



2026-28 Guidelines for Full Proposals

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN SEA GRANT COLLEGE PROGRAM

OVERVIEW

The University of Wisconsin Sea Grant College Program is inviting research and education project proposals for the next two-year grant period that begins on February 1, 2026. Proposals must be led by an investigator who is a faculty member or person with principal investigator status at their institution in the University of Wisconsin System or other Wisconsin college or university. To be eligible to submit a full proposal, applicants **MUST** have submitted a preproposal by the preproposal deadline. The full proposal must be submitted in accordance with the guidelines described in the following pages. All applicants are required to submit proposals via the UW Aquatic Sciences Center (administrative home of the University of Wisconsin Sea Grant College Program) online proposal submission system, eDrop. **The deadline for submission is 3 p.m. (Central Daylight Time) on Friday, May 2, 2025.** Additional supporting documents can be found at seagrant.wisc.edu/rfp.

An informational webinar for eligible prospective investigators interested in submitting full proposals will be provided on Friday, March 7, 2025, 3-4 p.m. CDT. Our staff will discuss the full proposal process and offer advice and options for incorporating outreach and education activities within research proposals. Connect via: <https://uwmadison.zoom.us/j/96250679785?pwd=6Ud0s7Y3QufBJUbulQBUXfAFdqZsOE.1> (Meeting ID: 962 5067 9785, Passcode: 040750) A recording will be available at seagrant.wisc.edu/rfp.

Please note, we encourage projects that:

- Support students in becoming strong scientists and provide opportunities to practice community engagement and actionable science.
- Engage communities and partners throughout all phases of a research study, including the preproposal stage when defining the question to be addressed.
- Connect with our Sea Grant outreach and communications staff to increase relevance and exposure of the work to relevant audiences.
- Incorporate the ideals of justice, equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility.¹

TIME FRAME

Projects will normally begin February 1, 2026. Though funding to Wisconsin Sea Grant from

¹ Note, since the initiation of this competitive process for federal funds, the President issued [Executive Order 14151](#) entitled “Ending radical and wasteful government DEI programs and preferencing.” This Executive Order may affect Wisconsin Sea Grant’s ability to consider this priority.

NOAA is on a year-by-year basis, proposals should be written to cover the entire period of time necessary to fulfill the proposed objectives (**up to two years**).

FOCUS AREAS AND ASSOCIATED BUDGET LIMITS

Annual funding limits by focus are listed below:

Wisconsin Targeted Focus Areas (\$130k/year), including:

- Justice, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility for Underserved or Underrepresented Communities²
- Organic Contaminants and Marine Debris
- Human Dimensions for the Health, Well-Being, and Sustainability of Coastal Communities and Great Lakes Ecosystems

Wisconsin Base Focus Areas (\$130k/year), including:

- Healthy Coastal Ecosystems
- Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture
- Resilient Communities and Economies

Minnesota-Wisconsin Joint Request for Proposals (\$100k/year for Minnesota team and \$100k/year for Wisconsin team)

Environmental Literacy and Workforce Development (Non-research Education Projects) (\$40k/year)

These maximum limits are on a per-year basis per proposal for up to two years. These limits include all costs (salaries, fringe benefits, tuition remission, equipment, supplies, field travel, contracts, ship time and indirect costs).

For a detailed list of priorities under each focus area, please refer to the original [Request for Proposals](#).

AVAILABLE FUNDING

Wisconsin Sea Grant expects to fund approximately 9-12 new two-year research and education projects in this omnibus grant cycle. All funding is reliant upon Wisconsin Sea Grant receiving federal funding that has not yet been appropriated. As such, funding cannot be guaranteed. All funding levels, including the maximum amount per project, the number of projects, and even some priority topics are subject to change. Applicants may be asked to revise scopes of work, start date, and budgets so that their projects align with available funding levels. Applicants should be aware that, based on past competitions, not all highly rated projects will be able to be funded.

² Note, since the initiation of this competitive process for federal funds, the President issued [Executive Order 14151](#) entitled “Ending radical and wasteful government DEI programs and preferencing.” This Executive Order may affect Wisconsin Sea Grant’s ability to consider this priority.

REVIEW PROCESS

All **research proposals** will receive at least 3 confidential external peer reviews followed by an external technical panel review. Evaluation criteria include:

1. **Rationale:** Evaluate the degree to which the project addresses an important Great Lakes-relevant issue, challenge, or opportunity and how it relates to the research priorities outlined in the [Request for Proposals](#).
2. **Scientific Merit:** Evaluate the degree to which the project will advance the state of the science or discipline using state-of-the-art methods.
3. **Clarity of Objectives/Hypothesis and Feasibility:** Are the objectives/hypothesis of the proposed research clearly presented, does the methodology/approach support the objectives, and is the project feasible as written?
4. **Qualification and Past Record of Investigators:** Evaluate the degree to which investigators are qualified by education, training, and/or experience to execute the project; record of achievement with previous funding.
5. **Anticipated Outcomes:** What are the likely outcomes or impacts (environmental, educational, social, economic, etc.) that could result from the project? Did investigators identify potential users of project results (e.g., specific businesses, industries, coastal communities, state and federal government agencies, etc.?). How are partners, communities, and populations served by the project engaged in the process and potential outcomes associated with the proposed work?
6. **Budget/Value:** Does the budget estimate seem adequate, or too high/too low? Does the project seem a good value?
7. [For proposals resulting from the **joint call with Minnesota**, the panel will also consider the regional importance of the work and how well the proposal is integrated, given researchers from different state programs. Are the WI and MN project teams complementary and is there a clear plan for ensuring collaboration throughout the project?]
8. **Overall Summary:** Please provide a brief summary of your overall evaluation of the merit of this proposal.
9. **Overall Rating:** Please indicate how you would rate this proposal ranging from Excellent (5) to Poor (1)

