



CALL FOR PRELIMINARY PROPOSALS 2015-2016 LONG ISLAND SOUND RESEARCH

OPENING DATE: April 1, 2014

CLOSING DATE: June 9, 2014

Connecticut Sea Grant (CTSG) and New York Sea Grant (NYSG) announce the Long Island Sound Study (LISS) extra-mural research program. The intent of this program is to fund research that will support the management of Long Island Sound (LIS) and its resources. The LISS is a regional, community-based partnership to protect and restore LIS. Information on the LISS can be obtained at www.longislandsoundstudy.net. **NOTE** that the emphases, approach, and funding levels for this cycle of the LISS Research Grant Program differ from prior years. Respondents are urged to read the Call carefully.

Preliminary proposals are invited for the funding period of March 1, 2015 to February 28, 2017. Any investigator seeking support for this period (or portion thereof) must submit a preliminary proposal via NYSG's electronic submission web site www.NYSGproposal.org for receipt by **5:00 p.m. EDT on Monday June 9, 2014**. Hard copy, email, and fax submissions will NOT be accepted. Approximately \$760,000 in funding is expected to be available. The first year of the funding period covered by this Call for Preliminary Proposals begins on March 1, 2015. Allocation of Year 2 funds will be contingent on satisfactory progress in Year 1.

1. Topic Areas

With the recent publication of the Long Island Sound Study's synthesis book entitled *Long Island Sound: Prospects for the Urban Sea* (Latimer *et al.* 2014), several science gaps that hinder management and priority research needs were identified. On the basis of these, and preliminary feedback regarding revision of the Long Island Sound Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan, four topic areas were selected for this Call in consultation with the LISS Science and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC).

As a result, the purpose of this Call is to *support research that will produce and integrate information to fill these identified gaps in our understanding and extend the ability of managers to make informed decisions and take appropriate management actions in order to prevent, reduce, or mitigate anthropogenic stressors and enhance the health and sustainability of the Sound.*

Preliminary proposals (i.e., pre-proposals) in any of the four **Topic Areas** listed below are invited in this funding cycle:

1. Research examining the impact of nutrient reductions on hypoxia in LIS.

Example topics include, but are not limited to:

- a. Sediment nutrient flux measurements, with the goal of trying to determine if these parameters are changing as was observed in Narragansett Bay and Massachusetts Bay, in response to nutrient loading decreases;
- b. Modeling work that builds on our existing investments and improves our ability to understand the impacts of alternative management strategies on hypoxia;
- c. Improved understanding of changes in primary productivity.

2. Research improving our understanding of ecosystem services provided by LIS habitats such as eelgrass and saltmarsh, how these systems respond to climate and anthropogenic change, and/or contributing to our ability to restore these critical habitats.

Example topics include, but are not limited to:

- a. Valuation of the effectiveness of various tidal marsh restoration techniques with regard to successfully building marsh elevation/coping with marsh migration, supporting flora and fauna and providing ecosystem services;
- b. Improved understanding of the impact of climate change and human activity on bait/forage fish populations that serve as the base of the food chain for birds and commercially and recreationally valuable fish species.

3. Synthesis or modeling that contributes directly to our ability to understand and manage anthropogenic perturbations to LIS.

Example topics include, but are not limited to:

- a. Modeling work that improves our ability to understand the impacts of changing ecology and phenology on LIS;
- b. Synthetic work combining datasets to test novel hypotheses.

4. Research that improves understanding and management of the sources and relative loads of sediments, nutrients, and contaminants into LIS.

Example topics include, but are not limited to:

- a. Work facilitating better estimates and/or better partitioning of nonpoint source nutrient and contaminant loadings contributing to water quality impairments;
- b. Identifying sources and sinks of sediments and associated contaminants that contribute to the need for dredging to maintain navigational channels.

Applicants must specify which Topic Area or Areas (1, 2, 3, and/or 4) their pre-proposal addresses. **Applicants must clearly identify and provide specific examples of how their research projects can inform management decisions and help to address impairments to LIS. Submissions merely stating, in general, that “there will be value” of the information generated from the proposed research will not be sufficiently compelling.**

2. Duration and Funding

The program anticipates awarding approximately \$760,000 to cover the entire duration of all selected projects. Projects may extend for two years, but projects of shorter duration are also welcome. **The maximum amount of funding available per project is \$300,000 and this must include all direct plus indirect costs.** Proposals that exceed this amount will be discarded without review. Matching funds (from state, private, or any non-federal sources) are desirable, but are not required. Projects with total budgets significantly lower than the \$300K cap are strongly encouraged.

