



Fisheries Innovation Fund

2015 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Pre-Proposal Due Date: **December 19th 2014, by 11:59 PM Eastern Time**

Full Proposal Due Date: **February 26th 2015, by 11:59 PM Eastern Time**

OVERVIEW

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) will award grants to foster innovation and support effective participation of fishermen and fishing communities in the implementation of sustainable fisheries in the US. We anticipate awarding \$1.16 million through this solicitation and up to 40% of the funding will be prioritized for eligible projects in the New England Groundfish fishery.

Successful proposals will develop innovative approaches to:

- I. Build capacity of fishing businesses and communities to improve their sustainability and access additional forms of financing (loans and equity).
- II. Support full utilization of Annual Catch Limits and minimize bycatch of overfished and endangered, threatened, and candidate species.
- III. Improve the quality, quantity and timeliness of fisheries-dependent data used for science, management and fishermen's business purposes.

The Fisheries Innovation Fund was created through a partnership with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), with additional support from the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation and the Walton Family Foundation.

Background

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit that preserves and restores our nation's native wildlife species and habitats. Created by Congress in 1984, NFWF establishes partnerships to invest public conservation dollars matched with private funds in the most pressing environmental needs. NFWF has a long and successful history of working with NOAA to establish public-private partnerships to support the agency's conservation priorities.

Sustainable Fisheries are one of NOAA's top priorities. The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Reauthorization Act of 2006 (Magnuson Act) included provisions to help rebuild overfished stocks; sustain fishermen, communities and vibrant working waterfronts; and promote safety, fishery conservation and management, and social and economic benefits. The Fisheries Innovation Fund is a public-private partnership that seeks to support fishermen and communities as they work to meet the sustainable fisheries goals of the Magnuson Act.

This is the fifth funding opportunity of the Fisheries Innovation Fund, and will consider applications from all US fisheries, commercial or recreational, looking to foster innovation as they strive to achieve sustainability.

PROGRAM PRIORITIES

Proposals submitted to the Fisheries Innovation Fund should address one of the following:

1. Innovations in Capacity Building:

- a. Build the capacity of individual fishermen and/or sectors to improve the economic viability and efficiency of fishing businesses. This may include helping fishermen diversify to generate smoother, more stable incomes over the short and the long term¹; requests for support to access technical assistance and business planning expertise will also be considered.
- b. Projects to assist and support the participation of fishing communities in the establishment of Regional Fishing Associations (as defined by the Magnuson Act), community trusts, community supported fishing associations, or permit banks to help retain access to fisheries resources by fishermen in local communities.
- c. Development and submission of community sustainability plans, as well as development of business plans that support the financial viability of communities. Creation of fishery conservation networks to serve as organizing vehicles for sharing information among fishermen, fishing communities, scientists and others.
- d. Development of viable processes to promote inter-generational fishery access, and entry level access into the fishery.

2. Innovative Bycatch Reduction Initiatives: Projects that enhance the opportunity for fishermen to fully access Annual Catch Limits through innovative gear modifications or fish handling practices that increase fish survivability, and other approaches such as bycatch hotspot mapping or risk

¹ These priorities for New England were informed by the report: Future of Fish and Neel Inamdar. 2014. "Building A Sustainable Value Chain for New England Groundfish: Finance Needs and Opportunities for Investment." http://futureoffish.org/sites/default/files/docs/resources/Full_Report_FoF-Inamdar_NE_Groundfish_June2014.pdf
http://futureoffish.org/sites/default/files/docs/resources/TwoPager_FoF-Inamdar_NE_Groundfish_June2014_0.pdf.

pooling that increase species selectivity while reducing impacts on protected, overfished and non-target species and on habitats.

3. Support Market Development and Differentiation: This may include projects to develop or strengthen Community Supported Fisheries or other market development mechanisms. It may also include projects that facilitate market innovations like forward contracting marketplaces.²

4. Innovations in Monitoring and Evaluation:

- a. Projects that improve monitoring and evaluation of fisheries and promote adoption of monitoring innovations including, but not limited to: enhancements in observer coverage, new tools to assist in gathering data, and implementation of electronic monitoring in fisheries.
- b. Improving the traceability of fish in the supply chain so new markets can be explored.

5. Innovations in Recreational Fisheries:

- a. Projects to improve monitoring and evaluation that are consistent with the priorities of, and that complement research projects of, the NOAA Fisheries Marine Recreational Improvement Program (<http://www.countmyfish.noaa.gov/index.html>) including, but not limited to: innovative dockside surveying methods, development/implementation of electronic applications and data collection tools, and other mechanisms to assist in gathering data.
- b. Other innovations to address current needs as identified by the recreational sector through the NOAA Fisheries Recreational Fishing Action Agendas, (http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/management/recreational/2014_action_agendas.html) including but not limited to: studies that quantify recreational release mortality rates and the effects of conservation-based methods to reduce release mortality through improved catching, handling and release techniques (e.g. barotrauma research).

