



## Request for Proposals – STREAM Grants

### *Solutions Through Research, Education & Art in Massachusetts*

#### Important Dates and Details:

- **Deadlines for optional [Pre-Submittal Interest Form](#): August 22, 2023 by 5:00pm ET.**
- Deadline for eSeagrant access: August 31, 2023 by 5:00pm ET.
- **Deadlines for full proposal: September 1 by 5:00pm ET** (Note: Applicants must request access to eSeaGrant by August 31, 2023 by 5:00pm ET).
- **Eligibility:** STREAM Grants are open to a broad range of applicants who are affiliated with Massachusetts organizations such as institutions of higher education, P-12 schools, museums, tribes, industry, and nonprofit groups. Students must apply with an eligible faculty member or educator.
- **Requested Funding:** Budget requests must not exceed \$9,999. Matching funds or in-kind contributions of 50% of the requested amount are required. See the Budget and Matching Funds section below for additional information.
- **Project Duration:** 9 months. Projects must occur between November 1, 2023 and July 31, 2024. There will be no extensions for any project funded under this RFP.
- **Submitting:** Submittals are through eSeaGrant, our [online proposal system](#). Please contact Mary Newton Lima, Research Program Coordinator ([seagrantinfo@mit.edu](mailto:seagrantinfo@mit.edu)) for access at least one business day before the submittal deadline.

#### Contact Information:

If you are interested in discussing your project idea or the submittal process, please fill out the [Pre-Submittal Interest Form](#) by August 22, 2023 by 5:00pm ET and we will contact you. Please feel free to contact us with any questions ([seagrantinfo@mit.edu](mailto:seagrantinfo@mit.edu)).

- **Questions about STREAM Grants:** Mary Newton Lima, Research Program Coordinator and Lily Keyes, Communications Specialist ([seagrantinfo@mit.edu](mailto:seagrantinfo@mit.edu))
- **RFP Process/eSeaGrant:** Mary Newton Lima, Research Program Coordinator ([seagrantinfo@mit.edu](mailto:seagrantinfo@mit.edu))

#### Purpose

MIT Sea Grant allocates a portion of its program development funds to support small projects that advance MIT Sea Grant's Strategic Plan goals. The STREAM Grant program supports 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 with a more significant educational or outreach component;
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 for which there is a need for timely action in response to a current situation or driver.

Proposals 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 communities and stakeholders and add value to MIT Sea Grant's research, extension, education, and outreach efforts as outlined in the [2018-2023 Strategic Plan](#).**

All proposals meeting the criteria above are welcome. We highly encourage proposals that align with one or more of the following list:

- 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 art and science, especially to P-12 classrooms;
- provide innovative approaches to solving problems and leveraging opportunities in resource management, development, or public outreach; or
- connect coastal communities with science and art that support the goals and outcomes as outlined in the MIT Sea Grant Strategic Plan.

### **Award and Deadlines**

STREAM proposals will be considered on an annual basis. No more than one proposal may be submitted by any Project Lead / Principal Investigator during any one application period. Budgets cannot exceed \$9,999 and projects must take place between November 1, 2023 and July 31, 2024. Proposals must be submitted no later than September 1, 2023 by 5:00pm ET (Note: Applicants must request access to eSeaGrant by August 31, 2023 by 5:00pm ET). Decisions will be communicated in October.

### **Eligibility**

The following applicants in the state of Massachusetts may submit proposals: faculty, students, educators, artists, researchers, and others who are affiliated with one or more of the following in Massachusetts: institutions of higher education, P-12 schools, student groups, museums, tribes, industry, and nonprofit organizations. While students must apply with an eligible faculty member or educator, students are encouraged to lead the development and submission of proposals. The Project Lead / Principal Investigator must not be the recipient of other MIT Sea Grant funding during the period of this grant.

## **Budget**

STREAM Grant funding may be used for equipment, materials and supplies, as well as P-12 student and teacher workshop and field trip costs (e.g., teacher training costs, fees, and transportation). However, proposals requesting support for travel to or participation in conferences, or existing research will not be considered.

