

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)**  
*-- Submission Deadline -- Oct 15, 2021, 4:00pm EDT --*

**Sea Grant COVID-19 Response Funding for Municipal Shellfish Programs and Industry Support Program - Fiscal Year 2021-2022**

*MIT Sea Grant & Woods Hole Sea Grant*

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**I. Purpose and Scope**

These guidelines contain the information and forms required to apply for the COVID-19 Response Funding for Municipal Shellfish Programs and Industry Support Program, focused on supporting municipal propagation to the benefit of recreational shellfishing programs, commercial shellfish harvesters, and shellfish growers, whose operations have been impacted by Covid-19. A total of approximately \$90,000 is available for funding projects in this program. Each proposal may request up to \$10,000.

**Who we are:**

As part of National Sea Grant funding programs, MIT Sea Grant (MITSG) and Woods Hole Sea Grant (WHSG), in partnership with Cape Cod Cooperative Extension (CCCE), are sponsoring a COVID-19 Response Funding program to support municipal shellfish programs and the local shellfishing and aquaculture industries. The proposal review panel of this funding opportunity consists of representatives from MITSG, WHSG, CCCE, Mass Oyster Project (MOP), the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF), as well as additional external reviewers with relevant expertise.

**Where:**

All municipalities within the coastal communities of Massachusetts (Barnstable, Bristol, Dukes, Essex, Plymouth, Norfolk, Nantucket, and Suffolk counties) are eligible to apply to this COVID-19 Response Funding program.

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**Purpose & Goal:**

The primary goal of the COVID-19 Response Funding program is to help municipalities manage shellfish resources and assist shellfish-based communities who have been negatively impacted by the pandemic. This is in response to the issue of municipalities experiencing reduced volunteer labor, budget cuts for maintaining shellfish resources, and higher levels of shellfish harvesting activity in many cases. Municipalities may propose actions that lead to the maintenance and enhancement of municipal shellfish fishery beds and/or that support members of the shellfishing and aquaculture industries (please see Section III below: *Priorities and Eligible Activities*).

A secondary goal of this program is to gather information on the current impact or effectiveness of various shellfish enhancement strategies. Municipalities will be required to describe in their proposals, and incorporate into their work, some form of evaluation of the effectiveness of the strategies undertaken with these funds, with technical assistance and oversight from MITSG/WHSG/CCCE staff. This information will be used as a quantitative measure of enhancement in resource availability and industry health after the activity as compared to before the activity, and will be compiled, reported, and shared with awardees, fellow shellfish managers and local management groups.

**II. Eligible Applicants**

All Massachusetts Municipal Shellfish or Natural Resource Departments, or other departments/entities responsible for management of local and Commonwealth shellfish resources.

**III. Priorities and Eligible Activities**

Proposed Sea Grant-awarded funding for individual projects should not exceed \$10,000. The timeline for execution of eligible projects is Fall 2021 to June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

**Priorities**

- Alleviate ongoing COVID-19 impacts on municipally managed shellfish populations and the shellfishing community.
- Support the supply of food, jobs and the economy, as well as the cultural benefits to Massachusetts communities derived from shellfish aquaculture and natural resources.
- Gather information on the continuing impacts of COVID-19.

**Example Activities**

Examples of projects and actions that would be eligible for funding include, but are not limited to:

Shellfish Purchases

- Shellfish seed purchases to bolster municipal propagation programs.
- The purchase, and/or relay of, native shellfish species from shellfish growers or harvesters for planting in municipal propagation areas.

Hiring of commercial wild harvesters and/or commercial growers to...

- Relay product into propagation areas.
- Assist with maintenance and grow-out of town shellfish resources.
- Manage and maintain shellfish nurseries.

Other costs incurred in managing shellfish transfer or propagation efforts

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**IV. Funding and Match Requirements**

**Award amounts**

Based on the level of interest and availability of funds, MITSG/WHSG/CCCE may either award the entire requested amount, or a portion. All projects will be ranked on how they reflect the Purpose and Goals of this funding outlined above, and additional criteria listed under Section VIII - *Proposal Review Process and Evaluation*.

Duration: Unless granted special consideration, funded programs are to be structured for a period within the state/municipal fiscal 2022 year, beginning with the initiation of a contract and ending with funds utilized by June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022, and the submission of the final report and evaluation form by July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022.