ELIGIBILITY

• Eligible and Ineligible Entities

- ✓ Eligible applicants include non-profit 501(c) organizations, state government agencies, local governments, municipal governments, Indian tribes, educational institutions, businesses, unincorporated individuals, international organizations.

² These priorities for New England were informed by the report: Future of Fish and Neel Inamdar. 2014. "Building A Sustainable Value Chain for New England Groundfish: Finance Needs and Opportunities for Investment." http://futureoffish.org/sites/default/files/docs/resources/Full_Report_FoF-Inamdar_NE_Groundfish_June2014.pdf http://futureoffish.org/sites/default/files/docs/resources/TwoPager_FoF-Inamdar_NE_Groundfish_June2014_0.pdf.

- × Ineligible applicants include U.S. Federal government agencies
- **Ineligible Uses of Grant Funds**
 - × NFWF funds and matching contributions may not be used to support political advocacy, fundraising, lobbying, litigation, terrorist activities or Foreign Corrupt Practices Act violations.
 - × NFWF funds may not be used to support ongoing efforts to comply with legal requirements, including permit conditions, mitigation and settlement agreements. However, grant funds may be used to support projects that enhance or improve upon existing baseline compliance efforts.

FUNDING AVAILABILITY

The Fisheries Innovation Fund (FIF) will award approximately \$1.16 million in grants for the 2015 funding cycle. The majority of awards under this program will fall in the range of \$50,000 to \$200,000. However, upper or lower limits to award size are not specified. Matching contributions (both cash and in-kind) are preferred but not required. However, applicants are encouraged to seek out matching funds because these grant proposals may be more competitive. Applicants will be prompted to include information on other sources of funding for the project in the application section entitled “Matching Contributions.” Project periods may run for up to two years.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

All proposals will be screened for relevance, accuracy, completeness and compliance with NFWF and funding source policies. Proposals will then be evaluated based on the extent to which they meet the following criteria.

Criteria:

Technical Merit – Project is technically sound and feasible, and the proposal sets forth a clear, logical and achievable work plan and timeline. Project engages appropriate technical experts throughout project planning, design and implementation to ensure activities are technically-sound and feasible.

Budget – Costs are allowable, reasonable and budgeted in accordance with NFWF’s [Detailed Budget Instructions](#) cost categories. Federally-funded projects must be in compliance with OMB Cost Allowability Circulars as applicable (www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars_default).

Partnership – An appropriate partnership exists to implement the project and the project is supported by a strong local partnership that leverages additional funds and will sustain it after the life of the grant.

Funding Need – Project establishes a clear need for the funds being requested, and demonstrates that activities would not move forward absent funding.

Monitoring – Project includes a plan for monitoring progress during and after the proposed project period to track project success and adaptively address new challenges and opportunities as they arise.

TIMELINE

Dates of activities are subject to change. Please check the Program page of the NFWF website for the most current dates and information (www.nfwf.org/fisheriesfund).

✓ Pre-Proposal Due Date	<i>December 19th, 2014, EST</i>
✓ Invitations for Full Proposals Sent	<i>January 30th, 2014 EST</i>
✓ Full Proposal Due Date	<i>February 26th, 2014 EST</i>
✓ Awards Announced	<i>April 30th, 2014 EST</i>

HOW TO APPLY

All application materials must be submitted online through National Fish and Wildlife Foundation’s Easygrants system.

1. Go to www.nfwf.org/easygrants to register in our Easygrants online system. New users to the system will be prompted to register before starting the application (if you already are a registered user, use your existing login). Enter your applicant information.
2. Once on your homepage, click the “Apply for Funding” button and select this RFP’s “Funding Opportunity” from the list of options.
3. Follow the instructions in Easygrants to complete your application. Once as application has been started, it may be saved and returned to at a later time for completion and submission.

APPLICATION ASSISTANCE

A *Tip Sheet* is available for quick reference while you are working through your application. This document can be downloaded at www.nfwf.org/fisheriesfund. Additional information to support the application process can be accessed on the NFWF website’s “Applicant Information” page (<http://www.nfwf.org/whatwedo/grants/applicants/Pages/home.aspx>).

For more information or questions about this RFP, please contact:

Kristen Byler
Kristen.Byler@nfwf.org
(202) 595-2445

For issues or assistance with our online Easygrants system, please contact:

Easygrants Helpdesk
Email: Easygrants@nfwf.org
Voicemail: 202-595-2497

Hours: 9:00 am to 5:00 pm ET, Monday-Friday.

Include: your name, proposal ID #, e-mail address, phone number, program you are applying to, and a description of the issue.