## **Matching Funds**

Matching funds are funds, goods and services provided by the applicant organization to support the project in addition to STREAM Grant funds being requested. These types of funds can be equipment already owned by the applicant, salaries, etc. Direct salary support for individuals from state and federal agencies, tribal, and for-profit and foreign organizations is not allowed; however, non-federal salaries can be counted as matching support for the project. Sea Grant typically expects a 50% match on all proposals. For example, if you are requesting \$5,000 from MIT Sea Grant, you are asked to provide at least \$2,500 from qualified, non-federal matching sources. Please contact Mary Newton Lima, Research Program Coordinator, or Lily Keyes, Communications Specialist, at [seagrantinfo@mit.edu](mailto:seagrantinfo@mit.edu) to discuss what your group can use as matching funds.

## **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Justice, and Accessibility**

MIT Sea Grant is committed to bringing a range of voices and values together to find solutions that are innovative, creative, and responsive to the complex problems facing coastal communities. Applicants should articulate how the project will engage and reflect the diversity of Massachusetts communities and stakeholders. STREAM Grants will support projects that uphold our cross-cutting principles:

- Cultivate and sustain partnerships by integrating the expertise and capabilities of partners from international, federal, tribal, state, and local communities, and from academia, non-governmental organizations, and industry.
- Embrace Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Justice, and Accessibility (DEIJA) by integrating diverse perspectives, to advance cultural understanding and enable the network to pursue its vision and mission among all audiences. We will actively create mechanisms to facilitate diverse participation in network activities. MIT Sea Grant will tackle problems facing coastal communities by utilizing a range of perspectives, values, and tools to develop solutions that are more innovative, creative, inclusive, and responsive.

MIT Sea Grant encourages applicants to engage with underrepresented or underserved groups, and we welcome 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.

## 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 [Pre-Submittal Interest Form](#) by August 22, 2023 by 5:00pm ET to discuss project ideas prior to preparing application materials.** This form has specific questions that can help us determine if your project is a good fit for this RFP and better guide you in the application process. The form will also help you to understand the focus areas, objectives and goals of the [MIT Sea Grant Strategic Plan](#), and how your idea can best align with our mission. If you do choose to fill out the form, we will contact you within one week to discuss your project.

Proposals will be submitted to MIT Sea Grant through our online portal, eSeaGrant. You will receive instructions once you request access. Please contact Mary Newton Lima, Research Program Coordinator, at [seagrantinfo@mit.edu](mailto:seagrantinfo@mit.edu) by August 31, 2023 by 5:00pm ET. to receive your password, and we are happy to provide eSeaGrant tours and other information to any applicants.

The deadline for submittals is September 1, 2023 by 5:00pm ET (Note: Applicants must request access to eSeaGrant by August 31, 2023 by 5:00pm ET). 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 with one-inch margins), please provide clear and concise information to the following sections. Any text over the 5-page limit will be removed from the narrative and will not be shared with the reviewing STREAM Committee. Include enough detail below to show innovation and the project’s relevance to the 2018-2023 [MIT Sea Grant Strategic Plan](#):
  - a. *Title and Contact Information:* Include the proposal title and the name, affiliation, email address, and phone number of the lead investigator/applicant. Please provide your institutional UEI number, and indicate if your institution has received federal funding during the past 5 years. You must have a full [SAM registration](#) and Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number (or have an active application pending) at the time of submission in order to be considered for this award.
  - b. *Project Start and End Dates:* The project start and end dates must fall between November 1, 2023 and July 31, 2024. The project may not be more than 9 months in duration. Please note the actual start and end dates may vary depending upon funding and processing timelines.
  - c. *Coastal- or Marine-Related Issue or Opportunity to be Addressed:* Identify the coastal or marine-related problem, 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 focus areas as detailed in the MIT Sea Grant Strategic Plan, including how these will be advanced by supporting the proposed work.
  - d. *Objectives:* Provide your specific objectives in a numbered list format.