**Match requirement**

Thanks to financial support by Cape Cod 5 Bank, the Massachusetts Oyster Project (MOP), and Barnstable County that will be used to cover the majority of the National Sea Grant requirement for matching funds (50% of awarded funds), proposed projects are not *required* to provide matching funds. However, the listing of town funds or in-kind services that would be used as match is still encouraged. This could be in the form of a cash match using existing town budgets, from partner entities, or in the form of in-kind services. Contributions other than cash that you apply to match the awarded grant are called “in-kind contributions” and represent the dollar value of services that will be provided toward your project. Match committed to this award cannot be used as match on another application to this RFP. *Please note that the Massachusetts Oyster Project’s match support will be applied to specific proposals. While not required, we encourage applicants interested in utilizing MOP matching funds for match, to contact Andrew Hultin (andrew@massoyster.org) to assess if the proposed project is a good fit.*

Examples of in-kind contributions include:

- Dollar value of your own staff time
- The value of volunteer time
- Use of municipal equipment, vehicles, boats

**Eligible expenses:**

Salaries, materials or expenses, which are directly applied to and necessary for achieving your proposed objectives will be considered. These can include:

- Shellfish purchases for propagation, as seed or legal sized product must be made at or below fair market value. For example, though they have varied, market prices for oysters have averaged \$0.56/piece, so a suggested price to work with might be \$0.50/piece. It is understood that market values of other species or even with oysters in different areas may be more complicated (depending on delivery method, etc.) so other prices will be considered but should be justified in the proposal and budget.
- Contract services from commercial growers or wild harvesters to aid in propagation efforts, or for other purposes – for example, relay of shellfish from one area to another
- Supplies and equipment – a maximum of 50% of the proposed budget can be applied to equipment purchases. Please provide a justification and description of how proposed equipment purchases fit within the program’s focus of supporting recovery from the effects of the pandemic.

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**V. Proposal Submission Guidelines**

- ✓ **Submission:** Proposals packages must be submitted electronically to: [badgerd@mit.edu](mailto:badgerd@mit.edu).
- ✓ **Deadline:** 4:00 pm EDT October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021  
Applications received after the submission deadline will not be considered.
- ✓ **Delivery:** Must be emailed. NO faxed or mailed applications will be accepted.
- ✓ **Format:** To apply for funding, you must use the Application Form beginning on Page 7 of this document.

**VI. Proposal Content**

The Application Form on Page 7 must be completed in its entirety. Proposals that fail to include all application elements will not be reviewed.

*Awards to proposals selected for funding will be conditional upon the completion of (1) a Data Management Plan and (2) an Environmental Compliance questionnaire for NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) compliance. Sea Grant program staff will assist in the completion of these forms, and can be done concurrently with execution of the sub-grant agreement with Barnstable County, the fiscal agent.*

**VII. Informational Webinar**

A virtual informational webinar will be offered for town officials, growers, and harvesters, outlining the goals of the program and providing an opportunity to answer questions and discuss how best to apply for and use these funds in a given area. The webinar will be led by extension staff from MITSG, WHSG, and CCCE and will be held on:

**Wednesday, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 3:30-4:30pm**  
<https://mit.zoom.us/j/96691698000>

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**VIII. Proposal Review Process and Evaluation**

Submitted proposals will be reviewed and evaluated as follows:

1. A Proposal Review Panel, consisting of representatives from MITSG, WHOISG, CCCE, MOP, and three technical experts external to these organizations, will assess applications by providing written reviews. The criteria used by all reviewers to evaluate and score the proposals are provided below. All reviewers will also determine if proposals are Fundable, Fundable with Modification, or Not Fundable. All external reviewers will be asked to complete a Conflict of Interest form prior to conducting their review.
2. The Proposal Review Panel will meet to evaluate written reviews and scores of proposals provided by the technical experts. Proposals will be selected based on technical expert score (rank order), the Panel rank order, and fundability. The Panel may also select proposals for funding out of rank order based on the following selection factors: availability of funding, geography, type of institution, type of partners. Any panel member who is identified as having a conflict of interest with a proposal will not participate in the evaluation of that proposal.

Proposals will be evaluated and scored by the Review Panel using the following criteria. Scores will reflect the applicant’s ability and effort in articulating each criterion, with zero points indicating no / very poor discussion or explanation, to the maximum points that indicate a very good discussion or thorough explanation.

<u>Criterion</u>	<u>Maximum Points</u>
Clarity of goal and objectives	10
Addresses the priorities listed on page 2	25
Strength and creativity of plans of achieving objectives	15
Number and diversity of shellfish producers and community members supported equitably	15
How proposed work will be evaluated for success	10
Ability to complete the project within stated time limits	10
Demonstration of permits in hand	5
Qualifications of project team to conduct work	5
Reasonable budget projections	5

A discussion summary of the review and evaluation of each proposal will be provided to applicants.

