

New York Sea Grant's Call for a Great Lakes Integrated Assessment 2014-2015



(130128-finalrev)

INVITING PRE-PROPOSALS FOR an INTEGRATED ASSESSMENT

Pre-Proposal Deadline 4:30 PM Monday March 18, 2013

Anticipated Funds: up to \$75,000 per year for 2 years,
to support 1 project

New York Sea Grant strives to provide valid scientific information that will serve as the basis for furthering the sustainable development, use, protection, conservation, and management of our coastal resources. In addition to its research and extension program activities to accomplish this, New York Sea Grant is piloting an “Integrated Assessment” for New York’s Great Lakes in 2014-2015. The purpose of an Integrated Assessment project is to have a multi-disciplinary team work with existing data and materials to develop information, tools, partnerships, and management options to address a particularly challenging environmental issue.

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I. The Integrated Assessment Approach

An Integrated Assessment (IA) project will bring together a diverse group of technical experts, scientists, and stakeholders to define and evaluate policy or management options related to a particularly challenging or complex environmental problem. The challenges or complexities may be due to uncertain facts, conflicting values, high stakes, and the need for quick action. To address such a situation, the diverse skills, expertise, and involvement from an appropriate community of scientists, stakeholders and other experts would be required. Through summarizing the scientific knowledge and working through problems and perspectives, it is expected that the IA project process would lead to building consensus around potential policy or management direction.

For the purposes of NYSG's first experience with funding an Integrated Assessment, the project's approach should include the following elements:

- A. **Identify and describe the specific policy-relevant question** around which the IA is to be performed. The general topic of interest under this Call is listed below and is considered a particularly challenging area by managers and policy makers. The specific aspect or issue of this topic, to be addressed by the project team, must be identified and described in the pre-proposal.
- B. **Clarify the history, cause and consequences of the issue.** The IA project should help clarify aspects of the issue that are uncertain and are impeding action. A description of current conditions and historical trends can enhance understanding and provide a foundation for further analyses. To address the issue effectively, decision makers will need to better understand the probable causes and the environmental, social, and economic consequences of the issue.
- C. **Identify and evaluate potential options.** Projects should identify potential options addressing the issue, including policies, management actions or new initiatives, that are politically, socially, and economically feasible. An Integrated Assessment will help stakeholders compare and evaluate a suite of options, rather than recommend a single approach.
- D. **Develop tools and information that can guide decision making** and help implement potential options. If appropriate, researchers should provide an assessment of certainty levels associated with their findings to help policy makers interpret analyses or identify future research needs.
- E. **It is anticipated that the most effective way to undertake** such a project with the available budget is for faculty to assemble a team with diverse and relevant expertise who will carry out steps A-D through discussion and analyses/assessment, with the assistance of a graduate student(s).

New York Sea Grant is especially interested in pre-proposals that integrate natural and social sciences as appropriate to the specific question and issue.

The collaborative nature of an IA approach is a key characteristic for the success of a project. The participation of stakeholders throughout the project is expected. They may include local or

state policy-makers, natural resource managers, impacted businesses and other intended users of the IA's results. ***Research teams are strongly encouraged to contact NYSG staff with their ideas to make sure they are addressing the most critical questions and to improve their understanding of what information and products may be most useful to coastal stakeholders.***

Learn More about Integrated Assessment

Additional material on Integrated Assessments, including a guide and example projects can be found at the Michigan Sea Grant website: <http://www.miseagrant.umich.edu/research/approach>.

II. NYSG's Integrated Assessment Topic of Interest for 2014-2015

After discussions with managers and others, NYSG has selected "***Resiliency of NY's Great Lakes Recreational Harbors***" as the topic for IA pre-proposals.

New York's Great Lakes harbor communities depend upon recreation and tourism to help sustain and grow their local and regional economies. Much of the recreational use in these harbor communities is dependent upon the availability and accessibility to Lake Erie, Lake Ontario, Niagara River, or St. Lawrence River resources by boats. Maintenance and updating of recreational harbors is a critical part of maintaining and expanding these boating opportunities. In most harbors, the need for dredging arises and this requires the expenditure of resources which federal, state, and local agencies and organizations do not readily have at their disposal. Other perceived impediments include the required permitting processes for dredging, as well as the concerns regarding the quality of the sediments (which may then impact costs as contaminants may require special disposal methods). In addition, recent weather patterns and the ongoing planning processes regarding modifications to Lake level management have raised concerns about what the impact of erosion and water levels would be on harbor infrastructure and sediment management. An Integrated Assessment in this topic area would identify and assess relevant environmental data, economics, management strategies and policies, and stakeholder concerns, and then develop options supported by social science analyses of implementation tools. The IA project and its results will assist all relevant entities in addressing the resiliency of NY's Great Lakes recreational harbors.

