



## Request for Proposals – STREAM Awards

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

#### Important Dates and Details:

- **Informational Webinar: Thursday, October 10, 2024.**
- **Deadline for optional [Pre-Submittal Interest Form](#): December 2, 2024 by 5:00pm ET.**
- **Deadline to request eSeagrant access: Monday, December 16, 2024 by 5:00pm ET.**
- **Deadline for full proposal: Tuesday, December 17, 2024 by 5:00pm ET.**
- **Eligibility:** STREAM Awards 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 through an eligible faculty member or educator. Your organization must have a Unique Entity Identity (UEI) number and be registered with SAM.gov to apply.
- **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:** 12 months. Projects will run from May 1, 2025 to April 30, 2026.
- **Submitting:** Submittals are through eSeaGrant, our [online proposal system](#). Please contact Mary Newton Lima, Assistant Director, Administration ([seagrantinfo@mit.edu](mailto:seagrantinfo@mit.edu)) for access by Monday, December 16, 2024 by 5:00pm ET.

#### Contact Information:

Please feel free to contact us with any questions ([seagrantinfo@mit.edu](mailto:seagrantinfo@mit.edu)).

- **Questions about STREAM Awards:** Mary Newton Lima, Assistant Director, Administration and Lily Keyes, Communications Specialist ([seagrantinfo@mit.edu](mailto:seagrantinfo@mit.edu))
- **RFP Process/eSeaGrant:** Mary Newton Lima, Assistant Director, Administration ([seagrantinfo@mit.edu](mailto:seagrantinfo@mit.edu))

#### Purpose

The purpose of this award is to allow small amounts of funding to have big impacts on communities, education, and research focusing on coastal and marine science in Massachusetts. MIT Sea Grant allocates a portion of its program development funds to this award to support small projects that advance MIT Sea Grant's Strategic Plan goals. The STREAM Award 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, after-school activities, and community events; 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 add value to MIT Sea Grant's research, extension, education, and outreach efforts as outlined in the 2024-2027 [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, climate change) or focus on other important resources and issues;
- explore and/or advance the intersection between coastal or marine art and science, especially within 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 May 1, 2025 and April 30, 2026. Proposals must be submitted no later than December 17, 2024 by 5:00pm ET (Note: applicants should request eSeagrant access as early as possible, and must request access to eSeaGrant by December 16, 2024 by 5:00pm ET). Decisions will be communicated prior to the start date.

## **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 through 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 award.

## **Budget**

STREAM Award funding may be used for equipment, materials and supplies, outreach, 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. Additional detail for budget preparation can be found under the Proposal Process section.

## **Matching Funds**

Matching funds are funds, goods and services provided by the applicant organization to support the project in addition to STREAM Award funds being requested. These types of funds can be supplies, equipment already owned by the applicant salaries, volunteer services etc. Direct salary support for individuals is not allowed; however, non-federal salaries can be counted as matching support for the project. MIT Sea Grant requires a 50% match on these 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, Assistant Director, Administration, 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 constituents. STREAM Awards 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 from 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 fill out the [Pre-Submittal Interest Form](#) by December 2, 2024 by 5:00pm ET.** 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 may contact you within one week to discuss your project ideas prior to preparing application materials.

The deadline for submittals is December 17, 2024 by 5:00pm ET. Proposals are submitted to MIT Sea Grant through our online portal, eSeaGrant. You will receive instructions once you request access. Please contact Mary Newton Lima, Assistant Director, Administration at [seagrantinfo@mit.edu](mailto:seagrantinfo@mit.edu) as early as possible and no later than December 16, 2024 by 5:00pm ET 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, but each resume/CV should be no more than two pages.

### 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 2024-2027 [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. 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 May 1, 2025 and April 30, 2026. The project may not be more than 12 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/Constituents*: 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 constituents. Outline the project's outreach goals, methods, and how the work will impact or serve specific constituents. 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 non-federal salaries may be used for matching funds. Please contact MIT Sea Grant's Assistant Director, Administration 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 are costs that are not easily attributable to individual awards 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. 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 you can use the up to 15% standard rate that the federal government allows. Upload IDC-related documents on the narrative page of eSeagrant.
  4. *Letters of Support*: Letters of support are letters from other members of the community who support your application but do not have a financial investment in your project, i.e., they are

not in your budget. Letters of support are not required, but you may upload them in this form if you have any.

5. *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 Assistant Director, Administration 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 Assistant Director, Administration and Communications Specialist will oversee the submission and review process. Proposals will be reviewed and evaluated by the MIT Sea Grant STREAM Review Committee composed of MIT Sea Grant staff members and one external member who is knowledgeable of Sea Grant’s mission and outreach and engagement activities will be chosen to avoid any potential conflict of interest. The Committee will review all proposals after the December 17 deadline.

Committee members will evaluate each proposal according to the criteria listed below and assign a rating of Very High-High-Medium-Low-Very 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:

- 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). (40%)
- Alignment with the Purpose of the STREAM Award program and focus areas outlined in the MIT Sea Grant Strategic Plan. (20%)
- Innovation, timeliness, relevance to emerging issues, and, if applicable, proof of concept for further development. (20%)
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Justice, and Accessibility (DEIJA). MIT Sea Grant is committed to supporting 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. (20%)

The final decision will be made by the MIT Sea Grant Director, Professor Michael Triantafyllou, based on rank order except in instances where the Director may deviate from the rank order based on strategic priority and diversity in applicant pool (e.g., institution, geography, career stage, end-user groups). The Director’s decision will be communicated by the MIT Sea Grant Assistant Director, Administration, 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 and 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, you 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 Award recipients will be expected to participate in MIT Sea Grant's annual reporting required by NOAA. Details on report formats 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 NOAA and MIT Sea Grant funding on any publication or product resulting from your STREAM Award project is required. The MIT Sea Grant logo, NOAA logo and award language will be provided to awardees at the start of funding.

### Project/Award Period

The requested award start date must begin on the first day of the month and end on the last day of the month. Project start dates will be no earlier than May 1, 2025, dependent upon availability of Federal funding as provided by Congress, acceptable completion of all NOAA/applicant negotiations including National Environmental Policy Act analysis and permit requirements, and the provision of other supporting documentation as requested. Applicants selected to receive funding may be asked to modify the project start date.