3. The Proposal Review Panel will make recommendations to the Directors of MITSG and WHSG and National Sea Grant Office of which projects to fund.

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**IX. Timeline and Process for Award of Grants**

- Request for Proposal Announcement           September 2021
- Informational Webinar                           September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2021
- Application Submission Deadline           October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021: 4:00 pm
- Proposal Review Panel meet                 Mid-Late October, 2021
- Grant Award Notification                    Within 3-4 weeks following submission deadline
- Sub-grant agreement & form finalization   Prior to Release of Initial Funding
- Conclude Funded Project Activity         No later than June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022
- Final Report & Evaluation Due **(required)**   July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022

**X. Funding Schedule**

75% of funds will be distributed upon award notification and receipt of a signed and fully executed contract, and the remaining 25% will be distributed upon receipt and approval of the final report and evaluation.

**XI. Contacts**

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact one of the following individuals.

Danny Badger	(617) 253-9308	badgerd@mit.edu
Harriet Booth	(508) 375-6634	harriet.booth@barnstablecounty.org
Carolina Bastidas	(617) 253-3438	bastidas@mit.edu
Joshua Reitsma	(508) 375-6950	jreitsma@barnstablecounty.org
Abigail Archer	(508) 375-6702	aarcher@barnstablecounty.org

**APPLICATION FORM**



**Sea Grant COVID-19 Response Funding for Municipal Shellfish Programs and Industry Support Program FY2021-2022**

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**How to Submit Your Application**

1. Complete this form in its entirety  
*Applications with missing components will not be considered*
2. Email to *badgerd@mit.edu*                      Subject: *SG Covid Response Application*
  1. This application form, completed
  2. Copy of any necessary permits (e.g. propagation) for proposed activity

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**Your Project Title** \_\_\_\_\_

**Applicant Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Municipality and Department** \_\_\_\_\_

**Full Mailing Address** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Email** \_\_\_\_\_                      **Phone** \_\_\_\_\_

***Budget Information***

Funds Requested	Match / In-Kind Contributions Proposed (Optional)	Total Project Budget
\$	\$	\$

***Proposed Project Summary (2 – 3 sentences encapsulating the proposed project)***

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**Proposal Information**

**Briefly describe the proposed action or project**

*Word Limit: Restricted to what fits in each box*



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**Impact**

**Please estimate the number and size of shellfish to be purchased and/or transplanted as part of the proposed activity.**

**Briefly describe how this proposed project or your funding request will enhance shellfish resources and/or aid industry members negatively impacted by COVID-19 within your community.**

**Briefly describe how you will evaluate the effectiveness of the proposed activity.**

**What will success look like?** *(Data collected could include #/size of shellfish purchased and/or planted, # recreational permits sold compared to previous years, # of active harvesters compared to previous years, a measure of enhancement of a shellfish bed after planting vs. before, etc.)*

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**Who will be involved?** *(Explain the roles and responsibilities of the collaborators/partners in this project. Note that we aim to support proposals that engage a diversity of stakeholders – types/sizes of operations, personnel from underrepresented communities, years in the industry, etc.)*

**Timeline**

Proposed start date: \_\_\_\_\_ Proposed end date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Required permits and project location**

**What areas of your town will be involved in the proposed work?**

**Does your propagation permit cover planting in those areas?**     Yes     No

**Please provide geographic coordinates of the location(s) where the proposed work will take place.** *(Rough coordinates are fine here.)*

**Please attach a copy of your propagation permit to your submission, if any shellfish planting is to be conducted with these funds. This is to ensure compliance before federal funds can be awarded.**

Attached

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**Additional information you think we need to know about your project and request**  
*(Optional)*

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**Budget with Justification**

Prepare this budget page followed by a simple justification, outlining requested expenses by major categories (supplies, hiring, equipment, etc.) This should also include any matching funds and the sources of those funds (match is optional but encouraged).

<b>Grant Funding Requested</b>		
	<b>Category or Purpose</b>	<b>Amount</b>
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		
<b>Total Request</b>		<b>\$</b>

<b>Matching Funds</b>		
<b>Category or Purpose</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Amount</b>
<b>Total Match</b>		<b>\$</b>

**APPLICATION FORM**



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**Budget Explanation/Justification**

*(please provide a brief description indicating how the requested funding will be used)*

**By typing your name in below, you are attesting that this application is accurate.**

Applicant Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_