Environmental Literacy and Workforce Development **non-research education project proposals** will be reviewed by an external panel of experts. Evaluation criteria include:

1. **Introduction and Rationale** (6 points): Evaluate the degree to which the activity will advance environmental literacy and/or workforce development in the Great Lakes Region.
2. **Project Objectives** (6 points): Are the objectives clearly stated and is there a plan to measure project results to show that objectives have been achieved?
3. **Anticipated Outcomes** (8 points): What are the likely outcomes that could result from this project and are the participants, audiences and/or users of project results defined? Did the project address the RFP's goal of participation and engagement with the communities that call Wisconsin home?
4. **Methodology/Approach and Timeline** (10 points): Are the project tasks and deliverables clearly defined? Is there a realistic timeline? Are partnerships appropriate and well defined? Does the project incorporate relevant perspectives and approaches?
5. **Merit** (10 points): Evaluate the degree to which the proposed project addresses one or more of the priority education actions outlined on p. 23 of the [Request for Proposals](#).
6. **Budget** (6 points): Is the proposed budget appropriate? Are expenses realistically estimated?
7. **Competency of the proposing team** (6 points): Evaluate the degree to which the investigators are qualified by education, training, and/or experience to execute the proposed project.
8. **Ability to contribute to Sea Grant performance measures** (8 points): Evaluate the degree to which the proposed project will contribute to any of the following Sea Grant performance measures:

- Number of Sea Grant products that are used to advance environmental literacy and workforce development
- Number of people (youth and adults) engaged in Sea Grant-supported informal education programs
- Number of Sea Grant supported graduates who become employed in a job related to their degree within two years of graduation.
- Number of Sea Grant tools, technologies and information services that are used by our partners/customers to improve ecosystem-based management.
- Economic and societal impacts and benefits derived from Sea Grant activities (market and non-market; jobs and businesses created or sustained; patents/licenses).
- Number of volunteer hours.
- Number of postsecondary students and degrees financially supported by Sea Grant in higher education programs (undergraduate, graduate).
- Number of P-12 students who participated in Sea Grant-supported formal education programs.
- Number of P-12 students reached through Sea Grant-trained educators.
- Number of educators who participated in Sea Grant-supported professional development programs.
- Number of Sea Grant-sponsored/organized events.
- Number of attendees at Sea Grant-sponsored/organized events.
- Number of public or professional presentations.
- Number of attendees at public or professional presentation.
- Number of peer-reviewed publications produced by Sea Grant.
- Environmental Actions: Number of people participating in environmental actions through NOAA education programs (NEW; Pilot).

References:

Great Lakes Literacy Principles: <https://www.cgll.org/principles/>

Wisconsin Standards for Science (WSS) (<https://dpi.wi.gov/science/standards>) and Next Generation Science Standards (<http://www.nextgenscience.org>)

Wisconsin Standards for Environmental Literacy and Sustainability: <https://dpi.wi.gov/environmental-ed/standards>

In addition, the review process for all proposals includes input from the Wisconsin Sea Grant Advisory Council regarding relevancy of the proposed work to the Wisconsin Sea Grant strategic plan. Proposals submitted in response to the joint request for proposals with Minnesota will also receive input from Minnesota Sea Grant partners and advisors.

The Wisconsin Sea Grant leadership team will conduct a final review of the proposals and consider recommendations of the review panels. This review will be conducted jointly with Minnesota Sea Grant program for the proposals submitted to the joint request. The Sea Grant director has final discretion to select research and education proposals based on peer reviews, panel recommendations, Advisory Council advice, diversity and balance of proposals, availability of funding, and programmatic objectives, needs and priorities. Wisconsin Sea Grant will submit the final list of projects recommended for funding to the National Sea Grant College Program. The National Sea Grant Office reviews and provides final approval on the projects to be funded.

Applicants will be notified in September 2025 as to whether their proposal(s) will be included in the 2026-28 UW Sea Grant Omnibus proposal submission. Some adjustments of successful project proposals may be required prior to submission as a part of Wisconsin Sea Grant's 2026-28 omnibus proposals submission, and investigators will be required to submit additional mandatory application materials at that time (budget forms, NEPA – see below).

ALSO INCLUDED THIS YEAR

Researcher Code of Conduct

Researchers and their team members are expected to represent Wisconsin Sea Grant with the highest integrity and ethical standards. They are expected to foster an equitable, positive, and respectful working and learning environment free of discrimination, harassment, and bullying. They must abide by the standard code of conduct policies of their home institution(s) including, but not limited to, any: personnel policy, policy regarding sexual harassment, policy regarding workplace violence, and policy regarding ethical behavior. Furthermore, the funding provided through this research award is subject to [NOAA policies](#) relating to [scientific integrity](#) and [sexual assault or harassment](#) that may be in force at the time of the award.

Outreach/Engagement Component

A major emphasis of the National Sea Grant College Program's review process for state Sea Grant programs relies on the impacts of the federal investment in the state program and its strategic focus areas, not just in terms of research but also placing greater emphasis on delivery of the research products to coastal communities. We encourage PIs and their graduate students to take a more active role in delivering information about their work and research findings to public audiences or key policy-makers who might benefit from science support for decision-making. In addition, we encourage PIs to engage with partners and communities interested in the research prior to submitting a proposal. The goal of these initial conversations should not be to simply inform partners or communities of project goals, but rather to engage them in discussion to determine what questions, content, level of participation and products would be most useful for them. External reviewers will be asked to evaluate the outreach/engagement component of the proposal. Our outreach staff may be able to help you identify and connect with community partners, and additional resources are available [here](#).

