



National Marine Sanctuary Foundation

Ernest F. Hollings Ocean Awareness Trust Fund Request for Proposals: 2012 Hollings Grant

The National Marine Sanctuary Foundation seeks proposals to increase ocean awareness and promote action for ocean conservation. NMSF is interested in innovative projects that engage the public in compelling ocean stewardship issues and motivate effective and focused action to benefit both humans and the sea.

The Ernest F. Hollings Ocean Awareness Trust Fund

Established at NMSF in 2005, the Ocean Awareness Trust Fund represents our nation's commitment to the legacy of U.S. Senator Ernest F. Hollings (D-SC). Sen. Hollings authored an extraordinary range of laws to safeguard America's ocean and coasts, including the Coastal Zone Management, Marine Mammal Protection, Ocean Dumping, Sustainable Fisheries, Oceans and Human Health, and Coastal and Estuarine Land Protection acts. His Oceans Act of 2000 created the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy, whose recommendations continue to inform how America manages its ocean and coasts. During his many years of service to the nation, Sen. Hollings was committed to increasing knowledge of our ocean's value through research and education. He is an NMSF Trustee Emeritus.

NMSF's annual Hollings Grant, supported by the Ocean Awareness Trust Fund, initiate and strengthen projects that honor Sen. Hollings' commitment to increasing the American public's understanding of our ocean and promoting opportunities for all Americans to take action for ocean stewardship.

The National Marine Sanctuary Foundation

NMSF is a private, non-profit organization that connects people to the most valued places in our American ocean: national marine sanctuaries. Sanctuaries – hubs for jobs, learning, and outdoor fun set aside for their cultural and ecological significance – protect the very best of the American ocean for future generations. Through public and private partnerships that support national marine sanctuaries, NMSF inspires responsible stewardship of our nation's ocean, coasts, and maritime legacy.

Learn more about NMSF at www.NMSFocean.org.

About the Hollings Grant

Overview

- Awards will range from \$10,000 to \$25,000; NMSF will not review requests that fall below \$10,000 or above \$25,000. NMSF anticipates awarding five to seven grants this year.
- A 1:1 match is required. Government, private sector, or non-profit funds and in-kind support may be used for matching. Matching funds or in-kind support should come from an external source.
- Funding is available for a period of up to 18 months. Proposed activities must be completed and proposed goals achieved within that time period.

Eligibility

- Applicants must be a formal or informal education institution, non-profit, commercial organization, or a tribal, state, or local government. Entities located in national marine sanctuary communities are encouraged to apply.
- Federal agencies, NMSF trustees (or their affiliated organizations) and employees, and foreign entities may not apply.
- Previous recipients of a Hollings Grant are eligible to apply only if they have submitted the final report on their previous award or receive approval from NMSF.

Program Priorities

NMSF seeks to fund innovative projects that increase Americans' understanding of the ocean's value and engage the public to promote action for ocean stewardship. To be considered, proposed projects should:

- Increase public awareness of timely and relevant ocean conservation issues, including but not limited to marine debris, human interaction with marine mammals, non-point source pollution and runoff, the ocean and human health, and ocean acidification.
- Perform or promote on-the-ground action to address timely and relevant ocean conservation issues, including but not limited to marine debris, human interaction with marine mammals, non-point source pollution and runoff, the ocean and human health, and ocean acidification.
- Focus on the National Marine Sanctuary System in one or all of the following ways:
 - Direct partnership with a sanctuary site, region, or headquarters;
 - Project activities physically take place within the National Marine Sanctuary System;
 - Project activities leverage the expertise of national, regional, or local staff of NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries; or

- Project activities substantially increase public awareness of the value of the National Marine Sanctuary System.
- Establish or build on connections with the business community, private sector actors, and commercial enterprises.
- Include measurable markers for success to gauge progress on specific and defined activities against targeted milestones.

About the Application Process

Timeline

- **Proposals are due by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on October 26, 2012.**
- Final awards will be announced by **December 14, 2012.**
- Funds should be available in early January 2013.

Required Elements

Applicants must use the application form found at www.NMSFocean.org/our-grants for a proposal to be considered. A complete application will include a summary and project narrative that describes how the proposed project achieves the priorities of the Hollings Grant. Required information includes:

- a) Contact information;
- b) Brief biographies of project leaders/directors;
- c) Project Goals (150 words or less);
- d) Impact Statement (250 words or less);
- e) Project Narrative(1500 words max);
- f) Project Budget, including source(s) of 1:1 matching funds or in-kind services;
- g) Measurable metrics to gauge success;
- h) Statement describing how NMSF support will be acknowledged;
- i) Letter of Support/Commitment from a project partner. One is required, a maximum of two may be submitted as PDF files along with your complete application. Partners may not send statements of support to NMSF separately.

Submission

Completed proposals must be submitted by email to grants@NMSFocean.org using the application accessible at <http://www.nmsfocean.org/our-grants> by **5:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on October 24, 2012.**

- Fax or mail submissions will not be reviewed
- Do not send duplicate copies
- Do not send letters of support, budget spreadsheets, and proposals in separate emails.
- Subject line of the email should read:
[ORGANIZATION NAME]—Hollings Grant Proposal
(i.e. National Marine Sanctuary Foundation—Hollings Grant Proposal)
- Organizations may submit more than one proposal, although NMSF is not likely to fund two proposals from the same organization. Organizations submitting two proposals should send two separate email application packets.

When all parts of a completed proposal have been received by NMSF, you will receive an email confirming that your submission is complete.

Review and Selection Process

Proposals will be reviewed and selected for funding by NMSF. Proposals will be evaluated based on how well they achieve the program priorities of the Hollings Grant.

NMSF may use external reviewers to evaluate proposals' technical merit. Evaluation criteria may include:

- *Relevance to the Hollings Grant program priorities:*
 - To what extent will the proposed project increase public awareness and perform or promote on-the-ground action?
 - To what extent will the proposed project highlight the value of national marine sanctuaries?
 - To what extent will the proposed project effectively create or leverage partnerships, with a focus on the business community and commercial enterprises?
- *Technical merit:*
 - Are the project goals and objectives feasible given the proposed activities and methods?
 - Are the project goals and activities feasible given the proposed budget?
 - Are the project goals and activities feasible given the applicant's education and experience?
 - Does the proposed project include a rigorous program evaluation methodology?

Awards will be announced by December 14, 2012. All applicants will be notified on that date as to the status of their proposals.

Reporting Requirements

Awardees must submit progress reports to NMSF each February 1 and August 1 for the duration of the project, and a final report upon project completion. Progress reports and the final report must include photos or video of project activities. NMSF will provide standard progress reporting forms.

For Additional Information

- Read [Frequently Asked Questions about the Hollings Grant](#).
- Visit NMSF's web site at www.NMSFocean.org.
- For questions that cannot be answered through this RFP or the FAQs, contact Allison Alexander at (301) 608-3040 x3 or allison@nmsfocean.org.