III. General Information about Pre-Proposal Submission

A. Who is Eligible to Submit:

Sea Grant is a national college program, so faculty at academic institutions are the main targets and recipients of NYSG's research funds. Nevertheless, proposals from other groups may be accepted and approved for funding, too. Eligible groups are listed below in order of preference for funding under this Call:

1. Researchers at universities and colleges.
2. Researchers at other not-for-profit research institutions.
3. Researchers who are personnel of state or local agencies, or of not-for-profit organizations.
4. Researchers at for-profit institutions or companies (with limits).

Important Notes: All proposals submitted under this Integrated Assessment Call for 2014-2015 must be **led** by an eligible researcher with his or her primary professional base in New York State. Federal employees may participate in projects as collaborators, but they may not be included in the budget. Federal employees and institutions are not eligible for compensation or budget items of any sort, and their contributions cannot be considered a source of cost-sharing.

B. Duration of Proposed Work:

In this Call, the funding will cover two years, running from 2/1/2014 through 1/31/2016. While NYSG is accepting proposals for up to two years of work, only one year of support is awarded at a time. Continued support for the second year of the project will be contingent on demonstrated progress.

C. Budget Size (total of indirect plus direct costs):

The total budget request (direct + indirect costs) for a project may not exceed \$75,000 per year. Note that the budget estimates in pre-proposal submissions are expected to be realistic. A substantial increase in the final budget request will be viewed negatively and likely will result in either rejection of the project or budget cuts without changes in the scope of work.

D. Cost-Share Requirement:

Sea Grant requires non-federal cost-share (a.k.a. matching funds) support in the amount of at least 50 percent of the Sea Grant funds requested be provided under this Call. For example, if \$70K is requested from Sea Grant, the proposal's budget page must demonstrate an additional \$35K of non-federal cost-share. Additional cost-share (i.e., more than 50%) is encouraged and will be viewed favorably.

E. Limit on Salary Requests:

Principal and associate investigators with appointments providing nine (9) or more months of support annually are generally not allowed to receive more than two (2) months' total salary from NYSG per year. Other eligible principal and associate investigators will generally be allowed to receive only up to six (6) months' salary from NYSG per year. These limits may be relaxed under exceptional circumstances, with prior approval from NYSG. Under all circumstances, the amount of salary support requested or provided as cost-share must be warranted by the effort needed to conduct the project.

F. Data Management/Sharing Plan (NEW!) New NOAA regulations require that data and information collected and/or created under NOAA (including Sea Grant) grants must be made visible, accessible, and independently understandable to general users, free of charge or at minimal cost, in a timely manner (typically no later than two years after the data are collected or created), except where limited by law, regulation, policy or by security requirements.

The new requirement has two basic parts: (1) environmental and socio-economic data generated by a grant project must be made available after a reasonable period of exclusive use, and (2) the grant proposal must describe the plan to make the data available.

To comply with this new requirement, in NYSG's full proposal stage, the principal investigator must include a data management plan that describes how the project's data and metadata will be made available to others. Deposition of data in standard data archives (e.g., by discipline) or in available university archives is encouraged. This requirement for data archiving is in addition to the expected publication of research results in peer-reviewed journals. The proposed plan will be reviewed for compliance with NOAA requirements. If funds are needed for this task, they may be included in the project pre-proposal and full proposal budgets.

G. What and When to Submit:

The completed PC-readable Pre-proposal Submission Form (see Section VII) ***must be received by the deadline of 4:30 pm EDT on Monday March 18, 2013*** at NYSG's electronic submission web site: www.NYSGProposal.org Navigate to "New York Sea Grant's Call for a Great Lakes Integrated Assessment 2014-2015" and follow all directions for electronic submission. At the pre-proposal stage, signatures of principal investigators or campus officials are not required by NYSG.

Do *not* include information or materials supplemental to the Pre-proposal Submission Form (e.g., full budget, appendices, letters of support, etc.). Such materials will be discarded without review.

Important notes about pre-proposal submission:

Submissions that do not include the required information will lose rating points (see Section VII for Instructions).

