

California Sea Grant College Program Proposal Review Process

The California Sea Grant College Program solicits proposals for a variety of funding opportunities. The process described below is for submission to the annual omnibus competition. In addition to the omnibus competition, the program administers National Sea Grant College competitions that include a variety of fellowships, National Strategic Investments, and special one-time funding opportunities; the process described below does not pertain to these other special competitions.

Each year a call for preliminary project proposals is widely distributed throughout California. On average, of the nearly 100 preliminary proposals received annually, 40% advance to the full proposal stage, of which one third are approved for funding.

The Resources Agency Sea Grant Advisory Panel (RASGAP) conducts the initial review of preliminary proposals. Input from RASGAP is directed toward identifying and meeting priorities for state funding according to the needs identified in the document entitled "Summary of California Ocean Management Research Needs" located on the California Sea Grant website (<http://www.csgc.ucsd.edu>).

A subcommittee of the California Sea Grant Advisory Board made up of stakeholders and user groups, as well as the California Sea Grant Advisors, review the preliminary proposals for potential application to California's problems and opportunities in coastal/marine science, education, and outreach.

The California Sea Grant Committee, comprised of academic scientists with expertise in the areas funded by the program, conducts the second review of preliminary proposals. At this stage, screening is based on the project's innovative approach, uniqueness of the idea, importance and appropriateness to Sea Grant. Each proposal is considered on its own merits without regard for campus or institutional affiliation. Full proposals are requested on those topics that rate highly on these criteria.

Declined preliminary proposals may be appealed in writing to the Director of California Sea Grant. Appeal letters must reach the California Sea Grant office by May 27, 2005.

Full proposals are mailed to external merit reviewers. The California Sea Grant Committee meets a second time to evaluate full proposals with the benefit of the written merit reviews. Criteria for selection at this step include: (1) rationale; (2) scientific merit and impact or outreach quality; (3) innovativeness; (4) programmatic justification; (5) practical impact and user relationships; (6) relationship to Sea Grant priorities; and (7) qualifications and past record of investigators or past record of program components. Merit reviews, user collaboration, expected impact (scientific and practical), and letters of support from potential users help determine whether these criteria are met.

When all the input from the external merit reviewers, the California Sea Grant Committee, and RASGAP is received, the California Sea Grant Management Team makes the final decisions regarding approval of proposals for funding. The National Sea Grant Office is then notified of those decisions.

Proposals selected for inclusion in the institutional proposal may be returned to the authors for revision. After revisions are made, new and renewal proposals are compiled by the California Sea Grant College Program into a published institutional proposal containing project and program summaries, budget pages, full proposal narratives, curricula vitae, and letters of support. The institutional proposal, called the California Sea Grant College Program Omnibus, is submitted to the National Sea Grant College Program for funding and implementation on March 1 of the following year.

If you have any questions, or desire more information about this process, please do not hesitate to call the California Sea Grant office at (858) 534-4440.



USC Sea Grant Program Proposal Review Process

Sea Grant Advisory Council

Provides input on USC Sea Grant research priorities for the biennial Call for Proposals.

Call for Preliminary Proposals

Issued early in the year (January/February) biennially. Includes information on Sea Grant research priorities relevant to the "Urban Ocean" theme, and the State of California Resources Agency Sea Grant Advisory Panel (RASGAP) Statement of Research Needs.

RASGAP Review of Preliminary Proposals

Proposals are scored on the basis of relevance to State needs in March/April. A score of 1 indicates top priority for funding from the state, 2 and 3 are acceptable for state funding, 4 indicates the project is unacceptable for receiving funding from the state. USC Sea Grant's policy is not to fund projects that have received a RASGAP rank of 4.

Sea Grant Academic Coordinating Committee Review of Preliminary Proposals

This panel considers the quality of the science proposed and its relevance for the USC Sea Grant program theme; along with the scores from the RASGAP Review and the participation of a RASGAP member. Ranking of preliminary proposals for determining requests for full proposals.

Request for Full Proposals

The Sea Grant Director and Associate Director consider rankings provided by the Academic Coordinating Committee and RASGAP. Potential principal investigators are invited to submit full proposals and provided the full set of proposal requirements and forms.

Peer Review

Upon receipt of full proposals, requests for peer reviews are sent to reviewers, followed by phone calls to confirm that reviews will be conducted.

Technical Review

USC Sea Grant assembles a panel of Technical Reviewers, most of whom are from outside of California, or have specific expertise in areas represented in full proposals. The panel assesses the proposals, along with the set of peer reviews and ranks them in terms of scientific quality, capabilities of potential principal investigators, and relevance to USC Sea Grant priorities and issues of importance to Southern California and the nation.

RASGAP Review

Full proposals are again reviewed by the State RASGAP committee, which again ranks them with respect to State research priorities.

Funding Decisions

Funding decisions are made after consideration of all reviews and rankings, determination of funding resources and assembly of collaborative relationships and matching funds. Principal investigators are informed of decisions.