disabilities, cultures, religions, citizenship types, marital statuses, education levels, job classifications, veteran status types, and socioeconomic status types to apply. MIT Sea Grant encourages applicants to engage with people from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups, individuals with disabilities and individuals from economically or educationally disadvantaged backgrounds. Applicants should articulate how their project may tie into or have an impact on coastal communities, including people from underrepresented or underserved communities.

Proposal Process

Proposals exceeding \$5,000 should be discussed with MIT Sea Grant prior to submission, however **we strongly encourage all potential applicants to reach out to Mary Newton Lima, MIT Sea Grant's Research Coordinator or Lily Keyes, Communications Specialist via the email seagrantinfo@mit.edu to discuss project ideas prior to preparing application materials.** These individuals can help you understand the focus areas, objectives and goals of the [MIT Sea Grant Strategic Plan](#) how your idea can best fit into our mission.

Proposals will be submitted to MIT Sea Grant through our online portal, eSeaGrant. More information about the STREAM Grants and instructions on how to access and use eSeaGrant is available [here](#). Please contact Mary Newton Lima, Research Coordinator, at (seagrantinfo@mit.edu) to receive your password, and we are happy to provide eSeaGrant tours and other information to any applicants.

Your proposal must follow the outline below. Your references, resumes/CV(s), and budget do not count towards the page limit.

Application Materials

1. *Project Narrative*: In 2-5 pages (12-point type, Times New Roman or equivalent font, single-spaced), please provide clear and concise information to the following sections, and include enough detail below to show innovation and the project's relevance to the [MIT Sea Grant Strategic Plan](#):
 - a. *Title/contact information*. Include the proposal title and the name, affiliation, email address, and phone number of the Principal Investigator (PI).
 - b. *Coastal- or marine- related issue or opportunity to be addressed*. Identify the coastal or marine-related problem, field trip, classroom activity, issue or hypothesis requiring this work. If relevant, describe how your project would explore the relationship between art and marine science. You must identify the project's relevance to one or more MIT Sea Grant goals and outcomes as detailed in the MIT Sea Grant Strategic Plan, including how these will be advanced by supporting the proposed work.
 - c. *Objectives*. Provide your specific objectives in a numbered list format.
 - d. *Methods/Approach*. Include a description of how you will achieve your objectives, including lesson plans, field trips, fieldwork, laboratory analyses, or theoretical studies, and the approximate amount of time needed for these activities. If your proposal involves fieldwork, copies of all sampling licenses and permits will be required at the time of proposal submission.
 - e. *Outcomes/Benefits to MA communities/stakeholders*. Describe the potential outcomes or impacts that can be seen and measured, and if the anticipated benefits of the project will have practical applications or if they will lead to new understanding, attitudinal or behavioral changes, economic improvements, increased policy understanding, etc.
 - f. *Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion*. Describe how the proposed activity broadens the participation of individuals from underrepresented groups in STEM fields and how this work will have broader societal impacts on stakeholders from underrepresented or underserved communities.
 - g. *Engagement and outreach*: Proposals must include a plan for meaningful engagement with the identified communities or stakeholders. Outline the project's outreach goals, methods, and how the work will impact or serve specific stakeholders. Please contact Communications Specialist Lily Keyes for additional guidance.
2. *Personnel and CVs/resume of PI/Student/Educator*: Each resume/CV should be no more than two pages.
3. *Budget and budget justification*: The budget must include all costs of the project. **Note STREAM funds may not be used for salary or indirect costs. While cost share (i.e., matching funds) is not required for STREAM proposals, cost sharing opportunities are welcome.** Applicants must budget for all costs of the project, including extension, communications, and outreach activities. MIT Sea Grant's Research Coordinator Mary Newton Lima or the MIT Sea Grant Financial Officers Caroline Johnston (carolin@mit.edu) or Alexis Pappey (apappey@mit.edu) are available for any questions you may have regarding the budget.
4. *Data Management Plan (DMP)*: If your project does not include data collection, enter 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.” to satisfy the DMP requirement.

If your proposal does include data collection, you will need to create a DMP. The plan must conform to NOAA’s Data Sharing Directive for Grants, Cooperative Agreements, and Contracts. If you are unsure what is needed for a DMP please contact MIT Sea Grant’s Research Coordinator [Mary Newton Lima](#) and she will be glad to help support you in preparing a DMP.

Review Process and Evaluation Criteria

The Research Coordinator and Communications Specialist will coordinate the submission and review process. Proposals will be reviewed and evaluated by the MIT Sea Grant STREAM Review Committee, comprised of MIT Sea Grant staff members who will be chosen to avoid any potential conflict of interest. The Committee will review all proposals on a semi-annual basis after the May 15 or November 15 deadline.

Committee members will evaluate each proposal according to the criteria listed below and assign a rating of High-Medium-Low for each criterion. The Committee will then meet to discuss the proposals and arrive at a ranking of proposals for funding relative to the criteria scores.

The following criteria will be used in evaluating the proposals:

- Alignment with MIT Sea Grant Strategic Plan’s Goals and Objectives
- Innovation and relevance to emerging issues
- How your projects will positively impact the targeted community, general public, or stakeholders. This should specify who will benefit from the project (e.g. classroom, group, community) and what will be improved as a result (e.g. knowledge, skills, habitat).
- Timeliness and urgency of the proposed activity
- Potential to leverage other funds
- Proof of concept for further development
- Commitment from other partners
- Fostering relationships within the targeted community

Timing of decisions, distributions, and amount available must align with the MIT Sea Grant Plan and its priorities, goals, and outcomes.

The final decision will be made by the MIT Sea Grant Director and communicated by the MIT Sea Grant Research Coordinator, and will provide a summary of the Committee’s review whether the proposal is funded or not. It is expected that funding recommendations will be communicated to applicants within four to eight weeks of the Review Committee’s meeting; however the process may take longer, especially for those proposals requiring NEPA review.

Reporting

NEPA Questionnaire

All successful applicants will need to be assessed for environmental compliance, which may include preparing a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Compliance Questionnaire. If you have never completed a NEPA questionnaire before, please contact MIT Sea Grant's Research Coordinator [Mary Newton Lima](#) and she will be happy to help and provide more information on how to complete it. Funding for field-based projects is contingent upon final NEPA approval which may take 6-10 weeks from the close of the submittal deadline. Early submission of forms will expedite funds being disbursed.

If your project does not include anything that will occur in the natural environment, a simple statement such as "Because no part of this project will take place in the environment, the NOAA Environmental Compliance Questionnaire is not needed" is all that is necessary to satisfy the NEPA requirement.

Post-Project Reporting

At the end of the project, recipients of STREAM grants will be expected to provide a final report which should include specific impacts and accomplishments. 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 as part of its robust and integrated Planning, Implementation and Evaluation System. Details on report formats, impact statements and metrics desired will be provided upon funding.

Acknowledgement of MIT Sea Grant funding on any publication or product, either by using the MIT Sea Grant logo or language acknowledging the award, is required. The logo and sample text will be provided to awardees at the start of funding.