Working with Tribal Governments

For projects that engage members of Wisconsin's sovereign Native American tribes, the [UW System Tribal Consultation Policy](#) outlines fundamental principles as they pertain to consultation with and respect for indigenous communities. Proposal teams are encouraged to review the policy's content and to reach out to their campus [Tribal Relations contact](#) if they do not already have a tribal connection to ensure that collaboration is explored in a respectful and meaningful way.

Data Management Plan Required

The America Competes Act requires the federal government to ensure that data from federally supported research is made visible, accessible and independently understandable to general users, free of charge or at minimal cost, in a timely manner (typically no later than two years after the end of the project), except where limited by law, regulation, policy, or by security requirements. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) mandates that Sea Grant programs require data management plans from funded investigators. Deposition of data in standard data archives (e.g., by discipline, such as GenBank, National Oceanographic Data Center, and others) is acceptable. Other options, including university libraries, are detailed by UW-Madison's Research Data Services at <http://researchdata.wisc.edu>.

For Sea Grant, this data management plan has two basic parts: (1) environmental data generated by a grant project must be made available after a reasonable period of exclusive use, and (2) the grant application must describe the plan to make the data available (principal investigators are expected to execute the plan). If your project produces environmental data, it must conform to NOAA's Data Sharing Directive for Grants, Cooperative Agreements, and

Contracts. For detailed guidance, you can view the current version of the policy, including a definition of environmental data (which can include socioeconomic and model data), and download any updates and access additional implementation resources [here](#) (Appendix B outlines requirements). Proposals submitted in response to this Request for Proposals must include a Data Management Plan describing how these requirements will be satisfied. To comply with this requirement, the Principal Investigator must use the [detailed instructions](#) on the following pages to explain how the data and metadata will be provided. Please complete the form, including information for all applicable datasets related to your project(s). All data generated through Sea Grant-funded projects are required to be verified and made publicly accessible **by two years after the end date of the project**. If the proposed research will not generate environmental data, then a Data Management Plan will need to be stated as such: *“This project will not generate any environmental data.”*

If funding is required for data curation and archiving, please make sure that funds for data management are included in the project proposal budget.

NOAA’s National Environmental Compliance Act (NEPA) Requirements and Environmental Permits

Projects that are selected for funding will require completion of an abbreviated NOAA Environmental Compliance Questionnaire (located [here](#)). This form is not required at the proposal submission stage, but will be required if the proposal is recommended for funding. Background and goals associated with the NEPA program can be found [here](#).

Sea Grant-funded research projects are subject to local, state, and/or federal environmental permitting requirements associated with the work being proposed. Examples of such projects include but are not limited to: aquaculture projects; projects that will conduct any sampling in sensitive areas, including state or national parks, or private property and/or deploy equipment long-term; projects on or in the area of threatened or endangered species, or any vertebrate species. Per the requirements in the Abbreviated Environmental Questionnaire, PIs who are selected for funding must include a list of all state and federal permits required to complete the project, including whether these permits have already been acquired. If a partner institution will be responsible for acquiring permits, this should be stated. The responsibility for acquiring permits lies with the funded PI, and failure to secure permits may result in delayed receipt of funds or changes to the scope of work proposed. Funded PIs are required to share with the Sea Grant program proof that all required permits and permissions have been granted prior to expending funds on the work covered by the permit.

Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval [if applicable]

PIs who plan to conduct human subjects research must state whether the proposed research is subject to Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval. No work involving human subjects may be undertaken, conducted, or costs incurred and/or charged for human subjects research, until appropriate documentation is approved in writing by IRB. PIs should provide a copy of IRB approval if completed prior to full proposal submission. If the PI intends to seek IRB approval after selection, a copy of IRB approval must be provided prior to commencing human subjects research. Absence of IRB approval at the time of submission will result in the NSGO placing restrictions on the award until those permits are provided, and host institutions may have additional restrictions on such funds, per their own policies.

Reporting

PIs of all Wisconsin Sea Grant-funded projects are required to submit annual and final project reports. These reports should include detailed information about project participants, research

activities, outcomes, publications, tools, and technology developed, management and decision-making processes influenced, education products and programs developed, and other products and contributions that result from Sea Grant-funded projects. Failure to provide the required project reports jeopardizes continued funding. In addition, PIs are required to provide to Wisconsin Sea Grant a copy of all peer-reviewed journal articles in their accepted manuscript format (not the officially published version) and other materials published as a result of this funding.

Acknowledgement and Disclaimer Statements

Wisconsin Sea Grant must be acknowledged in all promotions, publications, and products (copyrighted or not) that result from Sea Grant-funded research projects, and investigators should review this [resource](#) or contact Wisconsin Sea Grant for verbiage (even after a project end date).

Instructions for Submitting a Full Proposal

Proposals will be submitted through the online platform eDrop. Follow these instructions to ensure you submit a complete proposal in the proper format.

NOTE:

If submitting a proposal to the **Minnesota-Wisconsin Joint Request for Proposals**, follow the steps outlined in Attachment 1 in addition to the steps below.

The process for submitting a proposal has 12 steps:

Step 1. Draft proposal

Note: this step includes drafting the full proposal with sections as outlined under the detailed instructions for Step 1 below, including appending curriculum vitae(s) for all investigators, letters of support (optional, but strongly encouraged), current and pending support, and other items noted in Step 1.