3. Eligibility

Pre-proposals from the following eligible categories will be considered for funding:

- A. Faculty at universities and colleges,
- B. Researchers at not-for-profit institutions,
- C. Researchers who are personnel of state or local agencies, and
- D. Researchers at for-profit institutions or companies.

Eligibility is not limited to individuals from New York and Connecticut. However, the primary professional base of the lead investigator must be in the United States. U.S. citizens located in other countries are not eligible. Federal employees and institutions are not eligible to receive compensation, equipment, or budgeted items of any sort, but they may be involved with the project. Students and NYSG and CTSG staff cannot serve as Principal Investigators, co- PIs, or Associate Investigators.

4. Review

All pre-proposals that meet all of the specified requirements will be screened by a Panel established by CTSG and NYSG that will include scientific peers from unaffiliated institutions and one representative each from CTSG, NYSG, EPA, NYSDEC and CTDEEP. The Panel will use the following criteria, scoring, and weighting in rating pre-proposals:

- A. Likelihood that the project will be successful in fulfilling its objectives (0-5) 30%
- B. Rationale and responsiveness to the Topic Areas identified in the Call (0-5) 30%
- C. Usefulness of the anticipated results, as described in the submission, to inform and direct management of LIS and its resources (0-5) 40%

Pre-proposals with an average score of 2 or less in **any** of the three criteria (A, B, or C) will result in that submission being considered “out” of the competition. The remaining pre-proposals will be ranked on their average total scores.

Each lead investigator will receive a summary of the Panel scores for his/her pre-proposal. Full proposals will be encouraged only from those prospective principal investigators with the highest-ranked preliminary proposals. The estimated pool for funding is \$760,000 but note that there is no *a priori* projection or target for the number of proposals that will ultimately be supported. Instructions for full proposal submissions will be provided to the PIs for those full proposals which are encouraged.

5. Preliminary Proposal Requirements

A preliminary proposal, while not as detailed as a full proposal, should clearly and succinctly define the objectives, approach, and rationale for the project. The anticipated benefits (i.e., the usefulness) of the proposed work must also be described, that is, specifically how the proposed work will enhance understanding and management of Long Island Sound. **General**

statements simply expressing that there will be value in the information generated from the proposed research will not be sufficiently compelling.

Pre-proposals requesting funding that is complementary to that sought from other sponsors are welcome. In this case, other funding sources and amounts should be disclosed, and work being funded or proposed elsewhere should be distinguished from, and not duplicative of, work proposed under this Call.

All preliminary proposals must be submitted using the format and categories described at the end of this announcement. No appendices or other attachments are permitted. Investigators should ensure that all information is provided and that pre-proposal components follow the specified format.

The preliminary proposal project description must conform to stated page limitations, including minimum 1-inch margins and 12-point font of Times New Roman or equivalent. Illustrations and tables must be of legible size, and are *included* in the page limitation. References cited may be included as a separate section, *in addition* to stated page limits.

The completed Pre-proposal Submission Form (see end of this announcement) must be received via www.NYSGproposal.org as a single pdf by the closing **deadline of 5:00 p.m. EDT on June 9, 2014**. Please note that, although the submissions are to NYSG's web site, this is a jointly administered funding opportunity and all the submissions will be processed by both programs, CTSG and NYSG, as a single pool. *Preliminary proposals that are not received by this deadline will be discarded without review, as will preliminary proposals that fail to comply with content, format, budget, and other requirements. Note that submissions with sections that exceed specified page limitations will be rejected, not truncated.* We want all submissions to have a fair and equal opportunity, so please be sure to carefully follow the instructions. Unless required by your institution, it is not necessary for your University (or institution) sponsored programs office to formally approve your preliminary proposal prior to submission.

Each lead applicant will be notified by July 21, 2014, about whether or not a full proposal is encouraged. A summary of Panel results will be provided by August 8, 2014. Note that submission of full proposals will only be encouraged for those prospective principal investigators with the highest-ranked preliminary proposals following the Panel review and evaluation. For those investigators invited to submit full proposals, the deadline for these full proposals is October 1, 2014 at 5:00 p.m. EDT.