- Double-check your Pre-proposal Submission Form file before uploading it at the submission web site to make sure it is PC-readable and that it is your final version. *It must be in the form of a single pdf file.* You will receive an auto-receipt from the web site confirming your submission, but this is not an indication that your file is readable.
- We recommend submission via a PC at your university office, with a current version of Internet Explorer, Firefox, or Google Chrome web browser installed.
- If you have trouble with submission through www.NYSGProposal.org, call NYSG (631-632-6906) to explain the problem. We will try to help, but cannot guarantee that we can solve your problem. In any case, unless the web site (housed on the Stony Brook University server) becomes inoperable, it is *your* responsibility to use equipment that will allow you to meet the deadline.
- All submissions will be checked in the order they were posted and any that contain a virus or that are unreadable cannot be accepted. The lead investigator will be notified about this by email. However, for submissions that are posted on March 18, NYSG cannot guarantee that this check and notification will take place before the 4:30 PM deadline.
- Any submission after the deadline of 4:30 PM on March 18, 2013, cannot be accepted and its lead investigator will be notified. Please be sure to watch the time! Even if you are on the website before the deadline, if your file is not submitted by 4:30 PM, it will be too late to be accepted.

NYSG will not make exceptions to these conditions, so ***early submission is very strongly advised.*** The official time stamp on the submission is provided by the web site's server.

IV. The Review Process

All pre-proposals submitted to NYSG in response to this Call for a Great Lakes Integrated Assessment will be screened by NYSG's program management team, extension specialists, Program Advisory Council, and Science Panel of academic researchers. The following criteria will be evaluated:

- **Understanding of context and underlying issues:** Does the pre-proposal identify underlying issues; does the pre-proposal provide the right context for the underlying issues?
- **Project approach:** Does the pre-proposal address all of the elements of an Integrated Assessment? If it does not, are exceptions and gaps acknowledged and explained? Is the explanation credible?
- **Preliminary identification of relevant data sources:** Does the pre-proposal identify how data will be accessed? Does the pre-proposal reflect an effort to contact others working on this issue and identify team members or collaborators who bring data or access to data to the team?
- **Competency of the proposing team:** Does the team have members who can carry out each element of the assessment? Have team members done similar work in the past? They are not required to have Integrated Assessment experience specifically, but provide some indication they are able to assess status and trends and identify causes and consequences of, and solutions to, the issue.

Only authors of the most highly-rated pre-proposals will be invited to submit full proposals. During full proposal development, investigators will be expected to facilitate coordination with, or input from, industry, agency, or private groups as appropriate. NYSG staff will attempt to be of assistance in this process.

Full proposals will be subject to mail peer review and a Technical Review Panel. NYSG's program management team will also utilize additional input from NYSG's staff and Program Advisory Council. The National Sea Grant Program Office oversees NYSG's review processes and does not conduct a separate evaluation of individual proposals.

V. Timeline for Integrated Assessment Pre-Proposals

February 7, 2013	Call for IA pre-proposals released
March 18, 4:30 pm	Deadline for IA pre-proposals (must use NYSG submission web site)
April 11	NYSG invites selected PIs to write full proposals
June 7, 4:30 pm	Deadline for full proposals with all authorized signatures (must use NYSG submission web site)
July 31	PIs receive masked peer reviews for response
August 7	Deadline for PI responses to reviews
August 30	NYSG notifies investigators regarding funding
September 20	Deadline for revisions, final budgets and Word/Excel versions of

February 1, 2014 successful proposal
February 1, 2015 Anticipated funding begins for the selected project
February 1, 2015 Anticipated funding continues if progress is satisfactory

VI. New York Sea Grant Staff Contacts for this Call

Research Administration (at Stony Brook University)

James Ammerman, Director (631-632-6905, james.ammerman@stonybrook.edu)

Cornelia Schlenk, Assistant Director (631-632-6906, cornelia.schlenk@stonybrook.edu)

Mary Kethman, Fiscal Officer (631-632-6908, mary.kethman@stonybrook.edu)

Lane Smith, Research Program Coordinator (631-632-9780, Lane.smith@stonybrook.edu)

Great Lakes Extension Specialists (at various upstate locations)

Katherine Bunting-Howarth, Associate Director (607-255-2832 at Cornell University, keb264@cornell.edu) – coastal policy and decision-making; public participation; human dimensions of coastal management.

Helen Domske (716-645-3610 at SUNY Buffalo, hmd4@cornell.edu) – coastal education; avian botulism; Great Lakes ecosystems; emerging contaminants.

David MacNeill (315-312-3042 at SUNY College Oswego, dbm4@cornell.edu) – sportfishery development; fisheries biology, management and conservation; aquaculture; ecosystem change; aquatic invasive species.

Mary Penney (315-312-3042 at SUNY College Oswego, mp357@cornell.edu) – Great Lakes coastal communities; aquatic invasive species.

David White (315-312-3042 at SUNY College Oswego, dgw9@cornell.edu) – coastal recreational facility design, management, and operation; coastal recreation participation, uses, and impacts.