- Step 2. Prepare proposal cover sheet**
- Step 3. Prepare data management plan**
- Step 4. Log in to eDrop**
- Step 5. Enter basic information**
- Step 6. Upload proposal**
- Step 7. Upload proposal cover sheet**
- Step 8. Upload data management plan**
- Step 9. Enter budget information**
- Step 10. Provide administrative approval**
- Step 11. Submit your application**

Wisconsin Sea Grant staff are available to help you at any stage of the process; please feel free to reach out to the following contacts:

Research proposals - Jennifer Hauxwell (jennifer.hauxwell@aqu.wisc.edu)
Education proposals - Anne Moser (akmoser@aqu.wisc.edu)
Budget preparation - Melissa Boyce (maboyce@aqu.wisc.edu)
Use of eDrop - Tom Xiong (tomxiong@aqu.wisc.edu)

STEP 1. Draft proposal

Your proposal will outline the goals, objectives, background, methods, and intended outcomes of your project. You should include elements A through L below. eDrop requires the proposal be in Adobe Acrobat PDF format (.pdf). We recommend you draft in Microsoft Word, then save the document locally as an Adobe PDF. Step 6 will cover how to upload this PDF to eDrop.

Note: There is a maximum length of 15 pages* for parts A-F below using no smaller than 11-point type and 1.5 line spacing. This page limit does not include the additional sections G-L.

The proposal must contain the following information:

A) Project Title

B) Introduction and Rationale³

For *research* projects – What issue, challenge, or opportunity are you addressing and how does it relate to the targeted or base focus areas outlined on pp. 13-22 and pp. 24-26 in the [Request for Proposals](#)?

Please provide background and brief literature review.

For *education* projects – Summarize the problem or opportunity being addressed and identify the relevant Wisconsin Sea Grant priority education actions (outlined on p. 23 of the [Request for Proposals](#)).

C) Project Objectives/Hypothesis

For *research* projects – Clearly state the hypothesis to be tested or the question to be investigated. What are your goals; what do you hope to accomplish? Objectives should be selected and described in such a way as to be verifiable upon completion of the project.

For *education* projects – What are your goals and what do you hope to accomplish?

D) Methodology/Approach

For *research* projects – Describe your research plan and methods, including standard and novel techniques. Describe any special equipment required. Describe the analysis and modelling approach where relevant. How will you evaluate your results and show that you have accomplished your objectives? For the joint call with Minnesota, please describe the role each state team will play in carrying out the work.

For *education* projects – Describe the methods you will use to accomplish your objectives. How will you measure your results and show that you have accomplished your objectives?

E) Anticipated Outcomes

What are the likely outcomes or impacts (environmental, educational, social, economic, etc.) that could result from the project? Did you identify potential users of project results (e.g., specific businesses, industries, coastal communities, state and federal government agencies, etc.?). How are partners, communities, and populations served by the project engaged in the process and potential outcomes associated with the proposed work?

F) Timeline

Provide a timeline with key milestones for accomplishing the work, producing scientific or educational results, and engaging with interested parties throughout the course of the project.

*[15 page limit for sections A-F. Page limit does not apply for additional sections below.]

G) Institutional Review Board (if applicable)

Projects intending to use human subjects for research purposes should be identified and

³ Note, since the initiation of this competitive process for federal funds, the President issued [Executive Order 14151](#) entitled “Ending radical and wasteful government DEI programs and preferencing.” This Executive Order may affect Wisconsin Sea Grant’s ability to consider some previously identified priorities.

include an anticipated timeline for when Institutional Review Board approval will be obtained and when the activities involving human subjects are expected to occur. If the approval documentation is not available at the time of Omnibus submission, a special award condition will be placed on the award. The program will submit an award action request to satisfy that special award condition once approval has been obtained. No work involving human subjects may be undertaken, conducted, or costs incurred and/or charged for human subjects research, until the appropriate documentation is approved in writing by the NOAA grants officer.

H) Outreach and Technology Transfer Plan

Provide a cohesive strategy to ensure broader impacts of the work. Users across the greater geographic region, beyond those who actively participate in the proposed work, should have an opportunity to learn about the project's outcomes. Outline your plan for outreach and technology transfer. You may also state whether and how you intend to coordinate with Sea Grant's outreach, education, and communications teams. A paragraph or succinct bulleted list is acceptable.

I) Curriculum Vitae(s)

Provide short CVs for all investigators, including associate investigators. There is an optional CV template available here - seagrant.wisc.edu/rfp. CVs should be 2 pages or less with no smaller than 10-point font and include:

- Name
- Title
- Department
- Campus Address
- Phone Number
- Email Address
- Education (degrees, institutions, dates)
- Positions Held (title, organization, years)
- Professional Memberships (no abbreviations)
- Selected Publications

J) References

Provide complete bibliographic information for all references cited in the text.

K) Letters of Support / Collaboration (optional, strongly encouraged)

Append letters of support and/or collaboration.

L) Current and Pending Support (if applicable)

Principal and Co-Principal investigators should list the title of each project, source of support, amount of support and funding period for work in this general area (not required for Associate Investigators).

STEP 2: Prepare proposal cover sheet

The proposal cover sheet will be shared with potential reviewers when they are invited to conduct their review. Download the "Proposal Cover Sheet Template" available [here](#) under "Important links" near the bottom of the page.

