



Request for Proposals for Partnered Fellowship Research Projects on Coastal Adaptation and Resilience in the Lake Champlain Basin 2023–2025

Timeline

- Proposals are due Friday, June 30, 2023, to seagrant@uvm.edu.
- Expected project duration is August 1, 2023–July 31, 2025

Opportunity Summary

Lake Champlain Sea Grant (LCSG) requests proposals from partners in the Lake Champlain basin to co-support one two-year research fellowship that will create new scientific knowledge via research in coastal adaptation and resilience in the Lake Champlain basin and provide early-career training experiences for a recent graduate.

LCSG and the partner organization/s will share costs for the fellowship project. LCSG will provide up to \$30,000 per year for two years with federal funding from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), contingent upon receipt of funds from NOAA. Partner organizations will commit at least an equal amount of non-federal funding to support the fellowship project; these funds will be considered non-federal match on LCSG federal funds.

Coastal Adaptation and Resilience Research Topic

All proposals must generate new knowledge in the area of coastal adaptation and resilience in the Lake Champlain basin. Communities and land along waterways in the Lake Champlain basin are considered coastal. Generating new knowledge includes development and use of tools and strategies, monitoring, and assessment of current or new activities or efforts related to weather and climate. The proposal should identify and describe a specific audience (communities, decision-makers, etc.) and include anticipated outcomes for that audience. To the extent possible, the project should focus on adaptation and resilience of communities most at-risk for natural disasters and chronic events, with a priority given to challenges faced by tribal, indigenous, remote, and/or economically disadvantaged communities. All research should be responsive to local, state, and/or regional needs. For more information, please read about LCSG's focus on resilient communities and economies in [LCSG's 2024–2028 Strategic Plan](#).

Particular care should be taken to describe how the fellowship project will provide both a *research* and *training* opportunity that align with the goals of this request *and the* goals and interests of the partner organization.

Eligibility

Proposals are welcome from non-profit organizations, businesses, government agencies, or institutions of higher education in the New York or Vermont portions of the Lake Champlain basin. Organizations representing diverse ways of knowing, perspectives, and audiences are encouraged to apply. Multiple organizations may apply collaboratively.

It is expected that the fellow will be a recent graduate and add capacity to the partner organization.

Expectations for Collaboration

Leaders of the partnered fellowship research project will ensure that the fellow is selected in a fair and transparent process. LCSG and the partner will collaborate to facilitate a competitive selection process for the fellow. The fellow may be employed either through UVM or the partner organization, to be determined based on the proposal and the agreed-upon scope of work and workplan.

Fellows will benefit from professional development opportunities through LCSG, tapping into the rich collection of resources available at the University of Vermont, SUNY-Plattsburgh, and Sea Grant networks, along with those of local, state, regional, and federal agencies and organizations. Fellows are expected to participate in monthly LCSG staff meetings, annual retreats, and other staff initiatives; share monthly updates and have quarterly check-in meetings with a designated member of the LCSG staff; contribute to bi-annual reporting to NOAA; and collaborate with communications staff to disseminate information related to Lake Champlain environment and economies, particularly around their research.

All research fellowships must follow [LCSG's data management and sharing plan and policy](#) and have or be able to secure any permits and permissions necessary to conduct research via local government and federal authorities (for example, following the National Environmental Policy Act.) LCSG will assist with identifying and following relevant policies and forms after this competition is decided.

The National Sea Grant College Program champions diversity, equity, inclusion, justice, and accessibility (DEIJA) by recruiting, retaining, and preparing a diverse workforce and proactively engaging and serving the diverse populations of coastal communities. Sea Grant is committed to building inclusive research, extension, communication, and education programs that serve people with unique backgrounds, circumstances, needs, perspectives, and ways of thinking. We encourage applicants of all ages, races, ethnicities, national origins, colors, gender identities, sexual orientations, disabilities, cultures, religions, citizenship types, marital statuses, educational levels, job classifications, veteran status types, and income and socioeconomic status types to apply for this competitive opportunity.

Application Instructions

Narrative and budget proposals are due to seagrant@uvm.edu by June 30, 2023.