The total budget request for a project may not exceed \$300,000 for the entire project, including all direct and indirect costs. Matching funds (from state or private sources) may be included, but are **not** required.

Please double-check your Pre-proposal Submission Form file before uploading at the submission web site www.NYSGproposal.org to make sure it is a PC-readable pdf and that it is your final version. ***Warning!!*** **Do not wait until just before the deadline** in case you encounter technical difficulties with your computer or unexpected network issues. For best results, it is recommended that you use your office computer at your institution to submit your

pre-proposal. Allowing yourself plenty of time (at least several hours, if not days) to submit is highly recommended. Sending a test submission is allowable, if you identify it as such. You will receive an auto-receipt with a time and date stamp from the web site confirming your submission, but this is not an indication that your file is readable. If the file contains a virus or is unreadable, your submission cannot be accepted.

6. Schedule

- April 1, 2014 -- Sea Grant announces Call for Pre-proposals
- June 9 -- Pre-proposals are due by 5:00 p.m. EDT via www.NYSGproposal.org
- July 21 -- Sea Grant notifies authors about whether or not a full proposal is encouraged
- August 8 -- Sea Grant distributes to all lead investigators a summary of Pre-proposal Review Panel results for his/her submission
- October 1 -- Full proposals are due by 5:00 p.m. EDT via www.NYSGproposal.org
- December 22 -- Sea Grant notifies authors about decisions, providing peer reviews and a summary of Full Proposal Review Panel results
- March 1, 2015 -- Year 1 funding starts
- March 1, 2016 -- Year 2 funding starts, if Year 1 progress is satisfactory

7. If you have questions, contact:

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PRE-PROPOSAL SUBMISSION FORM – INSTRUCTIONS

Please be sure to use the format and provide the information as described below. Submissions that do not include the required sections and information will be rejected as incomplete. Likewise, submissions that do not follow the specified instructions below or as indicated elsewhere in the Call will also be rejected as not meeting the submission requirements.

2015-2016 LONG ISLAND SOUND RESEARCH PRE-PROPOSAL

1. **LAST NAMES OF PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS:** (e.g., Smith / Doe / Jones)
2. **BRIEF PROJECT TITLE:**
3. **INVESTIGATOR(S) and ELIGIBILITY:** List **all** principal, co-principal, and associate investigators, including name, address, telephone, and email for each. *Also* indicate eligibility category for each (see Section 3 and specify A, B, C, or D).
4. **PROJECT TOPIC AREA(s):** Specify by number (1, 2, 3, or 4) the Topic Area or Areas listed in Section 1 of the Call that the pre-proposal addresses.
5. **BUDGET:** Total of direct plus indirect costs (\$300,000 max).
 - A. **Estimated Funding Request** \$ _____
 - B. **Anticipated Non-Federal Cost-Share to be Provided (if any)** \$ _____
 - C. **Expected Source(s) of Cost-Share (if any):**
6. **BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT:** Starting on a *new* page, use up to two pages of text with the following a-c headings to describe your proposed project. Use all-around margins of at least 1” and a font size no less than #12 Times New Roman or equivalent.
 - a) **OBJECTIVES and APPROACH:** List the overall objectives of your proposed study, with a statement of the hypothesis(es) to be tested. Or, if this is model development or a synthesis effort, clearly state the intent. Include brief information about the approach to be used and whether there are linkages to other past, current, or proposed efforts.
 - b) **RATIONALE, and RESPONSIVENESS TO THE TOPIC AREA:** Explain the rationale for, and significance of, the proposed project to Long Island Sound in addressing the Topic Area(s) you have identified above in #4.
 - c) **USEFULNESS OF THE ANTICIPATED RESULTS TO MANAGEMENT:** Explain how the research and anticipated results can be used to inform and direct management of Long Island Sound and its resources. It is up to the pre-proposal to provide specific examples.
7. **LITERATURE CITED:** Present the full citations for any work referenced under #6, where they may be labeled as (1), etc. The space required to list the literature cited is not

counted under the 2-page maximum for #6 (Brief Description of Project).

8. REVIEWERS: You are invited to list three potential peer reviewers who would not have a conflict of interest with you, your team, or your institution, in case you are encouraged to submit a full proposal. We may or may not use these peers, so there is no need for you to contact them. If there is anyone who you feel should *not* be asked to provide a review, you may list up to two people and we will do our best to accommodate this request. Leaving Section 8 blank is acceptable.