The cover sheet should be formatted in the style of the template and include the following sections:

- A) Title
- B) Abstract (300 words)
- C) Investigator(s) & Affiliation (Department and Organization)
 - Lead Principal Investigator
 - Co-Investigator(s)
 - Associate Investigator(s)
- D) Location of Research or Education project
- E) Budget
 - Year 1 Request
 - Year 2 Request

Save the cover sheet locally as a word file (.docx). Step 7 will cover how to upload the cover sheet document to eDrop. Do NOT convert the Word file to a PDF.

STEP 3. Prepare Data Management Plan

Download the “Sea Grant Data Management Plan” [here](#) under “Important links” via a link near the bottom of the page. Complete the form and save as a Word document to your computer. Step 8 will cover how to upload the data management plan to eDrop. Do NOT convert the Word file to a PDF.

STEPS 4-12

The next steps must be completed online using the eDrop system. Access eDrop here: <https://edrop.aqua.wisc.edu/>

eDrop does not work with Microsoft Explorer. Use Mozilla Firefox or Google Chrome. If you have any difficulty with the eDrop system, please contact Tom Xiong at tomxiong@aquawisc.edu.

Tips for using eDrop

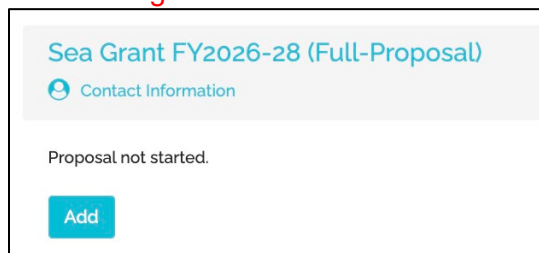
- These steps may be completed in phases. You do not need to upload your entire proposal package in a single session, as long as you use the “SAVE” button to avoid loss of work. We encourage you to save early and often.
- As you complete entry forms in eDrop, you must check the box at the top of each form to “Mark as complete.” Red dots in the menu on the left associated with different forms indicate sections that still need to be completed, green dots mark completed sections. You will need to fill out all required information, then check the “Mark as complete” box at the top of each section before submission.
- Your account will remain active through the submission deadline, and you may edit each section until the time at which you choose to officially submit.
- Your proposal is not submitted until you click on the “SUBMIT” button in the “Submission Preview” tab. See Step 11.
- After you login to eDrop, you may choose between two dashboard viewers, including the “old Dashboard” and the “new Dashboard.” The instructions below are specific to the new Dashboard. To determine which one you are using, look to the top right of the screen under your name. “Switch to old Dashboard” indicates you are currently using the new dashboard and vice versa.

STEP 4. Log in to eDrop

eDrop is an online platform for proposal submissions. First-time users will need to register for an account using a 2-step verification process that requires both an email and a phone number for verification. Returning users simply need to log in to the site. Any account created during the preproposal submission may be used to submit the full proposal. Access the eDrop portal at <https://edrop.aqua.wisc.edu/>

STEP 5. Enter basic information

Once you login, you will see several tabs. Select the “1 – RESEARCH FUNDING” tab. Within the task pane associated with “Sea Grant 2026-28 (Full-Proposal)” → **Select “Add” to begin.**



Next, in the dialog box that appears, enter a title for your proposal and click “Continue.” You may edit the title if necessary, by using the small edit (pencil) icon that appears following the Proposal title field near the top of the screen.

Clicking continue will activate a list of entry forms that will appear in the left side panel (e.g., “Investigators,” “Financial Contact,” “Partners,” etc.). The list of forms will be visible whenever you are in the Sea Grant 2026-28 Full Proposal task pane.

The following sections should be entered directly into the form fields in eDrop:

- A) Investigators
 - Designate the lead, co-principal(s) and associate investigator(s)
[For joint calls with other state programs, please provide a lead investigator for each state.]
 - Estimate the effort associated with each named investigator and add contact information. Effort must range from [minimum effort] to 100%.
 - Add additional investigators using the “Add SG Investigators” button
 - Note: Only faculty members and persons having principal investigator status at their institution in the University of Wisconsin System or other Wisconsin college or university may be designated as Principal Investigators. Other investigators affiliated with a project should be designated as Associate Investigators.
- B) Financial Contact (for administering the project at your university)
[For joint calls with other state programs, please provide information for a financial at a campus in each state administering the project using the “Add Financial Contact” button.]
- C) Partners (list all organizations)
- D) Data Management Plan Summary
 - All projects generating any kind of environmental data must include a full

data management plan. This will be uploaded in step 8. For this section, type the phrase which best applies:

“This project will not generate environmental data.”

-Or-

“A full data management plan is included with the proposal submission. The contact for data management will be [insert contact information].”

E) Project Dates

- Select start and end dates. The grant period runs from February 1, 2026, through January 31, 2028, for “typical” two-year projects. Investigators may submit proposals for one or two years.

F) Focus Area and Specific Program Priority (refer to the priorities listed in the [RFP](#))

- Research Proposals: Select the Targeted Focus Area or Base Focus Area or Joint Call for Minnesota-Wisconsin proposals that best fits your project
- Education Proposals: Select the “Non-research Education Projects” option from the dropdown
- All Proposals except Joint Minnesota-Wisconsin Request: Check the box(es) associated with the priority action(s) described in the [Request for Proposals](#) that the proposal best addresses
[For joint calls with other state programs, leave the boxes unchecked.]

G) Suggested Reviewers

- Research Proposals: Enter the names, affiliations and email addresses of at least five qualified reviewers stationed **outside** of Wisconsin [and, Minnesota for the Joint Minnesota-Wisconsin Request].
- [Note - this is NOT required for Education proposal submissions. If submitting an Education proposal, leave this blank and ignore any error messages that result from not filling it in.]