Proposal narrative. The narrative should be a maximum of five pages, with one-inch margins and eleven-point font. It should include the following information:

1. **Project title; Project leader name, title, affiliation, and contact information.** Project titles may be shared with NOAA and/or Congress, so please use professional, clear, concise, and informative language and avoid acronyms or shorthand language.
2. **Background.** Describe the specific problem the proposed fellowship research project will address and justify the importance of this problem.
3. **Project Objectives.** State the key questions or testable hypothesis that will be the focus of the project. Provide a list of clearly defined objectives. For each objective, provide a concise statement explaining how it is aligned with the coastal adaptation and resilience in the Lake Champlain basin. Describe who

needs the information that will be created by the fellowship project.

4. **Project Details.** Provide an explanation of the methods you will use to address your project objectives. Include the recruitment plan for the early-career fellow and a basic workplan including both research and career-development activities. (See also timeline below.) Clearly identify research-users, partners, and specific communities involved and their roles. Explicitly explain how this project leverages the expertise of your organization and partners and adds capacity in the area of adaptation and resilience.
5. **Anticipated Outcomes and Results.** List expected deliverables and outcomes related to the creation of adaptation and resilience knowledge, tools, and strategies and to the fellow's career development. Explain how the research outcomes will benefit the audience and meet current and future local, state, and/or regional needs.
6. **Project Timeline.** Please provide a timeline for accomplishing the proposed work, which covers the entire duration of the project. Include approximate dates for key milestones related to the proposed work, including the accomplishment of anticipated outcomes and release of deliverables.
7. **Diversity Statement.** (Not included in the page limit.) As relevant, describe how the proposed work broadens the participation of underrepresented groups (e.g., race/ethnicity, gender identities, sexual orientation, disability, geography, etc.) and how they benefit from its outcome.
8. **Works Cited.** (Not included in the page limit.)
9. **CVs or Resumés.** For project leader/s only. (Two-pages max each, not included in the page limit.)
10. **Letters of Support.** Optional.

Budget narrative (not included in page limit)

1. An annual line-item budget for both federal and non-federal match for both years of the project.
2. A budget justification with a short narrative that explains federal and match budget items for each year of the project in sufficient detail to enable review of the appropriateness of the funding requested.

Review Process and Criteria

All applications received will be reviewed in accordance with the National Sea Grant Competition Policy and [LCSG's Competition Policy](#). All reviewers will abide by the LCSG confidentiality and conflict of interest policies and will be encouraged to watch a bias awareness video and review other anti-discrimination resources prior to conducting the review.

The **review process** consists of:

- Three professionals external to LCSG will provide written reviews regarding technical merit, relevance, and fundability according to criteria described below.
- A *panel composed of partners and advisors* who are familiar with research needs relevant to the Lake Champlain basin will be convened if there is a sufficient number of proposals that they cannot all be reviewed by the same reviewers. The panel will comment on the fundability of all proposals and rank proposals recommended for funding.
- The LCSG Director will recommend proposals to the National Sea Grant Office (NSGO) to fund. The director will endeavor to follow the recommendations of review panel but has authority to make final decisions that, in their opinion, best serve the strategic interest of the program and its partners, including geographic diversity and meeting match requirements.
- The NSGO will review and make a final determination.
- LCSG will notify all applicants of the recommendations regarding their proposals and provide anonymized reviews.
- LCSG will work with the selected proposal partners to complete the budget in NOAA-required format, confirm a data management plan (or concurrence with the LCSG plan), confirm environmental compliance, and prepare for institutional review board approvals (if needed).

Review Criteria

External technical experts will comment on the strengths and weaknesses of proposals as a whole and score proposals using the following equally weighted criteria:

- The proposal addresses a critical gap in coastal adaptation and resilience research, management, or action in the Lake Champlain basin.
- The proposed approach/methods are scientifically valid.
- The deliverables and outcomes will meet a need for coastal adaptation and resilience knowledge, tools, and strategies in the Lake Champlain basin.
- The early-career fellow is likely to achieve anticipated learning, skills, or career outcomes as a result of the proposed activities.
- Opportunities to promote diversity, inclusion, equity, justice, and accessibility are addressed.

The scale used for scoring will be Excellent, Very Good, Acceptable, Poor. Insufficient Information will be given a score of Poor.

Contact

Please send any questions to Research Coordinator Julianna White at julianna.m.white@uvm.edu or call her at 1-802-777-7017.