

Sea Grant Funding Tools and Abilities, including Passthrough funding

Created by Kola Garber, last updated 5/14/2021

Nikola.garber@noaa.gov; Cell: 202-669-3552

Per Sea Grant's authorizing legislation, Sea Grant's mission is to enhance the practical use and conservation of coastal, marine and Great Lakes resources in order to create a sustainable economy and environment.

Types of funding instruments / definitions (from NOAA AGO):

Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreement Act, 31 U.S.C. §§ 6301- 6308: Establishes the legal instruments to use to reflect particular relationships between the United States Government and a State, local government, or another recipient, based on the principal purpose.

- **Procurement Contract:** Use when the principal purpose of the instrument is to acquire (by purchase, lease, or barter) property or services for the direct benefit or use of the United States Government.
- **Grant:** Use when the principal purpose of the relationship is to transfer a thing of value to the recipient to carry out a public purpose of support or stimulation authorized by a law of the United States, and substantial involvement is not expected between the executive agency and the recipient carrying out the activity in the agreement.
- **Cooperative Agreement:** Use when the principal purpose of the relationship is the same as a grant, but substantial involvement is expected between the executive agency and the recipient carrying out the activity in the agreement.

Ways to utilize the Sea Grant infrastructure with other funding:

- Utilizes the Sea Grant legislation or the authority of the other party to process a Grant, Cooperative Agreement or IPA (Intergovernmental Personnel Act). Sea Grant rarely utilizes contracts.
- Funds are BOP'ed (NOAA funding) or IAA signed (other agencies)
 - Note: Sea Grant's legislation allows us to accept funds from any party (including outside the Government) to further the Sea Grant Mission
 - Timeframe to on the ground work / research varies with need and mechanism.
- Match ONLY if required by the funding utilized.
 - I.e., 50% match on Sea Grant funds required by law
 - No match needed if other funding doesn't require it
- 90 day pre-award spending allowed by Sea Grant Programs
- Awards can be up to 5-6 years
- Mechanisms to move the funding:

- Institutional - funding will help the State Sea Grant Program address State Program's Strategic Plan - which in turn supports OAR, NOAA, and DOC's strategic plans.
 - Can be done quickly
 - Used for Rapid Response funds after disasters
- Competitive / meritorious - funding is competed:
 - If only Sea Grant Programs - can shorten application process utilizing the Sea Grant Special Project Portal (30 days to apply)
 - Any applicant - competition is open to any applicant or a new Notice of Funding Opportunity (at least 60 days to apply)
- Non-competitive
 - Only one applicant can do the activity so an award is made to that entity - needs justification

What does Sea Grant do for and with other parts of NOAA / other agencies?

- Extension
 - Boots on the ground that are: Non-advocacy (presents alternatives and enables all viewpoints); University-based educators (no regulatory function); Connected to key coastal clientele (trust developed through over 50-year history); Flexible programming (responsive to local user needs)
 - I.e., after Hurricane Katrina, NMFS funded a previously well ranked (not selected) application for a Vietnamese extension agent in the Gulf of Mexico;
- Legal expertise to provide information to states, local governments, regional entities
- Rapid response to address impacts and immediate research and extension needs following natural and/or man-made disasters
- Research (short and long term and in partnership with others)
- Manage competitions with other entities funding or a mix of funds (i.e., one competition was funded by small pots of funds from NOS, NWS, NESIDS, OAR, NMFS to fund a NOAA priority of Sentinel site coordinators).

What does Sea Grant not do?

- Sea Grant rarely utilizes contracts to move funds
- Sea Grant does not enforce or make regulations