STEP 6. Upload proposal

Upload the proposal file prepared in Step 1. The eDrop system permits you to browse your local files to locate and upload the PDF file you saved locally in Step 1.

STEP 7. Upload proposal cover sheet

Upload the proposal cover sheet file prepared in Step 2. The eDrop system permits you to browse your local files to locate and upload the Word file you saved locally in Step 2.

STEP 8. Upload data management plan

Upload the data management plan file prepared in Step 3. The eDrop system permits you to browse your local files to locate and upload the Word file you saved locally in Step 3.

STEP 9. Enter budget information

Note - Please review these instructions well in advance of the deadline to be sure you have all of the information you need prior to entry in eDrop. We have had PIs save the budget for

last minute entry and then realize that they needed more information and time than they had planned.

These instructions pertain to Wisconsin-based PIs applying for funding, including the Wisconsin-only portion of the budget for the joint request with Minnesota. Additional instructions for Minnesota PIs applying to the joint request for proposals are included in step 9.1 below.

The following steps will help you prepare the budget. Ensure you are working under the “Budget Worksheets (90-4 Adapted)” section in the left-hand task pane. Here, you will see five tabs. We will not use the first or second tab.

Third tab: SUBAWARDS.

Be sure to fill out this tab if your project includes a subaward. For the fourth tab to work properly, you must enter all subawards *before* entering information into the BUDGET WORKSHEETS tab.

- A) Draft the statement of work.
 - A statement of work (SOW) is a concise but descriptive summary of the work to be conducted under the subaward.
 - A simple Word template is available for the SOW. Click [here](#) to download it.
 - Draft the SOW using the template, then save locally as a pdf.
- B) Upload the statement of work.
 - Click on the SUBAWARDS tab.
 - Enter the “Subaward Institution Name” and “Subaward Investigator Name” and click “Add” on the bottom right
 - Use the “Upload” button to browse your local files and upload the PDF you saved locally in step A) above.
 - Note:
 - You do not need to upload a “Statement Budget PDF.” Budget details will be entered later, so ignore this option.
 - Do not use the “Import Subawards” feature (near top).
- C) Add additional subaward institutions and investigators as necessary following the same process above for each subaward and pressing the “Add” button.

Fourth tab: 90-4 CONFIGURATION

Be sure to fill out this tab if your project includes Other Personnel, Equipment or Participant/Trainee Support Costs expenses that aren’t listed in the below snapshots of dropdown menus. For the fifth tab to work properly, you must enter all additional expense names *before* entering information into the BUDGET WORKSHEETS tab.

Other Personnel

Select Personnel Type ▾

Select Personnel Type
Post Doctoral Associates
Graduate Students
Undergraduate Students
Secretarial/Clerical
Other

If you have additional appointment types for Other Personnel not listed above, such as Technical Staff, you will enter that on the 90-4 CONFIGURATION tab:

B. Other Personnel

Other 1 Label

Technical Staff

Permanent Equipment

If you have any Permanent Equipment in your budget, you will enter the name of it on the 90-4 CONFIGURATION tab:

C. Permanent Equipment

Item 1 Label

Instrument

Participant/Trainee Support Costs

E. PARTICIPANT/TRAINEE SUPPORT COSTS

Stipends ▾

Select Participant/Trainee Support
Tuition/Fees/Health Insurance
Stipends
Travel
Subsistence
Other

If you have additional Participant/Trainee Support expenses not listed above, such as Event Registration Fees, you will enter that on the 90-4 CONFIGURATION tab:

E. Participant/Trainee Support Costs

Other Label

Event Registration Fees

Other Costs

F. OTHER COSTS

Select Cost Type ▾

- Select Cost Type
- Materials and Supplies
- Publication Costs
- G. T Consultant Services
- ADP/Computer Services
- MC Subawards/Consortium/Contractual Costs
- Equipment or Faculty Rental/User Fees
- H. Alterations and Renovations
- Tuition NOT subject to indirect
- Other NOT Subject to Indirect
- 1. Other

If you have additional Other Costs expenses not listed above, such as Analysis, you will enter that on the 90-4 CONFIGURATION tab:

F. Other Costs

Other 1 Label

Analysis

Fifth tab: BUDGET WORKSHEETS

Overview:

This is where you will add detailed budget information for all costs necessary to complete the project. You will be creating multiple budget worksheets – one for each year for the lead PI's institution and one for each year for the individual subawards. Once you have entered all of your budget worksheets, your final list of worksheets should look similar to this example, with deviations depending on whether you have subaward(s) or not and whether you have a one-year or two-year project.

295	LeadPiLastName_Year1	On-Campus	1	2024
296	SubAwardPiLastName_Year1	Subaward On-Campus	1	2024
297	LeadPiLastName_Year2	On-Campus	2	2025
298	SubAwardPiLastName_Year2	Subaward On-Campus	2	2025

Each budget worksheet you create will include salaries and wages, fringe benefits, permanent equipment costs, expendable supplies, as well as costs for travel, publication, and indirect costs.

For each budget line, you will see a column called “SG FED FUNDS” and a column called “NON-FED FUNDS (MATCH)”. The SG FED FUNDS portion is the amount you propose will be covered by the grant. **Wisconsin Sea Grant covers the match portion, so please leave the “NON-FED FUNDS (MATCH)” column blank throughout the budget form.**

PLEASE NOTE: There have been recent updates to 2 CFR § 200 that are directly related to your institution’s indirect rate agreement. Please reach out to your institution’s sponsored programs office prior to completing this section. If there are questions, please contact Melissa Boyce at maboyce@wisc.edu to schedule a meeting.