Communications Staff (at Stony Brook University)

Barbara Branca (631-632-9124, barbara.branca@stonybrook.edu) – communications manager.

Paul Focazio (631-632-9124, paul.focazio@stonybrook.edu) – writer, web developer.

VII. Pre-Proposal Submission Form Instructions for an IA

Be sure to use the format and provide the information as described below. **Every Section (1-9) and all of the information specified within it is required.** Submissions that do not include all of this information will lose rating points. Use all-around margins of at least 1" and a font size no less than #12 Times New Roman.

Pre-proposal Submission to the NYSG Great Lakes Integrated Assessment Call for 2014-2015

Date: _____

1. LAST NAMES OF PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS: (e.g., Smith / Doe / Jones)

2. BRIEF PROJECT TITLE:

3. INVESTIGATORS: List **all** principal (PI), co-principal (co-I), and associate (AI) investigators, including name, mailing address, telephone, and email for each. *Also* indicate eligibility category (#1, 2, 3, or 4) from the Call's Section III.A for each. The primary professional base of the lead investigator must be in New York State. Students and NYSG staff cannot have PI, co-I, or AI status.

4. BUDGET: Totals of direct plus indirect costs.

A. Estimated Request for Federal Funds from New York Sea Grant

Year One \$ _____ Year Two \$ _____ Total Request \$ _____

B. Estimated Non-Federal Cost-Share to be Provided to New York Sea Grant

Year One \$ _____ Year Two \$ _____ Total Match \$ _____

C. Expected Source(s) of Cost-Share:

Year One:

Year Two:

D. Data Management Plan: Indicate your recognition that an acceptable data management/sharing plan will be required as part of a full proposal, that compliance with the plan will be required if the project is funded, and that the pre-proposal's budget estimate provides for this. _____ yes.

5. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT: Starting on a *new* page, **use no more than three pages** with the following a-h headings to describe your proposed Integrated Assessment (IA) project. Use all-around margins of at least 1" and a font size no less than #12. Anything beyond three pages will be discarded prior to review.

a) **BACKGROUND:** Provide a brief description of the IA project you propose to address the topic in Section II, demonstrating awareness of the main issues and identifying potential

stakeholders. Include the origin of the specific issue(s), an explanation of why it's a complex problem, and who is or should be involved.

- b) **OBJECTIVES:** Briefly state the IA project objectives.
- c) **GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS:** Please identify the geographic scope of the project and why it is appropriate for the IA topic.
- d) **CHARACTERIZE THE SOLUTION POSSIBILITIES:** What are the potential options that could be considered such as management actions, education, outreach programs, legislation, regulations or other initiatives.
- e) **YOUR DRAFT IA QUESTION:** Develop a draft question for your IA project using this pattern: What are the causes, consequences and correctives of <<natural resource problem>> at << geographic location(s) >>?
- f) **PROJECT APPROACH:** Provide an overview of how you intend to develop the Integrated Assessment so reviewers can determine appropriateness of the approach for achieving the stated objectives. It is not necessary to explain analytic methods in detail.
- g) **INVESTIGATORS AND COLLABORATORS:** Identify the project investigators and individual responsibilities in a table (see below). Below the project team, provide the names and affiliations of all persons and institutions you intend to recruit as collaborators. Note that it is not necessary at this time to contact or secure a commitment from these individuals and organizations.

Name	Institution/Organization	Role (Team member, collaborator, other)	Responsibilities

- h) **DATA AND DATA SETS:** Funds from New York Sea Grant should primarily support analyses and communication of existing data, rather than collection of new field data. Stakeholder surveys, focus groups, observations and interviews are permitted if used to support the goals of the Integrated Assessment process. Please identify any existing data sets you plan to use, their owners and how you intend to access the data. You may also indicate your knowledge of closely related projects, briefly identifying those projects and their principal investigators.

6. LITERATURE CITED: Present the full citations for any work referenced under Section 5, where they may be labeled as (1), (2,3), etc. The space required for Section 6 is not counted under the 3-page maximum for Section 5. If no references are used in Section 5, state “none”.

7. BIO-SKETCHES: Provide a bio-sketch for each listed investigator with a two page maximum per person. Include relevant project experience and publication citations.

8. POSSIBLE PEER REVIEWERS: Starting on a new page, list the names and affiliations of four out-of-state individuals of national standing and pertinent expertise who could provide informed peer reviews of your submission. Do *not* include individuals with whom you have worked or collaborated within the last 4 years or who would be considered to have a professional or personal conflict of interest. We may or may not use these individuals, so do not contact them yourself.

The information for Section 8 is for internal NYSG use only. Like Sections 1 through 7, omitting this section will cause your submission to lose rating points.