

Sea Grant Association

FY 2021 Programmatic Funding Recommendation for the National Sea Grant Program and Sea Grant Aquaculture

The National Sea Grant College Program (Sea Grant) is authorized by P.L. 89-688, the National Sea Grant College Program Act of 1966, as amended (33 USC § 1121 et seq. Sea Grant). The Sea Grant College Program Act authorizes the awarding of grants and contracts to initiate and support programs at Sea Grant colleges and other institutions for research, education, and advisory services in any field related to the conservation and development of marine resources. A joint federal, state and local investment, Sea Grant provides solutions for the issues affecting our Nation's coastal communities (including the Great Lakes, Gulf of Mexico and communities on the Atlantic, Caribbean, and Pacific coasts), yielding quantifiable economic, social, and environmental benefits.

The Sea Grant Association (SGA) recommends Congress appropriate \$82.9 million in FY 2021 for the National Sea Grant College Program and \$15 million for Sea Grant Aquaculture. The total amount recommended (\$97.9 million) is consistent with the *total* authorized in Sec. 9 in both S. 910 and H.R. 2405 for FY 2021.

In 2018, [the Sea Grant program helped generate](#) an estimated \$624 million in economic benefits; created or supported 7,621 jobs; provided 34 state-level programs with funding that assisted 269 communities improve their resilience; helped nearly 23,741 fishers adopt safe and sustainable fishing practices; helped restore an estimated 207,773 acres of coastal ecosystems; worked with about 1,300 industry and private sector, local, state and regional partners; and supported the education and training of 1,994 undergraduate and graduate students.

Sea Grant is a unique university-based program within NOAA that awards over 90% of its appropriated funds to coastal states through a competitive process to address issues identified as critical by public and private sector constituents and coastal communities throughout the United States. Sea Grant fosters cost-effective partnerships among state universities, state and local governments, NOAA, and coastal communities and businesses, leveraging nearly \$3 for every \$1 appropriated by Congress.

Increasing aquaculture production is a key priority of the Department of Commerce (DOC) and NOAA. Sea Grant is a leader in supporting aquaculture research and development which lead to jobs and increased domestic production of safe and sustainable seafood. Through its locally based research and extension programs, its national perspective, and its longstanding role in aquaculture, Sea Grant is ideally positioned to play an expanded role in the Commerce Department's focus on reducing the Nation's seafood trade deficit. Sea Grant actions carried out between February 2017 and January 2018, in sustainable fisheries resulted in thousands of fishers adopting safe and sustainable fishing practices, 2000 people trained in safe seafood handling, and 2200 seafood businesses created or sustained. Sea Grant also assisted communities strengthen their resilience. Between Feb 2016 and Jan 2017, 1000 training workshops were held to improve community resilience, 300 communities have improved their hazard resilience, and 570 communities have adopted sustainable development practices. Sea Grant is helping coastal communities in Texas, Puerto Rico, North Carolina, South Carolina, Florida and other states recover from Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, Maria, Florence, Michael, and Dorian.

RATIONALE FOR THE PROPOSED INCREASE SEA GRANT

The **coastal community resiliency** challenges we face in the coming years differ from those of the past owing largely to the **expanding coastal populations**, socio-economic transformations, advances in transportation and communications, technological advancements, and **intensifying weather and climate conditions**. **Sea level rise** is affecting millions of people and billions of dollars of infrastructure. Changing ocean and Great Lakes water temperatures are already causing

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For more information, please visit www.sga.seagrant.org or contact:

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shifts in commercial and recreational fish and shellfish populations. **Ocean acidification** is already affecting a wide range of ecosystem components in the ocean including shellfish and corals in the Pacific Northwest. Timing and intensity of extreme weather events have negative impacts on coastal communities and businesses in the Gulf and Atlantic Coasts.

The effects of all of these phenomena—and others—will become more pronounced in the future. Evolving challenges such as rising sea levels and flooding; coastal community resiliency; and integrated fisheries, aquaculture, and seafood security will be further affected by changing coastal conditions. Sea Grant is actively assisting its stakeholders in vital planning activities necessary for the implementation of successful resiliency initiatives. This involves assessing and adapting research, extension, and education capacities, not only in the biogeochemical and social sciences but also in the fields of policy and planning, to assist communities to meet changing circumstances.

Future Sea Grant opportunities include **expanding strategic partnerships** with other federal, state and local offices, agencies, and private sector partners to strengthen coastal resiliency; expanding Sea Grant’s role in shaping the future of our oceans, coasts, and Great Lakes through Sea Grant’s Network Visioning (strategic planning) process; supporting implementation of the Weather Forecast Research and Innovation Act of 2017 by informing observations and **minimizing the impacts of extreme weather and water events**; and **utilizing research, extension, and education** capacities of Sea Grant to **increase the economic contributions** of our domestic fisheries and aquaculture to reduce our seafood trade deficit.

Given these and other current and emerging coastal challenges, state-based Sea Grant programs are being asked to provide ever greater levels of assistance through research, extension, and education and outreach to assist local, state, and regional stakeholders in meeting these challenges. **To meet these growing demands, it is vital that all state-based Sea Grant programs have additional resources to strengthen their program management and outreach capacities.**

FY 2021 Programmatic Request for Sea Grant Programs

The Chairs of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees accept requests from Members and Senators for congressionally-directed spending in the annual appropriations process. We encourage Sea Grant supporters to write to their Members of Congress requesting the specifics below.

FY 2020 Appropriations Bill:	Commerce, Justice, Science Appropriations Bill
Agency:	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Account:	Operations, Research, and Facilities
Office:	Oceanic and Atmospheric Research
Program:	National Sea Grant College Program
Program:	Sea Grant Aquaculture
FY 2019 Final Appropriation:	\$68M for the National Sea Grant Program and \$12M for Sea Grant aquaculture
FY 2020 Administration Request:	\$0 – Proposed for elimination
FY 2020 House:	\$73M for the National Sea Grant Program and \$12M for Sea Grant aquaculture
FY 2020 Senate:	\$75M for the National Sea Grant Program and \$13M for Sea Grant aquaculture
FY 2020 Final Appropriation:	\$74M for the National Sea Grant Program and \$13M for Sea Grant aquaculture
FY 2021 Administration Request:	\$0 – Proposed for elimination
FY 2021 SGA Funding Request:	\$82.9M for the National Sea Grant Program and \$15M for Sea Grant aquaculture

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