Details:

Follow instructions below for entering your budget details/

A) Add Budget Worksheet

- Click the “Add Budget Worksheet” button
- Enter a worksheet title
 - Use the naming convention “PILastName_Year1” or “PILastName_Year2” as in *Yang_Year1*
 - You will have one worksheet for each year for the lead PI’s institution and for each year of any subawards
- Select budget type based on instructions from your research and sponsored projects budget office
- Select duration – i.e., whether the costs are associated with the first or second project year
- Indicate whether you are entering expenses for a subaward by clicking the “Subaward?” box. Choose the applicable subaward from the dropdown menu.
- Click “Save and Continue”

B) Fill out the Budget Worksheet

- Total Salary, Wages and Fringe Benefits (A+B)
 - Enter personnel
 - Enter all Principal, Co- and Associate Investigators under “Senior Personnel”
 - Enter research associates, students, technicians and administrators under

“Other Personnel”

- You may choose a “Name or Personnel Type” in the dropdown or populated from the Other Personnel 90-4 section you completed previously.
- Choose SALARY TYPE from the dropdown.
- Choose APPT. TYPE from the dropdown (Calendar, Academic, Summer)
- Enter either the full-time MONTHLY SALARY or the HOURLY RATE for each personnel line based on their SALARY TYPE. You may include adjustments for realistic increases in salary rates. This information needs to be reflected in your budget justification.
- Enter FRINGE RATE IN DEC. as a decimal (e.g., “0.19” for 19%). Include a percentage for each line. (Make sure to type “0” before the decimal.) Please use your institution’s current approved rate and do not inflate.
- Under “SG FED MON EFFORT,” enter the number of months of salary being requested for each line
- DO NOT enter anything for “NON-FED MONTH EFFORT (MATCH)”
- At the end of each line is a green “Add” button to add the line to the budget worksheet. Click the Add button.
 - Once you’ve clicked the Add button for each expense line, you will then see a “Missing” tag in the “JUSTIFY” column. Click it to enter a budget justification.
 - While you are in the Justification you will see something that looks like this—click this link to pull up a sample justification [SAMPLE BUDGET JUSTIFICATION (pdf)]
 - When complete, click “Save” and the “OK” to return to the budget worksheet
- Fringe Benefits
 - Fringe benefit amount will calculate and show in the justification automatically from the information entered under each expense line.
- Each appointment requires a separate budget justification
- Permanent Equipment
 - Please check with your institution’s Research and Sponsored Programs office for the definition of equipment.
 - If you have Permanent Equipment, please make sure you’ve completed the “Name” from the Permanent Equipment 90-4 section you completed previously.
 - Select the “Name” from the dropdown.
 - Enter the dollar amount on the SG FED FUNDS column and then click the green “Add” button.
- Travel
 - Include all travel expenses directly related to conducting the project as well as conducting outreach and education related to the work
 - All domestic travel may be added as a single line item. International travel should be separated by trip.
- Participant/Trainee Support
 - If you have Participant/Trainee Support expenses, use the dropdown menu to choose the type of expense and then enter the dollar amount in the SG FED FUNDS column for each respective item and then click the green Add button.
 - If you have expenses that aren’t on the dropdown list, please be sure that you completed the Participant/Trainee Support Costs 90-4 section previously.
- Other costs
 - If you have Other Costs expenses, use the dropdown menu to choose the type of expense and then enter the dollar amount in the SG FED FUNDS column for each

- respective item and then click the green “Add” button.
- If you have expenses that aren’t on the dropdown list, please be sure that you completed the Other Costs 90-4 section previously.

F. OTHER COSTS

Select Cost Type ▾

- Select Cost Type
- Materials and Supplies
- Publication Costs
- G. T Consultant Services
- ADP/Computer Services
- MC Subawards/Consortium/Contractual Costs
- Equipment or Faculty Rental/User Fees
- H. Alterations and Renovations
- Tuition NOT subject to indirect
- Other NOT Subject to Indirect
- 1. Other

-
- Indirect costs
 - INDIRECT COSTS – on Modified Direct Costs section
 - Use the appropriate rates as outlined by your research and sponsored programs office at your campus
 - In the boxes under “SG%,” and “Inst%” enter your institutional indirect rates that will be applied to this WISG project if awarded.
- As before, click on the “Missing” link to enter the justification for the indirect costs for all expense types that you entered above

C) Save Budget Worksheet

- After entering all cost data for this first worksheet, scroll back up to the top of the page and click “UPDATE WORKSHEET” to save it
- Click “Back” to return to the Budgets Worksheets main tab in eDrop
- You will see the worksheet you just entered now appears in a list under the “Budget Worksheets” tab

D) Add new Budget Worksheets as appropriate for your project by repeating the steps above. Note: create Year 1 and Year 2 budgets for each subaward AND the overall budget for the lead PI’s institution

- On the Budget Worksheets tab, in the row to the right of each Budget Worksheet listing, there are icons linked to useful functions. In particular, the printer icon may be used to create a PDF of the entire budget that is useful for your review as well as for sharing with collaborators or for institutional approvals.

For budget advice, including questions regarding submission of multi-campus or multi-institutional proposals, contact Melissa Boyce (maboyce@wisc.edu).

Step 9.1. Minnesota investigators on joint proposals with Wisconsin should prepare a 90-4 budget form and budget justification form as directed in the [2026-2028 Minnesota Sea Grant Biennial RFP](#).

Contact MNSG Research and Fellowship Coordinator [Alexander Frie](#) for questions about these forms.