- e. *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 prior to the start of the project.
  - f. *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.
  - g. *Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Justice, and Accessibility*: Describe how the proposed work broadens the participation of individuals from underrepresented groups in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) fields and how this work will have broader societal impacts on stakeholders from underrepresented or underserved communities.
  - h. *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 at [seagrantinfo@mit.edu](mailto:seagrantinfo@mit.edu) for additional guidance.
2. *Personnel and CVs/Resume of Lead Applicant/Student/Educator*: Each resume/CV should be no more than two pages.
  3. *Budget and Budget Justification*: Applicants must budget for all costs of the project, including research, education, communications, and outreach activities, and include a written justification for each budget item. The budget must include all costs of the project, including matching funds. Please note the following:
    - a. *Matching Funds*: Matching funds are funds and non-cash contributions provided by the applicant that support the funds being requested. STREAM funds may not be used for salary, but salaries may be used for matching funds. Please contact MIT Sea Grant's Research Coordinator Mary Newton Lima at [seagrantinfo@mit.edu](mailto:seagrantinfo@mit.edu) for any questions you may have regarding the budget or matching funds.
    - b. *Indirect Costs (IDC)*: IDC represent costs of performing research that are not easily attributable to individual grants such as utilities (light, heat/cooling, power), internet, and data transmission and storage. You may apply for IDC as part of your budget, but your proposal may not be only IDC. If you wish to waive your organization's IDC, verify that you have permission to do this with your organization, and include that in writing as part of your budget justification. If you do wish to include IDC in your proposal and your organization has a negotiated IDC rate to use in the budget, please include that rate and a copy of the agreement identifying the rate. If you do not have a negotiated rate then we ask you to use the 10% standard rate that the federal government allows.
  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."

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 Program Coordinator Mary Newton Lima at [seagrantinfo@mit.edu](mailto:seagrantinfo@mit.edu), and she will be glad to help support you in preparing a DMP.

## **Review Process and Evaluation Criteria**

The Research Program 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 after the September 1 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 the Purpose of the STREAM Grant program and focus areas outlined in the MIT Sea Grant Strategic Plan.
- Completeness of proposal. Did the proposal follow the structure/format in the RFP? Does the proposal include all required sections, including DMP or DMP statement?
- Innovation, timeliness, and relevance to emerging issues.
- Proof of concept for further development.
- Robustness of outreach plan. Are there plans to reach out to non-academic groups? Will relationships be created/fostered/strengthened? How will your project 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).
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Justice, and Accessibility. MIT Sea Grant is committed to supporting diversity, equity, inclusion, justice, and accessibility (DEIJA) by proactively engaging and serving the diverse populations of coastal communities in Massachusetts. Reviewers will consider how the applicant supports DEIJA in the marine sciences.

The final decision will be made by the MIT Sea Grant Director, Professor Michael Triantafyllou, and communicated by the MIT Sea Grant Research Coordinator, who will also provide a summary of the Committee's review. It is expected that funding recommendations will be communicated to applicants within four to eight weeks of the Committee's meeting.

## **Post-Award Requirements**

### Award Type

Awards under this RFP will be cost-reimbursable. This means that the awardee will receive payment after submitting receipts and invoices for approved, allowable budget cost items and

matching funds. Detailed invoicing instructions will be provided. If you have any questions or concerns about the invoice and payment process, please contact us at [seagrantinfo@mit.edu](mailto:seagrantinfo@mit.edu) so that we can provide guidance and discuss workable methods to assist your organization.

### Post-Award Documentation

After award notification and acceptance, but prior to funds being awarded, the applicant must provide additional documentation as outlined below. Please contact Mary Newton Lima at [seagrantinfo@mit.edu](mailto:seagrantinfo@mit.edu) for help with any of these documents.

All awardees must provide a Letter of Commitment from their organization that must be signed by an authorized official of the applicant organization, and a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Compliance Questionnaire, which is used by NOAA to assess the proposal for environmental compliance to federal laws. If the recipient has not received funds from MIT prior to this STREAM funding, they may also need to submit a Subrecipient Profile Questionnaire and a New Organization Registration Form. Funding will not be awarded until these items have been received. These items will be further explained in the post-notification documentation.

### Post-Project Reporting

At the end of the project period, STREAM Grant recipients will be expected to participate in MIT Sea Grant's annual reporting required by NOAA, including a final report and identifying impacts and accomplishments. Details on report formats, impact statements, and metrics will be provided upon funding. [Here](#) is a list of specific metrics MIT Sea Grant tracks and reports to the National Sea Grant Office. While your project does not have to incorporate all of these metrics, we encourage you to identify at least one metric associated with your project outcomes.

Acknowledgement of MIT Sea Grant funding on any publication or product resulting from your STREAM Grant project is required. The MIT Sea Grant logo and award language will be provided to awardees at the start of funding.