- A) Use the **Budget Spreadsheet Template** to provide year 1 and year 2 budget requests.
 - [Budget Spreadsheet Template](#) (90-4, updated 3/2025)
 - Save as an Excel file
- B) Use the **Budget Justification Template** to create an appropriate budget justification to accompany your proposal budget.
 - [Budget Justification Template](#) (Investigators should review the [example justification](#))
 - Save as a Word document
- C) Upload the Budget Template (xls) and Budget Justification (pdf) by clicking on “Upload Additional Joint Call Budgets with other states (Minnesota Budget).”

STEP 10. Provide administrative approval

All proposal submissions require administrative approvals and clearances before they can be considered. **Ensure that administrative approval has been provided by 3 p.m. Central Daylight Time on May 2, 2025.**

All Proposal Submissions: An email stating that the proposal has received all required approvals and clearances must be sent to Melissa Boyce (maboyce@wisc.edu) with the following requirements:

- The email must come from a **campus official** who is authorized to approve extramural grant applications (for UW-Madison proposals this would be the dean’s office)
 - (Attachment of official transmittal documents or electronically routed authorization forms are also acceptable from non-officials, as long as they demonstrate the required institutional approvals and also comply with the requested items below.)
- The subject line of the email should be **“WISG 2026-28”**
- The body of the email must identify the:
 - Name of the principal investigator
 - Title of the proposal
 - Approved budget amount for each year and total
 - Name of the submitting institution

When this step is completed, or if you are certain it will be completed by the submission deadline, check the box corresponding with this tab in eDrop.

Step 10.1. Minnesota investigators on joint proposals with Wisconsin should secure administrative approval as directed below:

University of Minnesota-based Investigators

No evidence of administrative approval is required.

Other Institutions

PDF evidence of approval from an entity at the PI's institution authorized to approve extramural grant applications should be uploaded in support of your application.

- The approval should include:
 - Name of the principal investigator
 - Title of the proposal
 - Approved budget amount for each year and total
 - Name of the submitting institution

STEP 11. Submit your application

After you have provided all the necessary information and are satisfied your application is complete, then:

- Click the checkbox in each section to “mark as complete”
- Click on the “Submission Preview” on the left menu
- Click on the “Submit” button at the top of the page

Note, your proposal is not officially submitted until you click on the “SUBMIT” button in the “Submission Preview” tab. If the submission is successful, you will receive an email confirmation. This step MUST be completed by 3 p.m. Central Daylight Time on May 2, 2025.

Attachment 1

Minnesota-Wisconsin Joint Request for Proposals

Proposals for the Minnesota-Wisconsin joint request for proposals are submitted through the Wisconsin eDrop system following the [detailed instructions](#). This table summarizes the unique aspects associated with submitting a joint proposal. The steps for submitting a proposal to this joint effort are nearly the same as for a conventional Wisconsin-based proposal, with the primary difference being that proposal budgets need to be structured in such a way that, if successful, they can be easily severable between the two state Sea Grant programs. Each state Sea Grant program has different mechanisms and rates regarding the budgets and administrative approvals. Therefore, separate budgets should be prepared for these proposals following Steps 9 and 9.1 in the [detailed instructions](#). Administrative approvals should be prepared and submitted following Steps 10 and 10.1 [detailed instructions](#). All materials must be submitted by Friday, May 2, 2025, 3 p.m. CDT.

Administrative and submission details are summarized in the table below:

Key Points for MN-WI joint proposals	Minnesota	Wisconsin
Project length:	Maximum of two years	Maximum of two years
Project dates:	Beginning February 1, 2026	Beginning February 1, 2026
Maximum budget per year (including graduate student support, fringe benefits, tuition remission, ship time and F&A [IDC] costs):	<p>\$100,000 per year. Minnesota researchers should follow the guidance within the Funding section of the MNSG RFP. Minnesota PIs should contact Minnesota Sea Grant for budget calculation assistance prior to submission.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Minnesota Sea Grant requires a 25% match. -Researchers within the UM System do NOT need to include indirect costs. -All projects must budget at least 40% of project funds (match and MNSG funds) for graduate student or undergraduate student support, classified as student salary, fringe, or graduate student tuition or associated indirect costs. 	\$100,000 per year, which includes indirect costs. No match is required.
Budget information contact:	Alexander Frie frie0388@umn.edu	Melissa Boyce maboyme@wisc.edu
Budget preparation:	Minnesota researchers follow instructions in Step 9.1 in the detailed instructions .	Wisconsin researchers follow instructions in Step 9 in the detailed instructions .
Administrative approval:	Minnesota researchers follow instructions in Step 10.1 in the detailed instructions .	Wisconsin researchers follow instructions in Step 10 in the detailed instructions .

Submission Procedure:	<p>Handled as a single proposal submitted through the Wisconsin eDrop system. Differences in the MN and WI submission process are described in the Proposal Submission Guidelines and below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Step 5.B. – names of administrative and financial contacts for both programs are to be indicated.2. Step 9 – Wisconsin PIs submit the WI-only budget following the instructions described in Step 9 in the detailed instructions Step 9.1 – Minnesota PIs submit the MN-only budget by following the instructions described in Step 9.1 in the detailed instructions by uploading the MN Excel budget form and justification to eDrop via the “<i>Upload Additional Joint Call Budgets with other states (Minnesota)</i>” menu item3. Step 10 and 10.1 – Wisconsin budgets must be cleared through Wisconsin administrative channels, and Minnesota budgets must be cleared through Minnesota administrative channels. Teams from each state should follow the detailed instructions for their state approvals.
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